



SCORECARD OF THE 8TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY & LESSONS FOR THE 9TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Report of a performance assessment of the 8th
National Assembly in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

Supported by:



SEPTEMBER, 2019

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YIAGA AFRICA - CLE, in partnership with the European Union support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) is strengthening the legislature at the national, state and local levels in Nigeria through the Support to National Assembly project. Among other objectives, the project aims to enhance the capacity of targeted National Assembly committees and personnel in the discharge of their legislative duties, to promote the responsiveness of the Legislature to the socio-political and economic needs of marginalized groups such as Youth, Women and PWDs, to improve legislator- constituent relationship and to strengthen interface and feedback between legislative committees and critical stakeholders.

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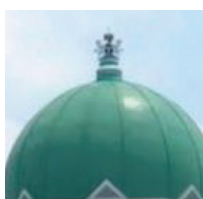
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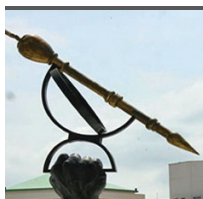
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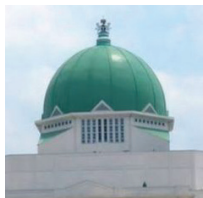
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Acknowledgments

YIAGA AFRICA CLE is indebted to many individuals, institutions and organizations too numerous to mention, for their immense contributions to the success of this research study on the performance of the 8th National Assembly as from June 2015 to May 2019. We appreciate and thank them all.

First, we wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to the team of researchers/consultants who have worked assiduously to conduct the research and produce this report: Professor Attahiru Muhammadu Jega, OFR, of Bayero University, Kano, who served as the Team Leader; Dr. Jake Dan-Azumi of National Assembly Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies; Professor Shola Omotola of Federal University, Oye-Ekiti; Professor Offornze Amucheazi Jr. SAN of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka; Dr. Christopher Ashiekaa, Director, Department of Project Monitoring and Evaluation, National Assembly and Mrs. Isabella Umunnakwe Ilobah, Director, Directorate of Planning and Legislative Budget.

Second, we also appreciate Dr. Hussaini Abdu, Chair of YIAGA AFRICA Board, who actively participated and contributed in all phases of the study; and the entire YIAGA AFRICA CLE team led by Dr. Ernest Ereke. Others include; Yetunde Bakare, Senior Program Officer; Dauda Farouk, Finance Officer, Tolulope Toromade, Monitoring and Evaluation Assistant and Amara Okolo, CLE Communications officer. Special thanks to Cynthia Mbamalu, YIAGA AFRICA Program Manager and Safiya Bichi, YIAGA AFRICA Senior Research Officer for their immense contributions to the success of this research.

The leadership of the 8th National Assembly welcomed the idea of the study and cooperated fully. We therefore wish to place on record our appreciation to Distinguished Senator Bukola Saraki and Rt. Honorable Yakubu Dogara and the entire leadership and staff of the National Assembly, for their understanding, support and cooperation throughout the period of the study.

Specifically, we wish to acknowledge the support of European Union for providing the funding to conduct this study under the European Union Support for Democratic Governance in Nigeria Project (EU-SDGN). Special thanks to Laolu Olawumi, EU Programme Manager, Democracy, Governance and Migration for her support and contributions to the research.

Itodo Samson

Executive Director, YIAGA AFRICA

Executive Summary

The legislature as a cardinal institution of democracy has responsibilities for legislation, oversight and representation. To what extent did Nigeria's 8th National Assembly (NASS), 2015–2019, live up to the expectations with regards to these responsibilities? This report critically addressed this central question through a detailed assessment of the performance of these three core functions by the 8th National Assembly.

This assessment is important for many reasons. First, the NASS has a constitutional mandate to make laws for the Peace, Order and Good government of the Federation. Second, leadership of the 8th NASS (principal officers) emerged under controversial circumstances against the ruling party's wish. Third, the attendant politics of legitimacy or the lack of it, as well as mutual distrust and frosty relations between the legislature and the executive dominated the period. It is pertinent to explore how these and related tendencies affected legislative performance during the period. By adopting an empirical approach rather than the usually impressionistic assessments that dominate the extant body of knowledge on the subject, the report has very strong foundations for challenging, if not correcting, long established stereotypes and misconceptions about the legislature in Nigeria and charting alternative roadmaps for productive legislative governance in the country.

The study adopted a descriptive qualitative and quantitative research design. It drew its data from secondary and primary sources. Secondary data were sourced from books, journals, committee reports (sessional and legacy reports), records of proceedings, Hansards and other official documents of NASS. Primary data were generated through in-depth interviews, survey using structured questionnaires, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). A total of 2910 questionnaires were administered in 12 randomly selected states, two per geo-political zone (one Senatorial District and one Federal Constituency per state).

In-depth interviews were conducted with the leadership of the NASS and Chairmen of twelve (12) selected Committees (5 Senate and 7 House). The selected Senate Committees were: Appropriation, Ethics and Privileges, Local Content, Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation; and House of Representatives: Public Petition, Public Account, Youth Development, Constituency Outreach, Education, Security and Anti-corruption. The survey questionnaire was also administered to Clerks of the 12 Committees and senior legislative aides (SLAs) to the Committee Chairmen and other NASS bureaucrats.

Data collected were analysed using both descriptive qualitative and quantitative techniques, together with content analysis. These included the use of inferences, logical deductions, frequency distribution, simple percentages, tables, figures (charts) and other relevant statistical tools of analysis.

The findings of the study are remarkable and revealing. With respect to law making, there was a significant increase in the number of Bills handled by the 8th National Assembly. Specifically, 2,166 Bills were introduced, out of which 515 pieces of legislation were passed, including 21 Constitution Alteration Bills – 5 of which received presidential assent. The Senate passed a total of 172 bills while the House of Representatives passed 343 bills within the same period. Some of these Bills could be regarded as landmark or significant for the widespread interest they generated, high media attention, pertinent issues they addressed and overall high perception of their potential impacts. Such Bills include the North East Development Commission Bill and Not Too Young to Run Bill, among others. Of all those Bills, 53 were declined Presidential assent and only about 80 (15.5%) received assent although several Bills were still awaiting assent at the time of study. However, data on the number of Bills transmitted to the President for assent were not available. Over the same period, 15 Bills were withdrawn while 33 were 'negatived' – killed. Overall, the efficiency percentage was

23.8%, representing the proportion of all Bills introduced that were successfully passed by the 8th National Assembly. Compared to the 7th National Assembly, which passed a total of 205 Bills out of a total of 1367 introduced, the 8th National Assembly was far better.

The report also reveals a high level of increase in the number of private members bill, which accounted for 95.8% of all Bills introduced during the 8th National Assembly. The House of Representatives accounted for 65% of this category of Bills, albeit due to its numerical strength over the Senate. Two decades of unbroken democratic governance and attendant accumulation of institutional memory may have tremendously enhanced the law-making capacity of legislators in terms of expertise. However, some of these Bills generally classified as Private Member Bills, though sponsored by legislators, were actually initiated by Professional Associations and Civil Society Organisations, including the Not Too Young To Run Bill. This not only shows that civil society organisations have a significant impact on law-making efficiency in the 8th National Assembly, but also underscores its positive disposition to participatory law making.

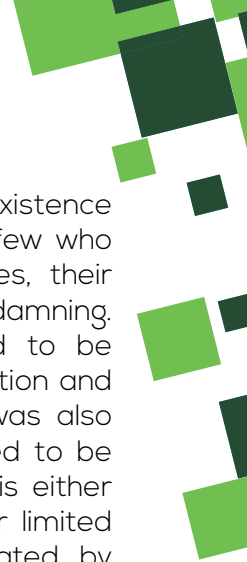
In terms of gestation period, some of these bills took long to be passed. Ideally, a bill should, averagely, take less than six months to pass. But out of the 515 bills passed in the 8th National Assembly, only 47 (9.1%) were passed within fifty days, while a whopping 271 (52.6%) took over 351 days. Furthermore, 14 Bills were passed within 100 days, 12 within 150 days, 80 within 200 days, 41 within 250 days, 23 within 300 days and 27 within 350 days. Notably, most of the Bills passed within 50 days were either executive bills or, of emergency nature.

These findings are mostly in tandem with public perceptions derived from the survey questionnaires. Of the 2,910 respondents who evaluated the 8th National Assembly, nearly half (46.0%) rated it to have performed "averagely" while 32.7% rated it "above average," 8.6% as "excellently" and 12.7% as "below average". Also, 14.4% respondents considered the legislations passed to be inclusive "To a large extent"; 53.9% "To some extent"; 25.8% "To a little extent", while 6.0% respondents did not

see any inclusion in the legislations passed. Respondents were particularly impressed with the passage of some Bills. For example, about nine in ten (89%) of the respondents either rated the Not too Young to Run Bill as "highly commendable" or "commendable." Also, 76.7% respondents rated the Disabilities Bills as either "highly commendable" or "commendable"; and 11.9% as "somewhat commendable". These responses suggest that legislations driven by public or civil society agitations/advocacy naturally resonate with the citizens.

In terms of oversight, the 8th National Assembly was found to have excelled in some areas, but performed below expectations in some others. Whereas some Committees were found to be very active (as indicated by the number of meetings, oversight activities undertaken and Bills/Motions considered), a few others were moderately active, while the rest were relatively inactive. Among the active committees were Senate Committee on Appropriation, which held over 79 meetings (ranging between 9 and 36 per session), considered four (4) Bills and four (4) Motions. Its counterpart in the House of Representatives held over 300 regular hearings with MDAs. Additionally, it considered and wrote reports on the 2010–2014 Annual Reports of the Auditor General. It also cleared over 1,500 audit queries leading to recovery of over N40 Billion from defaulting MDAs. The Senate Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions was similarly active. It held 94 meetings and hearings to consider petitions referred to it (ranging from 39 to 47 per session). It concluded 139 petitions and laid 126 reports. It also held between two (2) and five (5) interactive sessions with MDAs per session and one (1) confirmation hearing. Other committees in this category include the Senate Committee on Local Content and the House Committee on Basic Education and Services.

Moderately active Committees include the Senate Committee on Women Affairs, which held several meetings and interactive sessions. It also held four (4) budget defence meetings with MDAs, initiated and moved several motions and conducted two (2) oversight visits; the Senate Committee on Poverty Alleviation, which held an average of one (1) meeting



per session, dealt with one (1) motion and considered three (3) Bills, which it successfully reported back on, but did not undertake any oversight visits; the House Committee on Public Petitions held a series of meetings and considered over 1000 petitions out of which it successfully concluded 187; House Committee on National Security and Intelligence, which for the 2018-2019 session held two (2) regular meetings, seven (7) interactive sessions and twelve (12) investigative sessions. It also dealt with twenty-three (23) Motions and two (2) Bills. Other Committees performed below average, with varying degrees of performance.

The 8th National Assembly performed fairly creditably in oversight as many of the Committees met international benchmarks on the required number of meetings and oversight activities (visits, hearings, referrals, investigations, etc.). However, some other Committees did not live up to expectation. Despite notable challenges, especially poor funding, the activities of some of the committees resulted in positive outcomes contributing to good governance.

The assessment of representation function portrays a mixed record. Positively, the 8th National Assembly was well-rated in the areas of landmark legislations passed aimed at promoting 'peace, order and good governance', inclusiveness, anti-corruption, etc. These include the Not Too Young to Run Act, the Disability Bill, the North East Development Commission Act, and amendments to the Federal Character Law to ensure balance, inclusion and fairness in governance. It was also well rated for oversight. These ratings translate into effective representation because the people are the primary beneficiaries of such legislative gestures.

However, the ratings are not as encouraging with respect to core components of representation such as visits and meetings with constituents, establishment and management of constituency offices, responses to constituents' demands, attraction and execution of constituency projects, and communication with constituents. The 8th National Assembly performed poorly and below expectations in these areas. There was

generally poor knowledge about the existence of constituency offices. But for the few who expressed awareness of such offices, their perception of functionality was damning. Access to these offices was rated to be poor. Performance in terms of attraction and execution of constituency projects was also poorly rated and generally considered to be below average in both chambers. It is either much was not done in this regard or limited or no awareness/publicity was created by the legislators about such interventions. But, the 8th National Assembly was rated to be responsive to constituents' demands in multiple forms either directly or indirectly through their aides or party leaders.

At the aggregate level, the overall assessment of representation was below average. The positive rating stands at 29.8% of the respondents ('excellent', 'very good' and 'good' combined); 34.0% as fair and another 34.0% as poor (a combination of 'very poor' and 'poor'). But if we take 'fair' as an indication of pass mark, then the positive assessment becomes a total of 63.8% of the respondents. When disaggregated, the rating across almost all indicators was a little better for the House of Representatives than the Senate.

The report has identified some of the challenges that hampered the performance of the 8th National Assembly. General challenges applicable to all legislative functions include inadequacy of resources, especially finance, high rate of legislative turnover, which affects legislative capacity and tensions in legislative-executive relations. Some others are specific to each legislative function. Specific challenges of legislation include a moribund Bills processing system/procedure that sometimes allowed bills to be passed into law without adequate scrutiny; a flawed system of reconciling differences between chambers (Constitution Alteration Bills passed with differences between chambers of the 8th National Assembly were never reconciled); undue delays in considering major legislations; introduction of huge number of bills, coupled with an abysmally low rate of passage; and a public hearing system that is still not robust enough to input public views into legislations.

For oversight, notable challenges include poor funding, which not only undermines public hearings and oversight visits, but also tends to encourage reliance on MDAs for financial assistance for oversight. The multiplicity of committees, purely for political exigencies and often with overlapping jurisdictions, also results in conflict and inefficiency. The large number of Committees ultimately affects funds available to individual committees. Yet the question of corruption was also an issue. The identified challenges of effective representation include the inability to effectively manage the weight of rising constituents' expectations and demand on the legislators, abiding stereotypes and misconceptions about legislative emoluments, including widespread perceptions that Nigerian legislators are the highest paid the world over; managing tensions between collective legislative interests and constituents interest; quality of staff (legislative aides); and poor level of citizen participation in the legislative process.

In the light of the foregoing, the following recommendations are considered imperative:

On law making:

1. To improve the quality of bills passed by the National Assembly, the NASS should entrench Pre-Legislative Scrutiny as a norm for all proposed legislations (whether executive or private member bills) except in circumstances where the legislation needs to be fast-tracked because of a national emergency or some other exceptional urgency. This way, legislative proposals will be enriched as a result of consultations with practitioners, experts and all other stakeholders, before they are introduced in the legislature.
2. The National Assembly should consider creating a Legislative Standards Committee to oversee the pre-legislative scrutiny process. The Committee will serve as a gateway through which all bills would have to pass for quality control in order to progress to first reading.
3. Proposed legislations must establish clear monitoring mechanisms of the

implementation of legislations, including mid-term review/evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the legislations in accomplishing their stipulated objectives.

4. The National Assembly should adopt electronic voting on bills and motions. Voting records should be available to members of the public on all NASS online and offline channels.
5. It is important for the National Assembly to maintain an updated open and accessible Bills Progression Chart to enable legislators, legislative aides and other stakeholders track or monitor progress of bills passage. The National Assembly should maintain an accessible database of assented and gazetted legislations passed by the legislature.

On Oversight:

6. Improve the quality of legislative oversight by establishing minimum benchmarks/targets for committee meetings and oversight work in line with the assembly's legislative agenda. Failure to meet those targets should attract sanctions.
7. Legislative committees should uphold the principles of integrity, professionalism, transparency and mutual respect in the performance of oversight functions.
8. More platforms for constructive engagements, both formal and informal, between the executive and the legislature should be created, nurtured and sustained.
9. NASS committees should work closely with civil society groups in performing their oversight functions. Civil society groups provide valuable resources and evidence for improving the quality of legislative oversight.
10. National Assembly should prioritise adequate funding for committees, which is pivotal to effective legislation and oversight. Further to this, the NASS should ensure transparency and accountability for funds allocated to committees.

On Representation and citizens participation:

11. The National Assembly needs to be more open and transparent in its relations with the citizens.
12. The NASS should collaborate with citizens groups to develop a framework for the conduct of public hearings in the National Assembly. Such a framework should establish standards for the conduct of public hearings to guide legislative committees.
13. Legislators should establish functional constituency offices that is not only accessible, but also well-staffed and equipped. The NASS leadership should compel legislators to provide periodic reports on constituents' engagement and constituency office management.
14. Legislators need to do more in terms of visits, meetings and communication with their constituents. Legislators should take advantage of technology and social media to give an account of their stewardship.

Constituents place high premium on these channels of communication in their order of significance: face-to-face, phone calls, SMS, online and letters.

15. More sensitisation of the electorate on the functions of lawmakers, as well as the imperative of their participation in the legislative processes is required.

Other recommendations include;

16. The NASS needs to improve the quality and capacity of legislators and legislative aides. No doubt, the National Assembly does not have control over the kind of people who get elected into it; but political parties and Nigerians do. The people should assume ownership for the election of their representatives, focusing on capacity, competence and character.
17. Prevailing high rate of legislative turnover in successive elections affects the quality of representation. Political parties, Senatorial Districts and Federal Constituencies should promote continuity of representatives who perform well.



CHAPTER 1

General Introduction





Background

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In the last ten years, international organizations have given a lot of attention to the role and place of Legislatures/Parliaments as vehicles for the promotion of good governance, accountability, transparency and national development. There is consensus among international organizations and donor agencies that countries with higher levels of good governance tend to also experience greater levels of socio-economic development. As well, it has been recognized that properly functioning legislatures are critical components of a country's good governance framework, especially if they are able to hold governments accountable for their policies and programs through their oversight functions. Additionally, it has been argued that the quality of a country's democracy and institutions is greatly improved if its legislatures are functioning properly.

The Legislature performs three broad and important functions in a democracy; law making, representation and oversight, which are essential to the promotion and sustenance of democracy, democratic institutions, good governance and accountability. If these roles are played effectively, the legislature can contribute immensely to the strengthening of state institutions, state capability, accountability and responsive governance. In practice, however, many legislatures across the world do not meet these important criteria, as some are mere rubber stamps of executive decisions. This is especially so in emerging democracies, although some developing legislatures make gallant efforts under very difficult circumstances, to represent different interests in society and in the process, hold the executives to account for their actions or inactions.

In Nigeria, the National Assembly, is the second of the trio—executive, legislative and judicial arms of government. Under normal circumstances, the arms of government are characterised by the principle of separation of powers, because each is supposed to be independent of the other. Nigeria's National Assembly derives its powers and functions

from the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic. Sections 4(1) and 4(2) specifically vest it with the power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation. It does this through the exercise of not only its law-making powers but also its oversight and representative functions.

The 8th National Assembly was inaugurated on 9th June 2015, following its Proclamation by President Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC) who had earlier won the presidential elections and was sworn-in on May 29, 2015. From its inception, the 8th National Assembly experienced a debilitating leadership crisis following the unexpected emergence of Senator Bukola Saraki as Senate President, against the wishes of the APC leadership, whose desired candidate was outmanoeuvred. As the crisis lingered, it paralysed the work of the Assembly including the approval of nominees of the President. The new leadership of the National Assembly spent a considerable amount of time trying to establish its legitimacy and authority, which also adversely affected its work. The net result was the fractionalization of APC

legislators between those who backed the new Senate President and those who supported the President and upheld the supremacy of the party.

Tension between the leadership of the National Assembly and the Executive arm circumscribed the work of the 8th National Assembly, as their relations remained frosty until the Senate President and Speaker of the House later decamped to the opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), a few months to the 2019 elections. Matters were further complicated when the Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki, was arraigned before the Code of Conduct Tribunal on the allegation of false asset declaration. The 'trial' that ensued led to serious tension and disagreement between the two arms of government, which delayed the passage of the budget, spawned dispute over the power of appropriation as well as Senate's refusal to confirm the appointment of Ibrahim Magu as the Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), among others.

Despite these challenges, however, the 8th National Assembly will arguably go down in history as one of the most proactive, given the sheer volume of its legislative outputs and related activities. For instance, both Senate and the House developed and adopted Legislative Agendas and calendar that guided their activities during the four-year life of the Assembly. During this period, there was also a marked increase in the number of Private Members' Bills that were successfully introduced and passed. One of the unforgettable pieces of legislation passed by

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the 8th Assembly was the Not Too Young Run Bill, which reduced the age for those seeking elective seats in the National and State Houses of Assembly, for offices of President and vice President, Governor and Deputy Governor. This epoch-making piece of legislation made it possible for young people between the ages of 25 and 30 years to participate actively in the 2019 elections.

It is against these background and dynamics that the YIAGA undertook the research project: an assessment of the 8th National Assembly, focusing on its constitutionally mandated roles of law-making, oversight and representation functions. The research sought to determine the performance of the 8th National Assembly, the challenges it faced in carrying out these functions and the nature of executive-legislative relations during this period. It also explored measures that the 8th National Assembly adopted to improve its performance as well as its relationship with other arms of government, particularly the Executive.

Objectives of the Research

A legislature that does its job well can contribute significantly to democratic governance. It is important therefore to understand how a legislature works and its processes and procedures. This is even more important given the long history of military rule in Nigeria, which has made the legislature the weakest link in the governance architecture. The study was predicated on the recognition of the need

for more serious empirical study rather than merely an impressionistic assessment of the legislature. Similarly, the study focused on the core functions of the National Assembly, as well as the perception of citizens on its performance.

The broad objective of the study, therefore, is to carry out a detailed assessment of the

performance of the 8th Assembly from its inauguration in May 2015 to the end of its tenure in April 2019. The specific objectives are, to:

1. assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in discharging its constitutional mandate of law-making, oversight and representation;
2. evaluate the extent to which the 8th National Assembly has adhered to its legislative agenda and calendar;
3. examine and document the challenges that may have undermined the performance of the 8th National Assembly;
4. assess public perception of the 8th National Assembly and evaluate the extent to which such perceptions influenced citizens' participation in legislative activities such as public hearings, oversight visits, interactive sessions, etc.;
5. evaluate the extent to which the 8th National Assembly passed legislations and made Resolutions that are inclusive and determine factors responsible for them; and
6. produce a report for public presentation and consideration of stakeholders

Photo: Wikipedia



The specific research questions are as follows:

1. What laws have the 8th National Assembly made with regards to: the Peace, Order; and Good government of the Federation?
2. How has the 8th National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives) performed relative to the legislative agendas of both chambers?
3. What were the nature and extent of the challenges the 8th National Assembly faced and what measures were taken to prevent a reoccurrence?
4. What were the underlying causes of the Executive – National Assembly friction and what measures were instituted to prevent a reoccurrence and/or to improve future relations, from the 9th National Assembly?
5. How successful was the 8th National Assembly in passing inclusive legislations and what factors accounted for this?
6. How did the public perceive the 8th National Assembly with regards to the discharge of its constitutionally mandated responsibilities?



Research Questions

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5. How successful was the 8th National Assembly in passing inclusive legislations and what factors accounted for this?
6. How did the public perceive the 8th National Assembly with regards to the discharge of its constitutionally mandated responsibilities?



Scope of and population of Study

The study covered the period from June 2015 when the 8th National Assembly was inaugurated to the end of its tenure in May 2019, a period of four years. It is noteworthy that while some Senators and Members were re-elected from the 7th National Assembly, others were not so fortunate and were replaced by a new crop of legislators, who may not be familiar with the legislative procedures or activities of the legislative chamber. The Senate and the House of Representatives, with a combined total of 469 members comprising 109 Senators and 360 Members of the House of

Representatives are referred to as the “Red Chamber”, and the “Green Chamber” respectively. Three (3) Senators are drawn from each of the 36 states of the federation, one per Senatorial District, irrespective of the population or geographical size of a state, and one from the Federal Capital, Abuja. Representation in the House of Representatives on the other hand is based on population of a state.

Methodology

The study utilised descriptive qualitative and quantitative research design. It also utilized data from both secondary and primary sources. Secondary data was sourced from committee reports (sessional and legacy reports), records of proceedings, Hansards and other official documents of the National Assembly, published or unpublished, other publications, both from the National Assembly and other outside sources. The primary data was generated from in-depth interviews; survey using structured questionnaires and Focus Group Discussions (FGD).

Study Population

Specifically, a total of 1584 survey questionnaires were administered in 12 randomly selected states (2 states per geo-political zone) and 2 constituencies per state (1 Senatorial District and 1 Federal Constituency per state), as shown in Table 1.1.

S/N	Geopolitical Zone	State	Senatorial District (SD)	Population of SD	No. of Registered Voters	Sample Distri.	Federal Constituency	Population of Federal Constituency	No. of Registered Voters	Sample Distri.
1	NC	Niger	Niger East	2000000	998481	66	Kontagora/Wushishi/Mariga/Mashegu	911199	377812	66
2	NC	Plateau	Plateau South	1187000	671209	66	Barikin Iadi/Riyom	408100	190898	66
3	NE	Gombe	Gombe North	1441600	586792	66	Yamaitu/Debba	352200	181054	66
4	NE	Adamawa	Adamawa Central	1666900	812759	66	Miaha/Mubi North/Mubi South	523400	259099	66
5	NW	Kaduna	Kaduna South	1267800	972271	66	Kaduna North	492100	352257	66
6	NW	Jigawa	Jigawa South West	1957300	716023	66	Babura/Garki	485400	177654	66
7	SE	Abia	Abia Central	1149800	675966	66	Aba North/South	699900	498390	66
8	SE	Ebonyi	Ebonyi Central	856500	458546	66	Afikpo North/Afikpo South	415700	181411	66
9	SS	Bayelsa	Bayelsa West	610000	234649	66	Yenagoa/Opokuma	576700	252660	66
10	SS	Cross River	Cross River South	1590200	603575	66	Yakurr/Abi	455200	150657	66
11	SW	Osun	Osun West	1717100	522615	66	Obokun/Oriade	365200	100576	66
12	SW	Lagos	Lagos East	2635600	1225841	66	Surulere 1	692500	387889	66
	Total			18079800	8478727	792	0	6377599	3110357	792

Table 1.1: Distribution of Sample population for the Survey in 12 Randomly Sampled States

Furthermore, in-depth interviews were held with the leadership of the National Assembly, 24 legislators (from the 12 states – 1 Senator and 1 Member to be randomly selected) and Chairmen of twelve (12) selected Committees (5 Senate and 7 House). The selected Committees for the study in the Senate are: Appropriation, Ethics and Privileges, Local Content, Women Affairs and Poverty and Alleviation. Those in the House or Representatives are: Public Petition, Public Account, Youth Development, Constituency Outreach, Education, Security and Anti-corruption.

In addition to the interviews, structured survey questionnaires were administered to Clerks of the 12 Committees and senior legislative aides (SLAs) to the Committee Chairmen and other National Assembly bureaucrats.

Also, to generate complementary data, 10 Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) sessions were conducted at the national level, in the Federal Capital Territory, (FCT), Abuja. The constituencies or citizen categories with which

the FGDs were held are as follows:

- Civil Society Organizations
- Civil servants
- Disability groups
- Market groups
- Community groups
- Faith-based groups
- Youth and students' groups
- Labour organisations
- Professional Bodies (ASUU, NBA, Medical Associations, NUJ)
- Media groups

The size of each Group was between 8 and 12 participants.

Data Collection

The instruments (interview schedule and survey questionnaire) were developed by the research team and administered by selected and trained research assistants and experts from YIAGA's existing pool. Experts identified by YIAGA AFRICA CLE conducted interviews and FGDs. Secondary data was collected by two (2) consultants from the National Assembly as well as other sources identified (e.g. NILDS).

Data Analysis

The instruments (interview schedule and survey questionnaire) were developed by the research team and administered by selected and trained research assistants and experts from YIAGA's existing pool. Experts identified by YIAGA AFRICA CLE conducted interviews and FGDs. Secondary data was collected by two (2) consultants from the National Assembly as well as other sources identified (e.g. NILDS).

The analysis was done thematically, as follows:

Oversight Functions

Under this theme, the focus was on:

1. The number of oversight activities of the selected committees by sessions; meetings, oversight visits, bill referrals, public hearings,

investigative hearings, screening of government nominees, interactive sessions with Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies, MDAs, Questions, etc.;

- 2. Public petitions; constituents;
- 3. Outputs and outcomes of oversight activities of the selected committees; 4. Constituency/Zonal Intervention Projects and their locations;
- 4. Use and misuse of oversight functions, the impact of legislative oversight on the quality of governance and public service delivery; and 5. Constituency visits, frequency of visits and interactions with constituents/community leaders and
- 5. Public perceptions of oversight functions. 6. Public confidence in representation and public perceptions of representatives.

Legislation

Under the legislative functions, the following, among others, were subjected to rigorous analysis:

- 1. Total number of Bills Received;
- 2. Executive Bills;
- 3. Private Members' Bills;
- 4. Bills Transmitted from Senate for Concurrence (Received);
- 5. Bills that were given first, second and readings;
- 6. Bills withdrawn;
- 7. Bills Passed;
- 8. Relevance of Bills/and Laws passed

Representation

Under representation, focus was on the following:

- 1. Presence and functionality of constituency of Presence and functionality of constituency offices;
- 2. Quality of staff (aides) and services available/offered at constituency offices;
- 3. Accessibility of constituency offices to

Expected Outputs/Outcomes

The specified expected outputs and outcome of this study, which have now been successfully produced are as follows:

- 1. Detailed and authoritative report on the overall performance of the 8th National Assembly;
- 2. Advocacy resources for civil society organisations and the interested public on the roles and functions of the National Assembly as an instrument of democratic governance and oversight in Nigeria;
- 3. Thorough analysis and discussion on the 8th National Assembly's successes and challenges in its four-year life span;
- 4. Better understanding of factors that determined and influenced the legislative, oversight and representation performances of the 8th National Assembly;
- 5. Improved understanding of the legislative processes and functions of the National Assembly by the citizens;
- 6. Enhanced understanding of legislative advocacy and processes during the 8th National Assembly, and in particular, how YIAGA-AFRICA was able to execute both its Vision and Mandate, through its advocacy activities in the 8th National Assembly to get the Not Too Young To Run Bill passed in the run up to the 2019 elections.



Duration of the Study

The study was conducted from April to August 2019. It commenced with a Methodology workshop, which brought together the Principal Researcher, the Team of researchers and key staff of YIAGA AFRICA CLE, and reviewed in details the Concept Note and proposal for the study and planned the subsequent sequential execution of the study: development of the research instruments; the selection and training of Research Assistants; the selection of sample population and sample sizes; the conduct of the survey, interviews and FGDs; the analysis of data and the production of the final of the study.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One comprises the General Introduction, which outlines and presents the objectives, rationale, justification and methodology of the study. Chapter Two reviews and analyses in details the law-making functions and activities of the 8th National Assembly. Chapter Three reviews and analyses National Assembly's Oversight functions and activities, while Chapter Four reviews, analyses and critiques the Representation functions and activities. Chapter Five summarises and draws conclusion for the study.



CHAPTER 2

**An Assessment of the Law-
Making Functions and Activities
of the 8th National Assembly**





Introduction

Photo: Sahara Reporters

Section 4, subsection (2) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria vests legislative powers in the National Assembly, to be exercised by the Senate and House of Representatives 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” of the Constitution. Additionally, the National Assembly is empowered to make laws with respect to any matter in the Concurrent Legislative List set out in the first column of Part II of the Second Schedule to the Constitution and any other matter with respect to which it is entitled to make laws in accordance with the Constitution.

The National Assembly fulfils its constitutional mandate of law making through the instrumentality of Legislative Bills as stipulated by the Constitution. Hence, bills are therefore essential in the discharge of the law-making duty of the legislature as well as in assessing its performance both in terms of volume and quality.

This section explores what underlying data from the National Assembly and citizens’ views reveal about legislative performance in the 8th National Assembly in terms of patterns and trends. It also makes recommendations on how legislative performance could be improved.



Origin Of Bills And Overview Of The Legislative Process In The National Assembly

Bills principally originate from either the executive, members of the legislature, interest groups/civil society organisations or the judiciary.

Procedure

The President of the Senate or Speaker of the House of Representatives would usually refer a member’s bill to the Rules and Business Committee to schedule for first reading. If it is an executive bill, once it is received, the Presiding Officer of the House concerned similarly forwards it to the Rules and Business Committee.

Notices and Stages of Bills

Stage One

On the receipt of a bill, the Senate President sends it to the Committee on Rules and Business. This Committee examines the bill to determine whether it meets all the standards in draft and presentation. If it does not, the bill is sent to the Legal Department of the National Assembly for re-drafting and further advice. After this, the Committee sends the bill for gazetting. Executive bills are gazetted or published in the Senate Journal once, while those introduced by Members are published three times before they can be presented to the Senate for consideration.

¹Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 CAP C23, LFN, 2004.

²Section 4 (a) and (b) of the 1999 Constitution.

³Section 58 (1) of the Constitution stipulates that “the power of the National Assembly to make laws shall be exercised by bills passed by both the Senate and House of Representatives and, except as otherwise provided by subsection (5) of this section, assented to by the President”.

Stage Two

First, Second and Third Reading

The Clerk of the Senate reads the bills scheduled on the Senate Calendar (a schedule indicating the day and the time each bill will receive reading). She/he reads the short title of the bill for the first reading and then proceeds to “table” it.

The Second Reading is the period when debate occurs on the bill. Debate commences with a motion by the Senate Leader that the bill is read the second time if it is an Executive Bill. If it were a Member’s Bill, the sponsor of the bill would move the motion that it is read the second time. Such member would usually highlight the objectives, general principles and subject matter of the bill as well as the benefits the bill will engender if passed into law. If the Senate agrees to the motion, the Clerk will read the long title of the bill. Immediately thereafter, Members must signify their intention to speak on the bill. Two things could occur at this stage:

1. The bill may receive the support of the majority of the Senate and be allowed to move on to the next stage. Once it gets the needed support, it moves to the Committee stage.
2. The bill may be “Negatived” (killed) if it does not get the support of the majority of the Senate Members. When a bill is killed, it is taken off the table and cannot be discussed until it is re-introduced at a later date.

After the debate on the general principles of the bill, it is referred to the appropriate Standing Committee. Such Committee would thoroughly examine all aspects of the bill - clause-by-clause and point-by-point. It may also organise public hearings on the bill. While the public can make suggestions on any aspect of the bill, only a Member of the Committee can propose amendment to the bill. All amendments must be in line with, and relevant to the principle and the subject matter of the bill agreed to at the second reading stage.

After the committee has concluded its work, it will report back to the Senate in plenary with or without amendments. Thereafter, the

Clerk of the Senate/House of Representatives prepares a clean copy of the bill.

After the report of the Committee and the deliberation of the Committee of the Whole Senate, a motion may be moved that the bill be read the third time either immediately or at a later date and passed after each chamber has certified the contents of the clean copy to be accurate. Generally, no amendment can be entertained after the third reading stage. However, if a Member wishes to amend or delete a provision contained in the bill or to introduce a new provision, they must give notice of their intention “that the bill be re-committed” before the motion for the third reading is moved. .

Stage Three

When a bill has been read the third time and passed, a clean printed copy of it, incorporating all amendments will be produced, signed by the Clerk, and endorsed by the Senate President. The copy will then be forwarded to the Clerk of the Senate. The copy will be accompanied with a message requiring the concurrence (passage of the bill or agreement) of the House of Representatives. In the case of the Executive bill, both chambers will exchange copies of the bill since they usually both receive copies and discuss the bill concurrently.

When a bill is sent to the House of Representatives for concurrence, three things may happen:

1. It may agree with the entire provisions of the bill and pass it.
2. It may disagree to parts of the bill; hence, it may make amendments.
3. It may reject the bill in its entirety. This situation is however rare and has never been witnessed in Nigeria.

***Note that the above stage three scenario would be exactly replicated if the Senate were the receiving Chamber.**

In the event of (ii) above, if only minor changes are made to a bill by the other chamber, usually

the legislation goes back to the originating chamber for a concurring vote. However, when the House and Senate versions of the bill contain significant and/or numerous differences, a conference committee is officially appointed to reconcile the differences between the two different versions into a single bill.

Joint Conference Committee

The remit of the Committee is usually to harmonise the differences between the two chambers on the bill. The joint Conference Committee is precluded from introducing any new matter into the bill. The decision of the committee on areas of differences is binding on both chambers. Subsequently, the report of the Joint Conference Committee is presented in both Chambers for consideration. If both Chambers adopt the report, all the original papers are sent to the Clerk of the Chamber where the bill originated. The Clerk puts together all the amendments and produces a clean copy of the bill, which is sent to the Clerk of the National Assembly, who in turn, transmits it to President for assent.

Stage Four - Presidential Assent

Even if a bill enjoys broad support and acceptance in the legislature, it cannot become law unless assented to by the President. Once the Clerk of the National Assembly "enrols" the bill for the President's signature, the President has thirty (30) days to sign the bill. Where the President withholds or neglects to signify assent, the two Chambers can recall the bill and re-pass it. If the bill is passed in the form it was sent to the President by two-third majority vote in both Chambers, the bill automatically becomes a law.

Timelines

There are no established timelines for the completion of the various stages outlined. It is also almost impossible to indicate a timeline for the different stages of the process. As every Bill is usually considered on case-by-case basis, the pace and fate of bill's passage depend on the degree of consensus among the major players – legislators and the President. If the major players agree, the bill moves quickly and stands a good chance of becoming law.

The 8th National Assembly: What The Data Shows



2166

Bills Introduced



515

Bills Passed



15

Bills Withdrawn



33

Bills Negated



80

Bills Assented



53

Bills Declined Assent

Source: Underlying data from Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Rules & Business

Since inauguration in June 2015, out of 2166 Bills introduced, the 8th National Assembly passed 515 pieces of legislation, including 21 Constitution Alteration Bills – 5 of which received presidential assent, as well as other major bills such as the North East Development Commission Bill, Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit Bill, National Minimum Wage Bill and several money bills. Of all those Bills, 53 have been declined Presidential assent and only about 80 (15.5%) received assent although several Bills are still awaiting assent at the time of writing. However, it must be noted that data on the number of Bills transmitted to the President for assent was not available. Also, we were unable to get and analyse the records of both chambers of the 8th National Assembly to determine the extent of debate on the floor of each chamber that was devoted to each Bill.

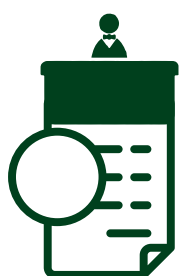
and House of Representatives Committees on Rules and Business respectively, the 8th Senate passed a total of 172 bills while the House of Representatives passed 343 bills within the same period. Over the same period, 15 Bills were withdrawn while 33 were negatived.

For the period under review, the efficiency percentage was 23.8% of all Bills introduced that were successfully passed by the 8th National Assembly. This is calculated by dividing the number of bills introduced by the number of bills adopted during the 4 years of the 8th Assembly. There is a marked increase in the number of bills introduced and passed in the 8th Assembly compared to the 7th National Assembly. In the 7th National Assembly, 205 Bills were passed out of a total of 1367 introduced.

According to underlying data from the Senate

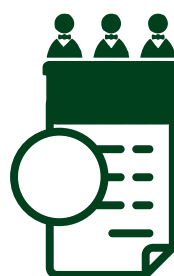
Table 2.2: Number of Private Members' Bills; Executive Bills Introduced In The 8th National Assembly
 Data for 2019 is for first six months of the year. **Source:** Underlying data from Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Rules & Business

YEAR	PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS		EXECUTIVE BILLS	
	Senate	House of Representatives	Senate	House of Representatives
2015/2016	403	729	7	49
2017	176	329	5	9
2018	118	296	9	8
2019	20	4	2	
TOTAL	717	1358	23	68



**Private
Members
Bills**

Senate
717
House of Reps
1,358



**Executive
Bills**

Senate
23
House of Reps
68

Interestingly, 95.8% of bills introduced during the 8th Assembly were Private Members' Bills. This dynamism in bills sponsorship by legislators can be predicated on years of unbroken democratic

governance and accumulation of institutional memory, which tremendously enhanced the law-making capacity of legislators in terms of expertise. However, it must be stated that

while all Non-Executive Bills are generally classified as Private Member Bills because legislators sponsored them, some of those bills were actually initiated by Professional Associations and Civil Society Organisations. Some of those bills include the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Fourth Alteration) Bill, No. 27, 2017 (Not Too Young To Run Bill), Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Bill, Quantity Surveyors (Registration, etc.) (Amendment) Bill, and Compulsory Treatment and Care for Victims of Gunshots Bill. One inference that could be drawn from this is that civil society organisations have had a significant impact on law-making efficiency in the 8th Assembly. More so, it underscores the 8th Assembly's positive disposition to participatory law-making.

The data also reveals that the House of Representatives accounted for 65% of all the Private Member Bills received by the 8th Assembly. This is not unsurprising given that members of the lower chamber of the National Assembly make up the vast majority of Nigeria's bi-cameral legislature.

YEAR	NO. OF BILLS INTRODUCED	NO. OF BILLS PASSED	NO. OF BILLS REJECTED	NO. OF BILLS WITHDRAWN	EFFICIENCY PERCENTAGE
2015/2016	1188	120	13	4	10.1
2017	519	91	11	3	17.5
2018	431	143	5	3	33.2
2019	28	161	3	3	575

Table 2.3: Legislation Activity & Efficiency In The 8th National Assembly
In the Table, 2015/2016 covers a period of 16 months while 2019 is only for the first six months of the year.
Source: Underlying data from Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Rules & Business

During the 4 years of the 8th National Assembly, on average, 541 bills were introduced, and 129 bills were passed per year. This undoubtedly reflects high performance. Nevertheless, this is averaged over a period of 4 years and individual years do not reflect the same level of efficiency.

In the Legislation Activity & Efficiency table above, there are years when more bills are introduced than others. Post-election years have a higher volume as citizens and pressure groups exert pressure on the legislature to legislate and implement all the policies it had promised to the electorate in its election manifesto.

Clearly, fewer bills are introduced during election year. This is due to a significant portion of the year being lost to campaigning, elections, induction and swearing-in of new legislators. Apparently, legislators held off introducing bills during election year as the chances of such bills being considered are slim. This is not at par with the number of bills passed during an election year as there is usually a rush to pass all existing bills ahead of a national election. This

is apparent in 2019 – the 8th Assembly's work efficiency increased during this year as both chambers of the National Assembly passed more bills than were introduced.

The data also shows a wide gap between the number of bills introduced and bills passed in the 8th National Assembly. This is indicative of inefficiency in the legislature and factors that might have accounted for the relatively poor returns include delays in the processing of bills, lack of technical capacity in certain committees, partisanship and lack/loss of interest by the sponsor of the bill or interest group advocating for the bill's passage. That notwithstanding, sometimes it is unclear whether a higher number is a positive indicator of efficiency or otherwise. For instance, the large number of executive bills passed in the 8th Assembly may indicate greater legislative effectiveness. On the other hand, it may be a result of less deliberation on each or some of the bills and could be construed as the legislature being unable to properly scrutinise legislative proposals.

At any rate, the legislature's effectiveness

is undermined by the unduly high ratio of bills introduced to bills passed and this ultimately perpetuates citizen's poor perception of lawmakers. Moreover, it is imperative that the number of bills introduced in the legislature is proportionate to the capacity of the legislature to process it.



PERIODS FOR PASSAGE OF BILLS (DAYS)	NO. OF BILLS	% OVER TOTAL
1 - 50	47	9.1
51 - 100	14	2.7
101 - 150	12	2.3
151 - 200	80	15.5
201 - 250	41	7.9
251 - 300	23	4.5
301 - 350	27	5.2
351+	271	52.6

Table 2.4: Bills Passed By The 8th Assembly/Actual & Percentage Distribution Of Gestation Periods
 The figures above are calculated from the date the bill was introduced into the legislature to the date the bill was passed including weekends, public holidays, constituency days and recess periods.
 Source: Underlying data from Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Rules & Business

Although a bill should, averagely, take less than six months to pass, our data reveals that out of the 515 bills passed in the 8th National Assembly, only 47 (9.1%) were passed within fifty days, while a whopping 271 (52.6%) took over 351 days to pass. Furthermore, 14 Bills were passed within 100 days, 12 within 150 days, 80 within 200 days, 41 within 250 days, 23 within 300 days and 27 within 350 days. Notably, most of the Bills passed within 50 days were either executive bills or, of emergency nature.

Because bills vastly differ in complexity and political tone, they are given to varying periods of passage. Nevertheless, our analysis shows that the days between introduction and passage of a bill were fewer in the later days of the 8th National Assembly. But even as it is desirable to ensure timely passage of bills, sometimes passage of bills within a short span of time deprives legislators of sufficient time to examine bills in detail and leaves little scope for robust consultations with stakeholders. It invariably makes the law-making process predisposed to the pressures of government expediency and politics.

Because societal problems need to be solved or addressed quickly and effectively, there was great concern about the delay in the passage of bills in the 8th National Assembly, particularly those bills with the potential to address critical national issues.

Several factors could be identified to have impeded the law-making process in the 8th National Assembly. They include the lack of individual capacity amongst legislators to conceive and craft robust legislations to address issues of national importance, the pervasive lack of executive-legislative cordiality and synergy during the 8th Assembly, undue executive interference in the activities of the legislature, overwhelming committee workload (while certain committees were frequently processing bills, some other committees had no legislations on their schedules at all), and the lack of openness, inclusiveness and transparency in the law-making process. Box 1 below summarises the possible hindrances to efficient legislation in the 8th National Assembly.

⁵Creelan & Moulton emphasised this stating that - "An efficient legislature produces legislation for the governor's signature without unnecessary delays, unduly high ratios of bills introduced to bills passed, or unnecessary barriers to final passage of a single bill by both Chambers". See, Creelan J.M & Moulton L.M. (2004). *The New York State Legislative Process: An Evaluation and Blueprint for Reform*. Brennan Centre for Justice at NYU School of Law. Retrieved from https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/d/albanyreform_finalreport.pdf

⁶Hamalai L., Dan-Azumi J., & Gbahabo T. (2019) 16 Years of Law Making 4th -7th National Assembly: An analysis of Bills Processed. *National Institute of Legislative and Democratic Studies*. Pg. 35

⁷Chakshu R. *Why Speedy Legislation in Parliament is not Good for Democracy*. CNBC January 10, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.prsindia.org/media/articles-by-prs-team/why-speedy-legislation-parliament-not-good-democracy>

BOX 1: FACTORS THAT HINDERED EFFICIENT LEGISLATION



- Lack of capacity and interest amongst legislators
- Executive Control
- Poor Executive-Legislative relationship/synergy
- Procedures that allow bills to be passed into law without adequate review
- Lack of coordination/dysfunctional Harmonization/Reconciliation process between the two chambers
- Lack of openness and public input into proposed legislations
- Nature and subject matter of the bill i.e., whether it is an executive or private member bill and whether the issues addressed in the bill are controversial or sectional
- Competing priorities
- Partisanship
- Overburdened Committees
- Loss of interest by Bill sponsor or interest groups



Extent of Assessment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To a large extent	119	14.4%
To some extent	856	53.9%
To a little extent	409	25.8%
Not at all	95	6.0%
Total	1588	100.0%

Table 2.5: Distribution Of Respondents On The Extent Of How Legislation Passed By 8th National Assembly Promoted Peace, Order And Good Governance

We sought the views of the general public on how they will rate the 8th National Assembly in its law-making function, particularly regarding the extent to which legislations passed fulfilled the constitutional mandate of promoting peace, order and good governance. Of the 2,910 respondents who evaluated the 8th Assembly on this vital role, nearly half (46.0%) said the 8th Assembly had performed “averagely” while 32.7% rated the 8th Assembly’s law-making function as “above average”. A few others i.e. 8.6% said the 8th Assembly had performed “excellently” with 12.7% saying it had performed “below average”.

Table 5 shows that about nine in ten of the respondents believed that the 8th National Assembly has passed legislations and made resolutions that are inclusive. In particular, 14.4% respondents considered the legislations to be inclusive “To a large extent;” 53.9% “To some extent;” 25.8% “To a little extent” while 6.0% respondents did not see any inclusion in the legislations passed.

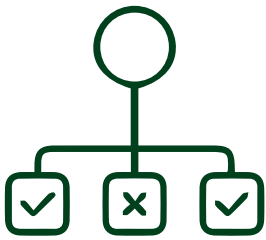
However, there were only 25.3% respondents

that had knowledge of various bills passed by the 8th National Assembly. Some of the bills identified included: the Minimum Wage Bill; Not Too Young To Run Bill; People with Disability Bill; Child Protection Bill; Local Government Autonomy Bill; Electoral Act Reform Bill; Grazing Bill; Public Procurement Bill; Basic Health Care Bill; Bill on Prompt Treatment of Accident Victims. Others include: Judicial System Protection Amendment Act; Whistle Blower Protection Bill; Petroleum Industry Bill; Nigerian Financial Intelligence Bill; Bankruptcy And Insolvency Act; Abolition Of Dichotomy Between HND and Degrees Bill; Agricultural Loan Bill; Nigerian Railways Authority Bill; Public Treasury Bill; Police Act Amendment; Digital Rights Bill; Bill Against Sexual Harassment of Students in Tertiary Institutions; Bill On the Removal of Age Limit in Employment; Federal Audit Service Commission Bill; Local Industry Bill; Peace Corps Bill; Bill on Test for HIV Status Before Marriage; and Girl Child Marriage Bill.

Regarding the Not Too Young to Run and People with Disabilities Bills, Tables 6 and 7 shows the opinion of respondents on the bills. Specifically,

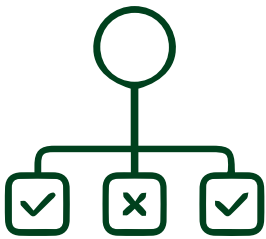
for the Not too Young to Run bill, about nine in ten (89%) of the respondents either rated the bill as “highly commendable” or “commendable” compared to less than 2% who rated the bill as “somewhat commendable” or indifferent (no comment). For the People with Disabilities Bill, 46.5% respondents rated the bill as “highly commendable;” 30.2% as “commendable;” 11.9% as “somewhat commendable;” 3.3%

respondents had no comment on the passage of the bill. As such, despite the disconnect between citizens` expectations of the legislature and legislators` perception of their roles and responsibilities, these responses suggest that legislations driven by public or civil society agitations/advocacy naturally resonate with citizens.



Opinion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly Commendable	936	58.8%
Commendable	480	30.2%
Somewhat Commendable	132	8.3%
No Comment	44	2.8%
Total	1592	100.0%

Table 2.6: Respondents Opinion On The Passage Of Not Too Young To Run Bill



Opinion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly Commendable	740	46.5%
Commendable	609	38.3%
Somewhat Commendable	189	11.9%
No Comment	53	3.3%
Total	1591	100.0%

Table 2.7: Respondents Opinion On The Passage Of People With Disabilities Bill

To recap, the 8th National Assembly successfully passed wide ranging legislations to strengthen the legal framework to support security agencies to tackle crime, terrorism and other national security challenges, curb corruption by instituting structures and mechanisms that enhance transparency and accountability in governance, consolidate democratic gains by ensuring free and fair elections and expanding the political space, stimulate economic development by removing legal obstacles to business and help bolster private sector participation in the economy, as well as inclusive legislations aimed at ending discrimination against minority groups and people living with disability. Although it is rather early to measure the impact of those bills that are operational having received presidential

assent, it is fitting to argue that they possess huge potentials to impact positively on governance and the welfare of all Nigerians.

The record number of bills passed by the 8th Assembly must also be viewed against the overwhelming contextual constraints that characterised the Assembly. In that case, any assessment of the performance of the 8th Assembly must take cognisance of the technical, constitutional and political constraints under which it operates – for example, the frosty relationship with the Executive arm that pervaded the entire life of the Assembly. Also, the fact that a large number of legislators were first timers should not be ignored. And while it was difficult to examine the depth of scrutiny of the laws that were passed, the 8th



Assembly has shown a degree of candour unusual in Nigeria's legislative experience by reviewing legislative proposals to address shortcomings where gaps are identified, even by the executive it was at loggerheads with. This was exemplified in the case of the Electoral Act (Amendment) Bill, which was reviewed and passed three times to address certain concerns and objections raised by the President. In addition, the preponderance of private members' bills is indicative of not only legislative enthusiasm but also of increasing legislative activism and independence.

Nonetheless, legislative efficiency in the 8th National Assembly was undermined by a moribund bills processing system/procedure that sometimes allow bills to be passed into law without adequate scrutiny, a flawed system of reconciling differences between chambers (Constitution Alteration Bills passed with differences between chambers of the 8th Assembly were never reconciled), undue delays in considering major legislations, introduction of huge number of bills coupled with an abysmally low rate of passage and a public hearing system that is still not robust enough to input public views into legislations.

To a large extent, the dearth of cordiality between the leadership of the 8th Assembly and the Executive impeded efficient law making, particularly regarding money bills, electoral reform bills and presidential assent. There is a need for improved relations and robust

coordination between the legislature and the executive. While such a relationship should not be devoid of disagreements, it should involve cooperation, constructive criticism, and frequent reporting to facilitate the law-making process and manage expectations.

Legislative proposals were often produced in a hurry, without adequate consultation with stakeholders. Many bills fail or are abandoned because they were ill-designed due to scant knowledge of the issues involved and inadequate pre-legislative scrutiny. The National Assembly needs to entrench Pre-Legislative Scrutiny as the norm for all proposed legislations (whether executive or private member bills) save in circumstances where the legislation needs to be fast-tracked because of a national emergency or some other exceptional urgency. This way, legislative proposals will be enriched as a result of consultations with practitioners, experts and all other stakeholders, before it is introduced in the legislature. A Legislative Standards Committee should be created to oversee the pre-legislative scrutiny process. The Committee will serve as a gateway through which all bills would have to pass for quality control in order to progress to first reading.

Finally, proposed legislations must establish clear monitoring mechanisms of the implementation of legislations, including mid-term review/evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the legislations in accomplishing their stipulated objectives.

CHAPTER 3

**An Assessment of the Oversight
Functions and Activities of Key
Committees In the 8th National
Assembly**

Committees have become central to the functioning of modern parliaments. They serve as smaller units through which parliament exercises its control and oversight over the executive. In many cases, committees are created to mirror government ministries and departments in the executive which they oversee. They do this by deploying a number of instruments including oversight visits, public and investigative hearings, interactive sessions, questions, referrals and public petitions. Thus, committees have been termed the engine rooms of the legislature.

In this section, the activities of select committees from both the Senate and the House of Representatives in the 8th Assembly are reviewed to assess their performance. The scope of activities assessed includes meetings and use of specific oversight tools. The assessment is done on two levels: (i) outputs – i.e. the number of meetings held and oversight activities undertaken and (ii) outcomes – direct results of the activities conducted by the Committees, i.e. the effect that the Committees’ activities in terms of improving order, security and good governance in Nigeria.



Senate Committees

Committee On Appropriation

Pursuant to the Senate Standing Rule 98 (10) 2015 as amended, the Committee has the mandate to exercise legislative jurisdiction on the following areas: (i) appropriation of revenue for the support of the government; (ii) issuance of call letters/circulars on Appropriation (Budget); (iii) annual Appropriations Bill; (iv) Supplementary Appropriation Bill; (v) all other matters related to Appropriation (Budgetary Matters); and (vi) annual budget estimates.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	12	36	21	9
Oversight Visits	0	0	0	0
Public Hearings	1	1	1	1
Investigative Hearings	0	0	0	0
Bill referrals	1	1	1	1
Other Referrals	0	0	0	0
Screening of government nominees	0	0	0	0
Interactive sessions with MDAs	1	1	1	1
Questions	0	0	0	0
Public Petitions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.1: Oversight Activities of the Senate Committee on Appropriation (2015-2019)
Source: Sessional Reports of the Committee

The Committee held seventy-nine (79) meetings during the period of the report and deliberated on matters referred to it by the Senate (12, 21, 36 and 9 respectively for the four sessions, 2015-2019).

Referrals (Bills)

Four Bills were referred to the Committee as follows:

- 2015 Supplementary Appropriation Bill – the Committee processed the Bill and on 2/12/15 recommended to the Senate the

sum of N574, 532,726,857 for approval. The increase was for the payment of outstanding fuel subsidy and other exigent programmes in 2015 budget.

- 2016 Appropriation Bill - the Committee recommended to the Senate for approval the sum of N6, 060,677,358,227.00 with a reduction, in line with the economic realities of the country.
- 2017 Appropriation Bill - On 11/5/17 the Committee presented to the Senate a report containing the sum of N7, 441, 175,846,758.00 for approval. The additional fund was to cater for some critical projects in the 2017 budget.
- 2018 Appropriation Bill - The Committee on 8/5/19 presented to the Senate the sum of N9, 120,334,988,225.00 with an increase to cater for critical sectors of the economy. However, the President declined assent on the 2018 Appropriation Bill as passed by the National Assembly. The President eventually signed the bill after a minor virement.
- 2019 Appropriation Bill - Inputs received at the public hearing as well as budget reports from its Sub-committees led to the recommendation of N8, 906,964,009,373.00 to the Senate for approval on 30/4/19.

Budget Appraisal

The Committee equally undertook appraisal of budgets passed. Appraisal of the Appropriation

Act passed from 2015 - 2018 shown an average performance of fifty percent (50%) on capital expenditure, overhead cost at sixty-five (65%) percent and personnel cost at one hundred percent (100%). However, the 2019 Appropriation Bill passed by the National Assembly is awaiting the President assent

Referral (Motions)

The Senate also referred Four (4) Motions to the Committee as follows:

1. 115/03/2016 - Provision of N10 Billion naira as Interim Financial and Material support/ assistance to internally displaced (IDPs) returnees in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe States.
2. 13/02/2018 - The Revitalization of Primary Healthcare System across Nigeria: Mandate the Committee on Appropriations to ensure adequate funding for the health sector in the 2018 budget in compliance with the Primary Health Act, 2010.
3. 10/10/2019 - Request of Mr President for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) 2019 Election Budget.
4. 09/04/2019 - Provision of the sum of N10 Billion naira in the 2019 Appropriation as intervention funds to cater for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other persons affected by the activities of armed bandits in Zamfara States.

The above motions were processed and accordingly reported back to the Senate.



Senate Committee On Ethics, Privileges And Public Petitions

The Senate Committee on Public Petitions and Ethics was one of the most active committees in the Senate in the period under review.

In its first three sessions (2015-2018), the committee held a total of 94 meetings/ hearings to deliberate on petitions referred to it by the Senate (47 in the first session, 44 in

the second session, 39 in the third session)

A total of 629 petitions were referred to the Committee: 153 in the first session, 208 in the second session, and 261 in the third session and 7 in the fourth session)

The Committee concluded a total of 139

investigations (32, 48, and 59 in the first session, second and third sessions respectively)

of the Assembly, 331 petitions had not been treated.

A total of 126 reports have been laid and considered by the Senate - (30, 39 and 57 for first, second and third sessions respectively). Petitioners withdrew 7 petitions and 124 were at various stages of investigation. At the end

The Committee also held several interactive sessions with the MDAs, professional bodies (including the Nigeria Bar Association and the Nigeria Labour Congress), media and the general public.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings/Hearings	47	44	2	1
Oversight Visits	1	1	0	-
Investigations	32	48	59	-
Bill Referrals	2	3	4	2
Confirmation and Screening of government nominees	0	0	1	0
Interactive sessions with MDAs	3	2	5	4
Questions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.2: Oversight Activities of the Senate Committee On Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

Confirmation/Screening Hearing

On 20th December 2018, the Senate referred Presidential Nominees as Chairman and Members of the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions for screening.

Budget Oversight

The Senate Committee on Ethics and Privileges oversees and monitors the activities of the following Agencies: Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB); Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT); and Public Complaints Commission. For the period under review, the Committee held budget defence meetings for the 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 Budget with the three (3) Agencies to ascertaining the level of implementation of the budgetary provisions of preceding years based on that, it made recommendations to the Senate Committee on Appropriations on the budgetary proposals of the Agencies in the Appropriation Bills.

Bill and Motion Referrals

As part of its oversight mandate, the Senate refers bills that fall within its jurisdiction to the Committee. The Senate equally refers motions to the Committee as considered appropriate. For the period under review, eleven (11) bills were referred to the Committee and included the following:

1. A Bill for an Act to Amend the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, Cap. C15, LFN, 2004; and for other Related Matters
2. "Abandonment of N8 billion office Headquarters project by the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB)" – a motion referred to the Joint Committee on Federal Capital Territory (FCT); Public Procurement; and Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions for investigation on 8th November, 2016.



Senate Committee on Local Content

The Senate Committee on Local Content was created in September, 2017 and was chaired by Senator Adeola Olamilekan. The jurisdiction of the Committee includes: (i) local skill development; (ii) ensuring the transfer of technology in the oil and gas industries; (iii) ensuring the use of local manpower by any industry sited in Nigeria; (iv) designing policies that would ensure the patronage of local manufacturing industries by Nigerians; (v) receiving an annual report on the performance of Nigerian Local Content; and (vi) oversight

of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

The Committee reported to having held meetings (over 30), interactive meetings with International Oil Companies (IOC's) operating in Nigeria, oversight, sensitization of the members through workshops, processing of petitions, budget hearing and investigation during the period under review.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	-	-	18	14
Oversight Visits	-	-	1	4
Public Hearings	-	-		
Investigative Hearings	-	-		
Bill referrals	-	-		
Other referrals	-	-		
Screening of government nominees	-	-	0	0
Interactive sessions with MDAs	-	-		
Questions	-	-		
Public Petitions	-	-	0	2

Table 3.3: Oversight Activities of the Senate Committee on Local Content (2017-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

Motions/Bills Referred

There was no Bill referred to the Committee and no Public Hearing was conducted during the Session under review. However, the Committee sponsored a motion for the Legislative Investigation of Local Content Elements and Cost Variations relating to the Egina Oil Field Project on 5th December 2017. The Senate considered the motion and set up an Ad-hoc Committee to carry out further legislative investigation.

Petitions and Investigations

The Committee received and considered petitions and held interactive sessions with officials of the affected companies with the view

to finding solutions to the conflicts raised in the petitions. The committee successfully resolved petitions from the following companies.

- i. Indigenous Vessel Operators versus Total Upstream Nigeria Limited - the Committee investigated alleged violations of Nigerian local content extant laws by Total, which was said to be undermining indigenous vessel owners in Nigeria. The petition was brought to the Senate by a vessel owner who accused Total of double standards in its awarding of contracts. Specifically, it was accused of excluding Nigerian owned vessels from participating in transactions

within the oil and gas industry.

The Committee issued a reprimand to Total stating that their actions negatively affected Nigeria's local economy. It called on the company to reverse its step in that direction to avoid further legislative sanctions. The House of Representatives had earlier sanctioned the Company. The parties agreed that Total Upstream Nigeria Limited will continue bidding/tendering process with the shortlisted vessel operators.

- ii. Solewant Pipe/Metal Coating Company Ltd versus Vurin Nigeria Ltd and Chevron Nig. Ltd. - The Committee intervened in the pipe coating contract involving Solewant Nigeria Limited, Vurin Nigeria Limited and Chevron on Okan GGCP Debottlenecking Line Pipe Coating Project. At its sitting of Wednesday 28th November 2018, the Committee directed Chevron to pay the outstanding contract sum to Solewant Nigeria Limited and that Solewant should allow the sub-contractor, Vurin Nigeria Limited to move the remaining line pipes from their yard to be coated elsewhere in view of the contract deadline.
- iii. In 2018, acting on complaints from a Nigerian firm, Alsa Gas and Shipping Nigeria Limited (AGSN), the Committee equally summoned BP Oil International Limited to appear before it to provide explanation over a \$3.3 billion pre-financing crude oil deal alleged to have breached the Nigerian Oil and Gas Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010. AGSN had provided technical and local industry knowledge support for BP Oil International Limited in the contract process with an agreement for a \$0.10 per barrel of crude oil of the deal, which was unilaterally revoked by the British firm. As part of its oversight responsibilities and functions, the Committee subpoenaed all emails, documents, agreements (signed and unsigned) between BP Oil, NNPC and AGSN relating to the contract as well as all transactional negotiation documents and offers, term sheets and any legal documents to do with dealings with NNPC in the pre-financing opportunity including

all correspondences from GED Finance, Group Managing Director and Standard Chartered Bank.

Oversight

Within the short period since the Committee was inaugurated, it undertook eight (8) oversight and inspection visits. Details of oversight visits conducted are listed below:

1. The Committee paid a courtesy visit to the Comptroller-General, Nigerian Immigration Service Headquarters, Abuja on 15th November 2017 on the need to have a good working relationship in the area of approval of expatriates into the Oil and Gas industry.
2. The Committee undertook an oversight visit to EGINA FPSO in February 9th 2018 to inspect the integration of the 6 top sides modules on the EGINA FPSO as it berthed in Lagos.

The Committee had also participated in the audit of Total's \$16bn EGINA project (January 2018). The audit was to ensure that Nigeria was not trapped in perpetual debt. The project, which commenced in 2013, is being undertaken by Total Upstream Nigeria Limited and is almost 90 per cent completed. The project, which is estimated to produce 200,000 barrels of oil per day. The 330-metres long EGINA FPSO is the largest FPSO ever installed in Nigeria. Despite the heavy investment, the project had never been audited despite provisions for such in the Project Agreement. At the time of the audit, NNPC had approved \$10.3bn of the total cost of the project (which is \$16.3bn and not \$11.4bn as contained in documents of Total Upstream). The audit by the Committee was the first of its kind and could serve as a guide for similar projects.

The Committee reviewed all relevant local content approvals granted the EGINA project by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board. This included expatriate quota, trainings and related local content matters.



3. The Committee also visited SCC Nigeria Limited (Pipe Mill) Company in Ushafa, Bwari Area Council, Abuja on 31st May 2018 in line with the NOGICD Act of domestication and domiciliation of Local Content in Nigeria.
4. The Committee embarked on an oversight visit to the Head Quarters building of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMD) in Bayelsa State on 31st October, 2018 to interact with the Board and inspect their projects. In addition, the Committee also visited other oil servicing companies like Halliburton Nigeria Limited, Saipem Nigeria Limited and F.M.C Nigeria Limited, all in Port-Harcourt, Rivers State.
5. The Committee also undertook an oversight visit to pipe-coating factory of Solewant Nigeria Limited in Port Harcourt on 17th December, 2018 to inspect and encourage indigenous company in pipe-coating.
6. Other oversight activities of the Committee included a 2-day oversight visit to Bayelsa and Rivers States. They visited three (3) oil companies in Rivers State. The objective was to determine compliance of oil companies to local content law with regards quota for Nigerians and remittance of funds.
7. On a similar visit to Halliburton Nigeria in Port Harcourt, the Committee queried the lopsided shareholding structure in favour of foreign component in Halliburton Nigeria. For instance, the shareholding structure for Halliburton is 70 per cent global and 30 per cent local.
8. The Committee found that the allied companies who have been operating in Nigeria for years are still almost totally foreign owned and are yet to be listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (including Halliburton Nigeria). It directed the company to submit tax certificate, financial statement and other documents, to enable the Committee to ascertain level of compliance with local content regulation. The Committee also scrutinised the payroll of the companies to ascertain the number of Nigerian staff as well as the disparity in remuneration for foreign and Nigerian workers. In the case of Halliburton, 97 per cent of the staff (606) were indigenous while three per cent (22) were expatriate workers. The company also complied with the one per cent remittance to the Nigerian Content Development Management Board. No discrepancy was found in the salaries and allowances paid to indigenous and expatriate workers.

Budget

As part of its mandate, the Committee considered the Annual Budget Estimates for Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).



Senate Committee On Women Affairs

The Committee was inaugurated on the 19th of November, 2015. It was constituted for the purpose of giving effect to legislative matters referred to it by the Senate, especially those functions derivable from the powers conferred on the National Assembly by section 62 and other enabling sections of the Constitution and extant Acts. The Senate Standing Order No. 98(56) specifies the jurisdiction of the Committee to include the following: Ministry of Women Affairs and National Centre for Women Development; and annual Budget Estimates.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	2	1	2	2
Oversight Visits	4	4	2	4
Public Hearings	0	1	1	0
Investigative Hearings	-	-	-	-
Bill referrals	-	-	-	-
Other referrals (motions)	-	4	3	-
Screening of government nominees	-	-	-	-
Interactive sessions with MDAs	5	5	6	5
Questions	0	0	0	0
Public Petitions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.4: Oversight Activities of the Senate Committee on Women Affairs (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

The Committee was generally active as indicated by the number of meetings and interactive sessions held between 2015 and 2019. Specifically, it held several interactive sessions with the Minister of Women Affairs and the Director General, National Centre for Women Development. There was also a joint interactive session during the first session between the Senate Committee on Women Affairs, Senate Committee on Judiciary, House Committees on Women Affairs and Women in Parliament with some visiting UK Parliamentarians. The interactive session was aimed at sharing experiences on gender issues and gender mainstreaming.

The Committee also held several (4) Budget Defense meetings with the MDAs under its jurisdiction (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and the National Centre for Women Development). It discussed

and approved annual budget estimates and the implementation status of previous budgets. There were interactive sessions between the Committee and the Ministry and the Centre at intervals within the reporting period.

No bill was referred to the Committee during the entire life of the 8th Senate. This indicates a relative inactivity with regards bills referral and points to the limited engagement by the Assembly by of legislation on matters relating to women and children.

Motions/Referrals

The Committee moved several Motions to recognise and commemorate International and National Days that have to do with women and children. These Motions are among the arrays of legislative measures through which the Committee has sought to bring attention to issues relating to the rights of women and

children. Some of these International and National Days are:

- i. 8th March – International Women Day
- ii. 27th May – Children’s Day
- iii. 16th June – International Day of the African Child
- iv. 11th October – International Day of the Girl Child
- v. 20th November – Universal Children’s Day
- vi. 25th November – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

On these days, the Senate in plenary made resolutions to promote gender and child development.

At the end of the Assembly, several referrals (motions) were still pending before the Committee and legislative actions had not been taken due to paucity of funds. These included the following motions:

1. For the Committee to look into the Domestication of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act in all the States of the Federation and report to the Senate” (S/Res/103/02/17).
2. For the Committee to look into the domestication of the Child Rights Act in the thirteen (13) States that are yet to do so(S/Res/181/02/17).
3. For the Committee to investigate the alarming rate of Rape and Sexual Assault against Women, Children and Vulnerable People across the country (together with Senate Committees on Health, Women Affairs and Judiciary, Human Rights and Legal Matters to jointly engage relevant stakeholders with a view to resolving these issues (S/Res/179/02/17)).
4. For the Committee to liaise with the Federal Ministries of Women Affairs and Health on ways to curb maternal, new-born and infant

mortality in Nigeria. (S/Res/195/03/18).

5. For the Committee to liaise with its Counterparts on Judiciary, Human Rights and Legal Matters to investigate the increasing rate of Child Labour, Molestation and Abuse in Nigeria” (S/Res/196/03/18).
6. For the Motion to explore measures on making adequate Provision for Inclusive and Accessible Basic Education for Children with Disabilities in Nigeria (S/Res/224/03/18).

Oversight Visits

The Committee undertook two (2) Joint Oversight Visits with the House Committee on Women Affairs and Social Development to the Federal School of Social Works, Emene, Enugu, Enugu State and the National Centre for Women Development within the period under review.

The Joint Oversight visit to the National Centre for Women Development took place on Monday, 3rd December, 2018. The purpose of the visit was to ensure that the Centre complied with the statutory provisions in the 2018 Appropriation Act in the implementation of its budgetary releases and expenditure. The Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the state of affairs and budget implementation of the Centre for the following reasons: no comprehensive report on the releases and utilization of some of the budget items and lack of proper accountability with regards to their Internally Generated Revenue (IGR). The Committee also found that the Cancer Diagnostic Centre was in a deplorable condition and non-functional despite annual budgetary provisions to the Centre.

The Joint Committee also went on oversight visit to the Federal School of Social Works Emene, Enugu State on inspection and interactive session on Wednesday, 31st October, 2019. The Committee discovered that even though the School was established in 1983 (35) years ago and has produced 1,981 National Diploma (ND) graduates in Social Development, it was only granted an Interim Accreditation in 2018. The facilities in the institution were in bad state

and school has been unable to generate funds given that its programmes are almost tuition free. Also, there is no direct allocation to the School as it is funded through the Ministry of Women Affairs. The sum of N700,000.00 (Seven Hundred Thousand Naira) only was approved by the Ministry for the School as monthly running cost and about 70% of the fund is spent on wages for staff. The remaining 30% is utilised for other expenses such as stationeries, diesel and petrol for generators, cleaning materials, drugs, electricity bills etc. Projects in the school are also directly executed by the Ministry.

The Committee also noted that the school set up, including its small size, poor security arrangement, lack of good water supply, all militate against effective learning. Furthermore, there is neither access road to nor a standard Clinic facility/Sick Bay in the school, the Admin. building had been abandoned and many of the staff work have been working on casual basis for over a decade without regularisation. The offices are poorly equipped and the 20-Room Female Hostel project has been abandoned for over sixteen years.

The Joint Committee recommended the following measures in order to address some of the challenges identified: The School should be granted full autonomy to enable it achieve its mandate. To this effect, an establishing Act should therefore be urgently enacted; also, the portion of land where the Enugu State Rehabilitation Centre is presently located belongs to the Federal Government and hence should be recovered and given to the School; budgetary allocations should be made directly to the School to enable it undertake core projects in a timely fashion. Hence, the National Assembly Committees on Women

Affairs should directly allocate funds to the institution in the Federal budget; adequate security should be provided; sufficient number of qualified teachers should be recruited for the School. Similarly, temporary staff who possess the requisite qualifications and experience should be regularized as regular staff of the institution; finally, the School Library should be properly stocked and equipped with e-Library facilities to enable research and development.

Reports

Reports of the two Joint Oversight Visits were laid at the plenary.

Committee On Poverty Alleviation And Social Welfare

The Committee's objective is to promote social welfare and alleviation of the abject poverty among Nigerians. The jurisdiction of the Committee includes poverty alleviation, social welfare and related issues. The Committee over sees both the office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Social Investments, under the Office of the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the National Poverty Eradication Programmes (NAPEP) (which was scrapped in January, 2017).

Given its legislative mandate, the Committee's objective is to ensure positive contribution towards nation building by promoting harmonious social investments, social welfare and alleviation of poverty through the Social Investments Programmes which include job creation, Home Grown School Feeding, Conditional and Unconditional Cash Transfer, Enterprise Empowerment Programme, and Stem Bursary Programme.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	2	1	1	1
Oversight Visits	3	1	1	1
Public Hearings	0	1	1	0
Investigative Hearings	0	2	0	0
Motion/Bill referrals	2	2	0	0
Other referrals	1	1	0	0
Screening of government nominees	0	0	0	0
Interactive sessions with MDAs	3	3	2	4
Questions	0	0	0	0
Public Petitions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.5: Oversight Activities of the Senate Committee on Poverty Alleviation and Social Welfare (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

The Committee Reports shows that it held a couple of meetings as well other interactive meetings with the Minister of State of the Budget and National Planning, Senior Special Assistants to the President on Social Investments and the Secretary of Programmes on NAPEP during the period under review.

Budget Defence

The Committee invited the organisations under its jurisdiction for Budget Defence meetings in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively. Thereafter, the Committee deliberated on the proposed Budgets and passed resolutions accordingly.

Referrals to the Committee

Only one (1) motion was referred to the Committee in the period under review (June 2015-May 2019). The Senate, at its plenary sitting on Wednesday, 4th November, 2015, deliberated on a motion on the urgent need to curb the soaring rates of unemployment in Nigeria and directed the Committee to investigate the effective releases, utilizations and performances of the various intervention funds to the approved and injected by the Federal Government of Nigeria into the various sectors of the economy to be implemented by the relevant government agencies and referred same to the Senate Committee on Poverty Alleviation and Social Welfare, for further legislative action.

The Committee had planned on conducting a Public Hearing in compliance with the directive of the Senate. However, this could not hold due to non-release of funds approved for the activity.

Three 3 Bills were referred to the Committee for further legislative action. These are:

- i. A Bill for an Act to Ensure Full Integration of Persons with Disabilities into the Society (Establishment, Etc.) Bill 2015 (Sb. 022) and to Establish a Commission for their Education, Healthcare, Economic, Social and Civil Rights (jointly referred to the Committee as well as the Committee on Sports and Youth Development).
- ii. The National Poverty Eradication Commission (Establishment. Etc.) Bill, 2016 (SB. 023) (referred to the Joint Committee on Poverty Alleviation and Social Welfare, National Planning and Economic Affairs).
- iii. Constituencies Sustainable Development Fund (Establishment, Etc.) Bill, 2016 (SB. 103)

In compliance with the directive of the Senate, the Joint Committee has completed work on the Bills (i & ii above) and approved it and was reported to the Senate in plenary session. A Public Hearing was held on (ii) above. The Bills were reported, read the third time and passed.

On the third Bill, the Committee conducted a public hearing, concluded its work and reported the Bill to the Senate in plenary session. The Bill was considered but was referred back to the Committee for further action. The Committee did not report back on the Bill.

Oversight Visits

The Committee was unable to carry out any oversight visits on the two organizations under

its jurisdiction because NAPEP was scrapped before the directive was given to Senate Committees to embark on oversight visits.

Also, the Committee could not equally undertake oversight visits on the National Social Investment Office because the Programme has no office accommodation of its own and has been operating within the office of the Vice President in State House.



House Of Representatives Committees

Committee On Public Petitions

As with its Senate counterpart, the Public Petitions Committee of the House of Representatives (HOR) has powers to conduct Public Hearings and investigations on petitions and other matters brought before it. The Committee also oversees government programmes, as may be required to do by the House from time to time. It can also initiate bills, approve and report legislations to the House and liaise with other parliaments on behalf of the House.

The Committee has oversight functions on the activities of the Public Complaints Commission. In the 8th Assembly, the Committee had a total of 38 members and was chaired by Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Meetings	3	1	1	2
Oversight Visits	0	1	1	0
Public Hearings	0	0	0	0
Investigative Hearings	25	27	32	25
Bill referrals	0	0	0	0
Other Referrals				
Interactive sessions with MDAs	2	0	1	1
Public Petitions	73	82	1000+	155

Table 3.6: Oversight Activities of the House Committee on Public Petitions (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

Records available from the House show that between June 2015 and June 2018, the Committee held an inaugural meeting and approved the budget of the Public Complaints for the affected years. The Committee also conducted series of investigative hearings on the petitions referred to it by the House.

Cases Considered and Status

For the period 2015-2018, the Committee received over 1000 petitions out of which 700 were considered. A substantial number of the cases were, however, inconclusive while others were adjourned sine die due to non-appearance of some of the parties to the cases. The Committee successfully concluded and laid 187 petitions, which were adopted by the House between 2015 and 2018.

Committee Public Accounts

The Public Accounts Committee was established pursuant to Sections 85(5) and 62 of the 1999 Constitution as well as Order XVIII Rule 6(1) of the House Standing Order. The Committee had 48 members and was chaired by Hon. Ibrahim Baba.

The Committee's oversight functions include: oversight of the office of the Auditor General of the Federation, all MDAs queried on Public Expenditure in the Auditor General's Annual Report and examining the accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by the House to meet the public expenditure together with the auditor's report. It also examines accounts or reports of statutory corporations, Board and Federal Government Institutions as presented by the Auditor General of the Federation after they have been laid before the House and report its findings and recommendations to the House.

The Committee has power to summon persons, paper and records and report its findings and recommendations to the House from time to time; summon and compel appearance of all officials of governments or persons affected from MDAs for explanation on the audit queries as raised in the Auditor General's Report. It can also compel the Auditor General to furnish it with any pre-payment audit queries raised by internal auditors of MDAs that were overruled by the Chief Executive Officer.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year		
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Meetings	-	-	-
Oversight Visits	0	0	0
Public Hearings			0
Investigative Hearing Sessions	308		
Bill referrals			2
Other Referrals			3
Interactive sessions with MDAs			1
Public Petitions	0	0	1

Table 3.7: Oversight Activities of the House Committee on Public Accounts (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

The Committee conducted Public Hearing on the Audit Service Commission Bill 2019 and laid its harmonized report to the House. It was subsequently passed by the National Assembly. It also held interactive sessions with the Auditor-General of the Federation, Members of the UK-based Institute of Chartered Accountants and Honourable Members of the Ugandan Parliament Public Accounts Committee as well as the African Organisation of Supreme

Audit Institutions (AFRO-SAI) English speaking countries officials from Kenya who visited the Committee on a study tour to Nigeria.

The Committee held over 308 regular hearings with affected MDAs to investigate queries raised against them in the Auditor General's Annual Reports for the years ended 31st December 201-2016.

It also conducted a number of status enquiries to understand some of the issues discovered during hearing sessions with MDAs and to explore other issues not contained in the queries of the Auditor General Report.

The Committee wrote reports on the 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 Auditor-General Annual Reports and laid same at the floor of the House.

The Committee cleared over 1500 of the audit queries and recommended for the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to recover the total sum of N40,774,572,052.75 from MDAs indicted by the reports and remit it to the government coffers.

The general findings and recommendations on recovery of funds, taxes and lost vehicles from affected MDAs in the reports referred to the EFCC to enforce compliance is attached (annex).

Some of the findings of the Committee include:

- i. i. Controversy over remittance of 25% of Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) and 80% of the operating surplus by some MDAs to the Federation Accounts which most times they failed to remit
- ii. ii. Non/late deduction and very late remittance of relevant government taxes (WHT, VAT and PAYE)
- iii. iii. Inadequate knowledge of financial regulation by financial operators and low capacity of accounting and auditing personnel in the MDAs
- iv. iv. Inadequacy of many MDAs in keeping Fixed Assets Registers
- v. v. Delayed submission of accounts of MDAs by the Accountant General of the Federation to the OAuGF thereby making the publication of his Annual Report to always come behind schedule.

To ease its operations, the Public Accounts Committee in the House established a website and an electronic system to ease retrieval

of documents/responses to Audit queries submitted by MDAs for consideration by the Committee. All MDAs therefore obtained audit queries online and made submission of their responses online through the Committee website, www.pac-hor.nass.org.ng. Also, all proceedings of the Committee became accessible to the public through the website. In addition, the Committee commenced quarterly publication of its activities in a Newsletter (PAC Newsletter) to sensitize the public on its statutory functions and activities. The maiden edition was published on 16th May, 2019.

Committee On Youth Development

Sessional reports from the Committee were not available at the time of this assessment. However, interviews with Committee Clerks shows that it has undertaken several meetings in the period under review. It also held interactive sessions with MDAs and conducted a few public hearings.

On bills/motion referrals, two (2) Bills were referred to the Committee: A Bill for An Act to Establish the National Youth Development Commission and the National Youth Welfare Scheme Fund to Manage and Coordinate Youths Welfare Services to Reduce Challenges in Governance and Security in the country and for Related Matters (HBs.122 & 558). The report was referred to the Committee on 11th April, 2017. The Committee completed its consideration of the Bill and laid a report before Senate on 18th October, 2018. The report laid was yet to be considered as at the close of the Assembly.

Also, another proposed legislation sent to the Committee was the Bill for An Act to Establish the Chartered Institute for Development and Social Studies to Provide for the Control of its Members and Promote Practice of Development and Social Studies in Nigeria and for Related Matters (HB. 1492). The Bill was referred to the on 18th December, 2019 and was unable to complete legislative action on it.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	2	1	1	1
Oversight Visits	4	5	5	3
Public Hearings	0	2	1	1
Investigative Hearings	3	4	2	2
Bill/Motions referrals	3	1	2	1
Interactive sessions with MDAs	4	1	0	5
Public Petitions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.8: Oversight Activities of the House Committee on Youth Development (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

The Committee was mandated by way of a Resolution of the House (HR. 158/05/2018) to investigate the death of a serving Youth Corps Member, Miss Amadi Eva in Kwara State with a view to improving medical facilities and personnel at NYSC orientation camps around the country. The Committee undertook investigative tour of three (3) states in 3 geo-political zones due to funding constraints.

Also, the House directed the Committee through a Resolution (HR. 54/10/2018) to look into the suspension of Benue State University Graduates from further participation in the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme. The Committee met with the management of NYSC and Benue State University and secured NYSC's compliance on the subject matter in the motion.

Other motions referred to the Committee include the Call on the Federal, State and Local Government Establishments, Parastatals and Agencies to Stop Rejecting Corps Members posted for Service (HR.181/2016). The Committee met with all stakeholders

and resolved to conduct a Public Hearing but was unable to do so due to funding shortages. The Committee was equally mandated to investigate the Spending on National Youth Development Centres in the Country as it relates to Unemployment and Youth Restiveness (HR. 31/2016) as well as the Undue Reduction in Quota of Students to be Mobilized Annually for the NYSC Scheme by Tertiary Institutions (HR. 113/2016). On the former, the Committee could not undertake investigative tours to all the National Youth Development Centres in all the Local Government Areas in the Country owing to the huge financial requirements for such. On the latter, the Committee interfaced with the Management of NYSC and other concerned stakeholders. The NYSC revised its mobilization to three (3) batches annually in order to accommodate all students due for service.

Committee On Anti-Corruption

There were no sessional reports available for this Committee. However, the report on status of its activities was complemented with interviews with the Committee Clerk and staff.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	5	3	4	3
Oversight Visits	0	1	1	0
Public Hearings	0	0	1	0
Investigative Hearings				0
Bill/Motions referrals	2	5	1	0
Interactive sessions with MDAs	2	1	1	0
Public Petitions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.9: Oversight Activities of the House Committee on Anti-Corruption (2015-2019)

A total of three (3) Bills were referred to the Committee as indicated above:

- i. A Bill for An Act to Amend the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act, No.5 of 2000 to modify the definition of Bank and Money Instrument, Review the Composition of the Commission and Harmonize the Tenure of the Office of the Members; And For Other Matters Connected Therewith (H.232).

The Committee requested for funding to process the Bill without success. However, on 4/05/2016, the Committee was discharged of the Bill, which was considered by the Committee of the Whole on 26/05/2016 and was Passed on 1/06/2016

- ii. A Bill for An Act to amend The Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, CAP. C15, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, To, Among Others, Provide For the Board, Condition of Assumption of Jurisdiction, Etc., and for Other Matters Connected Therewith (HB.135).

The Committee requested for funding but was discharged of the Bill on 4/05/2016. It was considered by the Committee of the Whole on 31/05/2016 and Passed on 7/06/2016.

- iii. A Bill for an Act to Amend the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences ACT, CAP 131, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Enhance and Strengthen the Commission's efficiency, provide for Forfeiture to be made to the

Original Sources of the Crimes and for Other Related Matters (HB.819)

The Committee held a Public Hearing on the Bill on 16/11/2017 and despite the preliminary report of the Secretariat being ready, the Bill had not been reported out by the Committee.

In addition to Bills, six (6) Motions were referred to the Committee including:

- i. A Motion on the Need to Investigate the N9.2 Billion Contract for Clean Stove for Rural Women Scheme Under the Last Administration (HR.25/2017).

The Committee could not proceed with further legislative actions due to lack of funding.

- ii. A Motion on the Need for Verification of Movable Assets from Contracts Awarded by Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) (HR. 29/2017)
- iii. A Motion for a Call to Investigate the Abandonment of Port Harcourt International Airport (HR.99/2017).

This is a Joint Referral to the Committees Aviation, Public Accounts and Anti-Corruption. No legislative action was taken on it.

- iv. A Motion on the need to investigate the Failure of the Bureau of Public Procurement to Enforce its Powers (HR.183/2017)

- v. This was a Joint Referral to the Committees on Public Procurement and Anti-Corruption and as at the end of the 8th Assembly, no action had been taken on it.
- vi. A Motion on the Need to Investigate the Illegal Withdrawal of the Sum of N10 Billion from the Insured Persons Fund of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) (HR. 98/03/2018).

This was also a Joint Referral to the Committees on Healthcare Services, Finance and Anti-Corruption. The Committees met and agreed to request for documents from the stakeholders.

However, as at the end of the Assembly, no further legislative action was taken. The Committee explained this on absence of funding.

Committee On Basic Education and Services

Based on report on status of committee activities and interviews with Clerk and staff of the Committee, the following range of activities were undertaken between 2015-2019. These include regular meetings (at least once a session) and several interactive sessions with MDAs and oversight visits.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	2	1	7	10
Oversight Visits	2	26	3	2
Public Hearings	3	7	1	1
Investigative Hearings	0	1	3	1
Bill referrals	2	8	2	2
Other referrals (Motions)	4	10	11	5
Interactive sessions with MDAs	5	11	10	12
Public Petitions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.10: Oversight Activities of the House Committee on Education & Services (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

A total of 14 Bills were referred to the Committee. The Committee held a total of 12 Public Hearings on the Bills it received as follows:

Bill	Legislative Action
A Bill for an Act to provide for the inclusion of vocational training in the syllabuses of Secondary Schools, to provide for Development, Skills Acquisition and Self-Employment of Youths in Nigeria and for Other Matters Connected Therewith (HB. 156)	Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid

<p>A Bill for an Act to amend the Examination Malpractices Act, Cap. E15, laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 for other related matters (HBs. 346 and 373)</p>	<p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid</p>
<p>A Bill for an Act to make Agricultural Science a core and compulsory subject in Secondary Schools in Nigeria and for other related matters (HB.881)</p>	<p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded</p>
<p>A Bill for an Act to amend the National Examinations Council (NECO) Act CAP N37, laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to establish a Steering Committee to be vested with the responsibility of centralizing the management of the senior school certificate examinations (SSCE), the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) and the National Business and Technical Examination (NABTE) under a single ICT platform to reduce the costs of taking the examinations and for other related matters (HB.850)</p>	<p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid</p>
<p>A Bill for an Act to amend the Nigeria Education Research and Development Council Act, CAP 105, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 204 and for related matters (HB.1123)</p> <p>A Bill for an Act to amend the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria Act. CAP, T5, Law of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 to provide for the change of name of the Council from Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, Regulating and enforcing Compliance in both Public and Private Schools with the Minimum Standard requirement for Teachers among other things and for other related matters (HBs. 994 & 995)</p>	<p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid</p> <p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid</p>
<p>A Bill for an Act to Mandate schools to provide for adequate special education needs to students with learning disabilities and for other related matters (HB.315)</p>	<p>Public Hearing Conducted but Report not Concluded</p>

<p>A Bill for an Act to amend the National Library Act, CAP. N56 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2014 to rename the National Library as Chinua Achebe National Library and prescribe stiffer penalties for breach of its provisions,</p> <p>A Bill for an Act to amend the National Library Act, CAP N56, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to specify the tenure of office of the Director and Review Penalties upwards, and</p> <p>A Bill for an Act to amend the National Library Act, CAP N56, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, to compel the Board of the National Library to Establish a National E-Library in order to bridge the deficiency gap in teaching and research in the Nigerian education sector and other related matters (HBs 142, 609 & 304)</p>	<p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid</p>
<p>A Bill for an Act to amend the National Library Act, CAP. N56 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2014 to rename the National Library as Chinua Achebe National Library and prescribe stiffer penalties for breach of its provisions,</p> <p>A Bill for an Act to amend the National Library Act, CAP N56, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to specify the tenure of office of the Director and Review Penalties upwards, and</p> <p>A Bill for an Act to amend the National Library Act, CAP N56, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, to compel the Board of the National Library to Establish a National E-Library in order to bridge the deficiency gap in teaching and research in the Nigerian education sector and other related matters (HBs 142, 609 & 304)</p>	<p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid</p>
<p>A Bill for an Act to Establish a Scholarship Board for the purpose of planning, implementing and overseeing a federal scholarship scheme and for other related matters (HB. 561)</p>	<p>Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid</p>

A Bill for an Act to amend the West African Examination Council Act to provide strict penalties for contraveners of the Act and other related matters (HB. 1263)	Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid
A Bill for an Act to provide for Compulsory Teaching of Security and Intelligence Studies in the Syllabus of Secondary Schools in Nigeria and for other Related matters connected therewith (HB. 123)	Public Hearing conducted and Report Concluded but not laid
A Bill for an Act to make provision for retirement age of the teachers in Nigeria; and for related matters (HB1554)	Laid

Three (3) bills did not receive any legislative action including the bills seeking to amend certain sections of the compulsory, free Universal Basic Education Act (HBs 994, 995 and 1312). Another Bill for an Act to Authorize the issue from the statutory revenue fund of the National Business and Technical Examination Board Statutory Appropriation Bill 2016 – this was addressed in the 2016 Appropriation Act.

As part of its mandate, over thirty (30) motions were referred to the Committee (4, 10, 11 and 5 for the First, Second, Third and Fourth Sessions respectively). Of these, four (4) were dealt with and reports concluded and laid including investigative hearing on the death of three (3) students of Queens College, Lagos, Resolution on the urgent need to arrest the crisis of Basic and Secondary School Education (HR117/2016), Resolution on the

lopsided admission system of Unity Schools in Nigeria (HR.150/2015) and House Resolution on the need to address the deplorable state of Unity Schools. In some instances, the affected agencies of Government complied with the Resolution of the House. For instance, following a House Resolution on the need to extend the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME) (HR.237/2017), JAMB agreed to extend the examinations by one month. Other resolutions were resolved and taken care of in the budget, e.g. the rehabilitation of Federal Government Girls College Ikot Obio Itogin in Akwa Ibom State. Also, following a resolution on the need to re-introduce History/Social studies as subjects in the Curricula of Primary and Secondary Schools, the subjects were reintroduced. However, the Committee failed to act on ten (10) other Resolutions due to lack of funding.

Committee On Constituency Outreach

The House Committee on Constituency Outreach, which was headed by Hon. Lawal Abubakar, conducted a number of meetings, interactive sessions and oversight visits.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	2	3	4	5
Oversight Visits	1	2	2	3
Public Hearings	0	0	1	0
Investigative Hearings	0	2	1	1
Bill referrals	0	0	0	
Other referrals				
Interactive sessions with MDAs	1	1	1	2
Public Petitions	0	0	0	0

Table 3.12: Oversight Activities of the House Committee on Constituency Outreach (2015-2019)
Source: Committee Sessional Reports

In the period under review, the House Committee on Constituency Outreach had one (1) bill referred to it – A Bill for an Act to Establish the Constituency Development Fund for the Purpose of Even Development of all Constituencies in the Federation and for connected purposes, 2015 (HB 330). The Committee conducted a Public Hearing on the bill. The essence of the Bill is to put in place a mechanism that would enhance the participation of citizens in the judicious utilization of funds intended to bring about accountability and socio-economic development. It is designed to provide a robust legal framework and mechanism to promote greater transparency, accountability, effectiveness and sustainability in the use of CDF as instrument of development fund and advancement of collective public good. The Committee concluded legislative action on the bill and laid its report on 15th March, 2018 – almost three (3) years from the date of referral (16th December, 2015). Action on the bill was pending at the end of the Assembly.

Two (2) Motions were referred to the Committee including 1) Need investigate the poor execution of constituency projects under the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA) from 2015-

2017 (HR.193/2017) and 2) Need to widen the scope of investigation of the alleged poor/non execution of Constituency/Zonal Intervention Projects by contractors under the NPHCDA to include all other MDAs from 2015-2017. These were reported as pending at the end of the 8th Assembly.

Committee On National Security And Intelligence

The Committee was inaugurated on 9th November, 2015 and had 47 Members and 4 Secretariat staff. It was chaired by Hon. Aminu Sani Jaji. The House Standing Order (9th Edition 2016) XVIII, Rule 194 (1 and 2), however, provides for only 30 Members. The Committee's jurisdiction covers: public security, all matters relating to any organisation or agency established by law for ensuring the security of the Federation and security and intelligence matters generally. It is responsible for oversight at the Office of the National Security Adviser, Department of State Services, National Intelligence Agency and Presidential Air Fleet. It also interacts with other Security Agencies as it relates to its jurisdiction, public safety and security of the Nation. Like all Committees, it also considers annual budget estimates.

Oversight Mechanisms	Legislative Year			
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-March 2019
Meetings	5	4	4	
Oversight Visits	4	2	4	1
Public Hearings	1	0	1	0
Investigative Hearings	0	0	2	1
Bill referrals	2	1	1	0
Other referrals				
Interactive sessions with MDAs	3	4	4	3
Public Petitions	-	-	-	-

Table 3.13: Oversight Activities of the House Committee on National Security and Intelligence (2015-2019)

The Sessional Reports obtained from the Committee only covered the period 2018-2019. It shows that the Committee held 2 regular meetings, 7 interactive meetings, 12 investigative sessions, a joint meeting with the Senate, 2 oversight visits and 2 days for budget defence with Agencies under its jurisdiction.

Specifically, the Committee invited and met all stakeholders in the matter as referred on the following:

- i. The source and actual ownership of the 43 Billion Naira recovered from a residential apartment at Osborne Road, Ikoyi, Lagos

(HR. 169/2017);

- ii. Invasion of parts of Kaiama and Baruten Local Government Areas of Kwara State by gunmen suspected to be cattle rustlers and insurgents (HR. 25/2018);
- iii. Call on the Federal Government to provide coordinate and sustainable security in Zamfara State (HR. 61/2018);
- iv. Need for the inclusion of Kaduna and Plateau State in the states afflicted by the herdsmen-farmer crisis that the National Economic Council Working Group Sub-Committee will visit for consultation (HR. 38/2018);
- v. Incessant attacks and killings by armed bandits in Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State (HR. 5/3/2019).

The Reports of the above referrals were all successfully laid before the House for consideration.

Oversight Visits and Investigations

The Committee undertook oversight visits to some of its agencies during the period under review. This included visit to the Department of State Services (DSS) in Abuja and Counter Terrorism Centre, which is currently under construction and is being supervised by the Office of the National Security Adviser.

Additionally, the Committee investigated the Presidential Committee on Audit of Defence Equipment Procurement (CADEP) that was set up by the Presidency to review the process of Arms procurement and equipment for the Nigerian Army to tackle security challenges in the country.

Interactive Meetings

The Committee held several interactive meetings with various agencies under its jurisdiction including Office of the National Security Adviser, Department of State Services, National Intelligence Agency, Presidential Air Fleet, EFCC, Police and Nigerian Army. Specifically, the Committee held several meetings and interactive sessions between

2015-2019. Also, it held a number of interactive sessions including with the Chief of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Tukur Buratai, former Director-General of the Department of State Services, Mr Lawal Daura and former Inspector-General of Police, Mr Solomon Arase on a wide range of issues including the clash between soldiers and members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria in Zaria. The Committee undertook an investigation to determine the cause of the clash and make recommendations to the House.

Referrals on Motions and Bills

The Committee's records show that twenty-three (23) Resolutions and Motions and two (2) Bills was referred to it. The motions were mostly on issues pertaining to killings by supposed herdsmen in different parts of the country (Edo, Kaduna, Plateau, Benue and Zamfara States), illegal importation of firearms and military equipment, vandalization of electricity cables and equipment, social media threats and criminal activities of cattle rustlers.

The Bills referred to the Committee include a 2018 for an Act to establish the National Security Trust Fund to provide for the maintenance of a Trust Fund that will cater for the procurement of military security infrastructure and technology for security agencies in Nigeria and for related matters (HB. 1475). The other is the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons (Prohibition Bill (HB. 1295)

Some Outcomes Of Oversight Activities Of The Selected Committees

The oversight activities of the committees discussed above had a number of outcomes that had direct bearing on the mandate of the National Assembly to make law for the peace, order and good governance of the country. Some of these outcomes are discussed below.

A significant outcome of the activities of some of the committees was increasing the accountability in legislative processes through improved access and public participation. For instance, through its activities and innovations,

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the Senate Committee on Appropriation improved the level of public participation in the budget process and by so doing strengthened accountability through greater engagement by the public and civil society organisations.

One of the innovations of the 8th Assembly was the introduction of a joint public hearing on the Appropriation Bill to ensure more citizen-participation in the legislative processes. The Joint Public Hearing was attended by major stakeholders that included members of the National Assembly, Ministers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, heads of Ministries, Department and Agencies of the Federal Government, the Budget Office of the

Federation, Office of the Accountant General of the Federation, National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), National Assembly Budget and Research Office (NABRO), Civil Society Groups, Pressure Groups, etc. The hearing created an interface between the National Assembly and different sectors of the society as well as the public as a whole. It also enabled NASS to obtain informed sectoral inputs from stakeholders.

Some of the more evident and important outcomes of the referrals handled by the Senate Committee on Appropriation include the following:

- i. Avoidance of eminent shutdown of the country in 2015 occasioned by accumulated fuel subsidy debts.
- ii. Reduction of budget deficit in 2016 with the cutting down of the budgetary provision by the President.
- iii. Infrastructural development in the transportation sector (air, rail and water) - work on the abandoned Warri-Aladja rail line resumed and the Baro Inland Water-ways successfully took off. Also, accumulated pension debts were also settled in 2017 budget.
- iv. Revitalisation of the Nigeria Primary Healthcare Sector.
- v. Strengthening of security agencies to combat emerging security challenges in the country.

Another noteworthy outcome of the activities of the committees surveyed relates to handling of and resolving grievances through the committees on public petitions. Handling public petitions is an important function of the parliament and this role has gained greater significance since 1999. Increasingly, citizens are relying on the Public Petitions Committees of both Chambers to handle their grievances rather than going through the court system, which is often long and expensive. The Public Accounts Committee in the Senate successfully concluded 128 petitions in the period under review. The bulk of the petitions (40) pertain

to alleged wrongful/unlawful dismissal or disengagement from service. The agencies of government involved include the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), Nigerian Police Force, Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Nigerian Army, Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Pension Transitional Arrangement Directorate (PTAD), etc. There were similar petitions against private organisations such as Total E & P Nigeria Limited, First Bank, etc.

Other petitions pertain to claims of non-payment of benefits, entitlements, pension and gratuity by agencies government agencies including NNPC, Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Ministry of Niger Delta, Police Service Commission, the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC) and private companies such as Kano Electricity Distribution Company (KEDCO), Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Ltd.

Similarly, the House of Representatives' Committee on Public Petitions successfully concluded and laid 187 petitions, which were adopted by the House between 2015-2018. As with Senate, 40 of these petitions related to wrongful termination of appointment by government and private sector organisations including: University of Benin, Federal Road Safety Commission, Diamond Bank PLC, Nigerian Communications Commission, Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria, Bureau of Public Procurement (BPE), Huawei Technologies Nigeria, Nigerian Ports Authority, National Electoral Commission (INEC) and National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA). Several of the petitions concluded were on non-payment of pension and death benefits and breach of contract.

In addition to these more apparent outcomes arising from the activities of the committees on public petitions, they have also contributed in building public confidence and trust in the National Assembly.

On other occasions, the various committees discovered cases of corruption or failure of MDAs to follow due process. For instance, the Senate Committee on Women Affairs found

Handling public petitions is an important function of the parliament and this role has gained greater significance since 1999. Increasingly, citizens are relying on the Public Petitions Committees of both Chambers to handle their grievances rather than going through the court system, which is often long and expensive.

that the level of budget implementation of both the Ministry and at the Women Centre (for 2017 and 2018) and there was no adequate explanation for poor utilization of the released funds. Furthermore, the Committee discovered that funds utilisation at both levels was discretionary and expenditures were not tied to line items as required by law. Likewise, the Committee noted that the internally generated revenue (IGR) of the Centre is being utilized for items already captured in the Centre's Overhead budget.

However, in some instances, through Committee Oversight, found that some government programmes significantly contributed in alleviating poverty among Nigerian youths and improving social welfare. This is particularly the case with the Social Investment Programmes. The performance of the Social Investment Programmes so far and to a large extent is appreciable and commendable.

Through its oversight activities, the Committee on Local Content was able to bring to the notice of government and the public some infractions of the law particularly with regards the low level of participation of local companies in the exploration and production sub-sector of the oil and gas industry. Despite demonstrating capacity, the sector is still overwhelmingly dominated by foreign international oil companies, resulting in massive capital flight and stifling of local capabilities. Even though the Local Content Act seeks to ensure that local companies benefit considerably from the nation's oil wealth, reduce the pace of capital flight and ensure some degree of self-reliance in the sector, there appears to be slow progress towards achieve these objectives. Furthermore, the Committee exposed some infractions committed by both indigenous oil

companies and international oil companies regarding the approval of expatriate quota contrary to the provisions of the NOGICD Act 2010.

With regards security, the activities of



Photo: Leadership NG

the Committee on National Security and Intelligence ensured that budgetary provisions were complied with by security agencies. Several meetings were held with principal actors in the sector to discuss and find ways to tackling the myriad security challenges facing the country. Perhaps one of the 8th Assembly's most significant contributions in this regard is the passage of the 2018 Anti-Terrorism Bill which makes provisions for offences relating to terrorism such as financing of terrorist activities, etc. The House Committee on National Security also organized several conferences (e.g. on Grassroots Security) as well as other programmes aimed at raising security awareness.

The greater percentage of Committees surveyed in both Senate and House of Representatives show active involvement and engagement in Committee activities and oversight functions. This is reflected in the number of legislative outputs from these Committees as discussed above. However, it is clear that the level of seriousness and tempo of activities is not the same for all Committees as some barely meet international standards on the number of meetings to be held and oversight activities to be undertaken per session. Many of the Committees do not even keep proper records of their activities and fail to adequately track outcomes of their recommendations to MDAs.

Finally, the data from the sessional reports and the claims made by Committees on outcomes of oversight activities and hence its impact on democratic governance was supported by results from the field study. A sizeable percentage of respondents commended the efforts of the National Assembly in conducting effective oversight. Remarkably, 23.3% rated oversight performance by NASS as either excellent or very good while another 30.5% rated it as 'good'. 28.4% considered NASS' performance at fair.



Challenges Faced By Committees

Several factors that impeded effective committee performance in the area of legislative oversight were identified both in the Sessional Reports as well as through interviews and interaction with Committee Clerks and staff. The first challenge relates to funding. Many of the committees were unable to consider Bills and Motions referred to them due to lack of funding, which hindered them from conducting public hearings and reporting back to either the Senate or the House of Representatives. This factor seems to explain why committees fail to conclude legislative action on matters referred to them. In the past, insufficient funding sometimes resulted in committees relying on MDAs to finance oversight activities. This in turn undermined the quality of oversight. Addressing this perennial challenge would mean increased funding for committee activities and more judicious application of resources at the disposal of the National Assembly.

Another challenge experienced by committees is that of limited capacity and technical expertise on the part of Committee Secretariat. As a result of this, committees do not always have the necessary background information they need to undertake effective oversight. A lot of data is required as part of pre-oversight preparation to enable legislators ask the right questions and interrogate MDAs on projects and their activities. Where possible, committees have had to rely on consultants who come at significant cost to the legislature. In order to tackle this challenge, the capacity of committee clerks and staff must be continually strengthened particularly in preparing for, conducting and reporting oversight activities. Significant investment is therefore required on the part of the National Assembly bureaucracy, the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) and other stakeholders (CSOs, development partners, etc.).

Additionally, committees face significant

challenges in accessing the information required for effective oversight from MDAs. Repeatedly, committees report that MDAs are neither forthcoming with information nor readily cooperative. On other occasions, the required documents are not supplied to the committees in good time. This was particularly pervasive in the 8th Assembly due to the frosty relationship between the executive and the legislature. Similarly, committees themselves have been found to fare no better than MDAs in this regard. Accessing information on committee activities is extremely difficult and sometimes impossible without recourse to powerful individuals in the National Assembly or distribution of favours.

A related challenge to that discussed above is the difficulty in bringing together stakeholders to make inputs at public hearings. This, in large part, was also attributable to poor executive-legislature relationship that characterized the 8th Assembly. As a result of this, many Bills that were considered and passed by the National Assembly failed to secure presidential assent. Elaborate consultation is necessary in securing the buy-in of all stakeholders particularly with regards bills.

Finally, several internal factors that include an inefficient scrutiny process, poor management of committees, etc., contribute to committee ineffectiveness in conducting oversight. A lot of frivolous bills are introduced annually by legislators. These get referred to committees for public hearing and further legislative actions. The huge number of bills means that committees are unable to consider them all. A strengthened scrutiny process at all stages of the legislative process will improve efficiency and enable committees to streamline their activities. Secondly, the multiplicity of committees, often with overlapping jurisdictions, results in conflict and inefficiency. The National Assembly is unable to adequately fund all these committees, many of which were created Leadership purely

for political exigencies. The large number of committees ultimately affects funds available to individual committees. This underscores the need to restructure and reduce the number of committees, improve funding to them and put in place a robust scrutiny process that involves the NASS legal department and NILDS.

In summary, this chapter has surveyed the oversight functions of twelve legislative committees in the 8th Assembly (2015-2019). Five (5) committees were considered in the Senate and seven (7) from the House of Representatives. An analysis of the activities of the various committees was undertaken mainly to determine their outputs as well as outcomes particularly with regards oversight.

Findings from the analysis show that the degree in the intensity of committee activities varied from one committee to another. Whereas some were found to be very active (as indicated by the number of meetings, oversight activities undertaken and Bills/Motions considered), a few others were moderately active while the rest were relatively inactive.

Among the active committees were Senate Committee on Appropriation, which held over 79 meetings (ranging between 9 and 36 per session), considered four (4) Bills and four (4) Motions. Its counterpart in the House of Representatives held over 300 regular hearings with MDAs. Additionally, it considered and wrote reports on the 2010-2014 Annual Reports of the Auditor General. Additionally, it cleared over 1,500 audit queries leading to recovery of over N40 Billion from defaulting MDAs.

The Senate Committee on Public Petitions was similarly active in the period under review. The Senate Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions held 94 meetings and hearings to consider petitions referred to it (ranging from 39 to 47 per session). It concluded 139 petitions and laid 126 reports. In addition to these, the Committee held between two (2) and five (5) interactive sessions with MDAs per session and one (1) confirmation hearing.

Another active committee during the period under review is the Senate Committee on Local

Content. This is particularly important given that the Committee was created halfway in the life of the 8th Assembly (2017). This is evident in the high number of meetings held by the Committee in the third and fourth sessions (18 and 14 respectively). Similarly, the Committee considered several petitions, conducted investigations and successfully resolved them. It also undertook eight (8) oversight visits in the two (2) sessions. This is an average of four (4) per session. The recommended number of oversight visits by IPU is two (2) per session.

Equally active was the House Committee on Basic Education and Services, which held between two (2) to ten (10) meetings per session, considered 14 bills and held Public Hearings on 12, received thirty (30) motions out of which only a few were successfully treated.

Other committees, which were moderately active, include the Senate Committee on Women Affairs, which also held several meetings and interactive sessions. In addition to regular meetings, it also held four (4) budget defence meetings with MDAs, initiated and moved several motions and conducted two (2) oversight visits. In addition, the Senate Committee on Poverty Alleviation held an average of one (1) meeting per session, dealt with one (1) motion and considered three (3) bills, which it successfully reported back on. However, the Committee did not undertake any oversight visits. The House Committee on Public Petitions was also only moderately active having held a series of meetings and considered over 1000 petitions out of which it successfully concluded 187.

Similarly, based on the information available, the House Committee on National Security and Intelligence was moderately active. For the 2018-2019 session for instance, the Committee only held two (2) regular meetings, seven (7) interactive sessions and twelve (12) investigative sessions. It also dealt with twenty-three (23) motions and two (2) bills.

Other Committees performed below average. The House Committee on Youth Development was relatively inactive during the review period having only held a few meetings, considered two (2) bills, and completed action on one. It

however, performed well in other areas such as oversight visits and investigative hearings. Another committee whose performance was equally poor was the House Committee on Anti-Corruption, which held between 3 to 5 meetings per session and undertook only two (2) oversight visits in the period under review. It also considered three (3) bills but only held public hearing on one (1). Of the six (6) motions referred to it, there was no legislative action on four (4). Furthermore, the House Committee on Constituency Outreach met between two (2) and five (5) times per session but was only able to consider one (1) bill and two (2) motions.

In all therefore, the performance by National Assembly Committees in the area of oversight was good. Overall, many of the committees met international benchmarks on the required number of meetings and oversight activities (visits, hearings, referrals, investigations, etc.). However, the performance of some of the committees was below average as indicated by the records of their activities. A lot more can be done by some of the special committees (Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions) particularly in the consideration and resolution of petitions. The data shows that only ten (10) percent of petitions referred to these committees were successfully resolved at the end of the life of the 8th Assembly. Many of the committees blamed poor funding for their poor performance in relation to public hearings and oversight visits. Further work is needed in this area to determine the structure of committee funding and its effectiveness. Finally, despite some of the limitations identified and discussed, the activities of some of the committees resulted in positive outcomes contributing to good governance and increased transparency in government operations.



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CHAPTER 4

**An Assessment of the
Representation Function and
Activities of the 8th National
Assembly**



Introduction

Representation is a critical component of democracy. It is also a core function of the legislature as a cardinal institution of democracy. This suggests that the legislature serves as a central institution for the expression of the representative functions of democracy. One primary way of expressing such representation is what has been termed constituency outreach, which in itself has various mechanisms of promoting the idea of representation.

This chapter undertakes a critical assessment of the performance of the representation functions of the 8th National Assembly (NASS) in Nigeria, spanning 2015-2019. The chapter explores the extent to which the 8th NASS

explored and used various mechanisms/instruments of representation to advance their functions in this regard. In particular, the chapter evaluates the place of: a) Symbolic/numerical representation; b) Satisfaction with legislation promoting peace, order and good governance; c) Inclusiveness of legislations; d) Satisfaction with oversight; e) visits and public/town hall meetings;) Responsiveness to constituents' demands; g) Setting up and managing constituency office; h) Attracting and executing constituency projects; and i) Overall assessment. The chapter also underscores the strengths and weaknesses of each of these instruments. Finally, the chapter highlights the challenges of effective representation and offers recommendations for improvement.



Conceptual Clarification: Representation

Generally, representation is an important function of the legislature that is central to democratic development. Though an essentially 'contested concept', Edigheji sees political representation 'as a key activity, a lifeline or linchpin that connects the citizenry to the government' (2006: 96). This connection between citizens and government manifests in diverse forms. These include, according to Senator Uzodinma 'a valid and active demonstration of respect for and recognition of the political struggle, economic wishes and expectations, infrastructural needs, interest and aspirations of the electorates, with regards to the people on whose mandate the lawmaker is constitutionally operational' (quoted in Benjamin, 2015: 206).

While applicable to all political systems, the need for effective representation of usually competing and, at times, conflicting interests, is much more acute in societies with complex diversity, such as Nigeria. In such societies, the legislature is expected to be a reflection of various societal interests in composition,

decision-making and policy outcomes. Most countries of the world have long recognised the importance of this in the way they allocate parliamentary seats at both the lower and upper chambers to reflect the federal/national character of the state (Fink-Hafner, 2011). In the Nigerian case, the upper legislative chamber, known as Senate, is constituted on the basis of equality of all states, and the lower chamber, called the House of Representatives, on the basis of population. This way, one can argue that in terms of composition, there has always been a conscious attempt to make the legislature a representative organ of the Nigerian society.

But this only amounts to symbolic representation, measured mainly via the number of seats allotted to various societal groups in parliament (Omotola, 2012, 2019). While it is crucial, given its capability to serve as a basis or foundation for effective representation, it is not necessarily a self-sufficient condition. Much depends on a number of intervening factors, such as the form and character of election that produced the

representatives, nature of party politics and the personal qualities of the representatives, among others.

Representation, however, assumes deeper meaning (and becomes effective) when taken beyond composition for many reasons. In this connection, representation 'requires members to advocate the particular concerns of their respective constituencies' (Barkan, 2010: 35), which is often difficult because, as Barkan argues, and rightly so, 'legislating requires bargaining and compromises across these and other interests, and therein lays a huge challenge' (Barkan, 2010: 35). Worse still, as he further argues, 'there is tension between legislating and constituency service: the former seeks to arrive at decisions that serve the entire nation, whereas the latter by definition serves a smaller subsector of society' (Barkan, 2010: 35). This brings to the fore the age-long debate initiated by the well-known political theorist and lawmaker, Edmund Burke, in his famous speech to his constituency in the city of Bristol in 1774, over whether a representative should act as a trustee or delegate.

To be sure, the question of accountability and responsiveness has been an important subject in legislative studies and governance. Accountability connotes institutions and processes by which public officers, or any persons for that matter, are made to act within constitutional limits in a way that ensures the actualisation of popular interests over and above selfish cum partisan interests. In a related vein, responsiveness connotes 'a conscious and deliberate effort by the representative to match his decisions on matters of public policy to his constituency's

policy preferences' (Jones, 1973: 925). But for Prewitt and Eulau, responsiveness is 'an inter-collectivity relationship between a representational body and the community which it serves'. In this case, representation connotes 'acting in the interests of the represented, in a manner responsive to them' (Prewitt and Eulau, 1969: 428-429). This kind of responsive representation is only possible, according to Jones (1973), if two conditions are met. First, the representative must correctly perceive his/her constituency's attitudes on relevant political issues; and second, s/he must act in accord with his perceptions of his/her constituency's preferences. Only then does representation graduate from symbolic to substantive representation. This is the substance of effective representation (Omotola, 2019).

Though a useful entry point, with a strong emphasis on responsiveness to the constituency, yet Jones tends to ignore the reality of the existence of many other centres of power competing for the loyalty of representatives such as 'national interests', political party and godfathers. Even at that, this entry point opens us to the old debate initiated by Burke in 1774 over whether a representative should be a delegate or a trustee. A delegate is a representative whose main tasks are to reflect the views and interests of his/her constituency. A trustee, on the other hand, is one who offers his/her own independent judgment of what is best for the nation, even if it conflicts with the interests or desires of his constituency. For Burke, the most desirable form of representation is the trustee model. As he powerfully expresses his position:

Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative, to live in the strict union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinions high respect; their business unremitting attention. But his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, to any set of men living. Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole-where not local purposes, not local prejudices, ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member, indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a Member of Parliament (Burke, 1774; quoted in Ornstein, 1992,p.).

These are obviously very powerful and persuasive words. But, as argued elsewhere, one must be careful not to be unduly swayed by the oratory power of the message. Edmund Burke accords pre-eminence to national interest, and rightly so, but fails to recognise the tensions usually associated with balancing national interests with constituency services, which has become an important aspect of legislative business, most especially in developing countries. Moreover, Burke leaves readers unclear about his measures of unbiased opinion, mature judgment and enlightened conscience, all of which can be subjective, to enable us identify one when we come across it. While the parliament is, in principle, supposed to be guided by collective, as against sectional interests, most countries, especially in developing democracies, are yet to attain such heights in practice. Burke was, therefore, unduly idealistic (see Omotola, 2014, 2015).

The debate is alive and will not be resolved here. However, MPs generally owe responsibility to the people, more so in political systems where MPs are directly elected. In doing this, however, they must be conscious of the collective responsibility of the legislature as an institution to effectively discharge their constitutional responsibilities. This is why legislative business privileges bargaining and compromise in order to satisfy all interests as much as possible. The need for compromise is even higher in 'new' legislatures where the struggle for resources to meet constituency services tend to strengthen the hands of the executive over those of the MPs. Worse still, the re-election bids of MPs is not so much dependent on the mass public. The executive can undercut them by not even fielding any MPs considered to be anti-governing party by engineering his/her downfall in primary elections.

For another, there are several other specific interests that demand representation in parliament, notably ethnic minorities, women and the youth (Haider-Markel, et al 2000). After all, the 'fairness of representation and democratic accountability hinge on collective decision-making being open to all citizens' (Mestove and Power, 1992; quoted in Hunold, 2001: 158), irrespective of age, gender or

ethnic identities. Unfortunately, the gender and generational dimensions of political representation in Nigeria remains abysmally low (see Hamalai, et al, 2017; Omotola, 2007, 2012).

For the purpose of this assessment, however, greater emphasis is placed on representation at the substantive level, though not at the expense of symbolic representation. As such, we evaluate representation at the level of constituencies, with occasional reference to symbolic representation of identity groups, particularly gender. A constituency connotes 'one of the areas into which a country is divided for election purposes, and from which a representative is elected to serve in a legislative body. It is an area where the electorate returns a representative to a designated parliament' (Benjamin, 2015). The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in Sections 49 and 71, empowers the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to divide the entire federation into 360 Federal Constituencies for purpose of election into the House of Representatives and delineate each state of the federation into three senatorial districts for purpose of election into the Senate Chamber of the National Assembly respectively (FRN, 1999). While Senatorial constituencies are regulated by equality of states, that of the House of Representatives is governed by population.

As noted earlier, constituency outreach is one of the most important mechanisms through which the legislature discharges its representational functions. As a concept, it 'consists of activities and mechanisms designed' to attain the following: a) Bring constituents closer to elected Members; b) Help Members address constituents' deeply felt or urgent needs; c) Engage Members with their constituents in mutually beneficial problem identification and problem solving; d) Inform development, introduction and enactment of, or advocacy for, legislation; e) Ensure accountable, equitable, accessible and appropriate services for all who need them. For it to be effective, it is important that outreach strategies and services are tailored to 'fit the norms, values, traditions, needs and concerns of the district' (National Democratic Institute,

NDI, 2004: 3).

Constituency outreach is of benefits to legislators, citizens, and political parties. The NDI (2004: 3) underscored the various ways in which this can happen. For the legislators, constituency outreach can serve the following purposes:

- Boost the visibility and public image of a legislator,
- Help to develop ideas that can be turned into legislation or other legislative-related activities such as hearings, fact-finding missions and resolutions,
- Facilitate consensus building on controversial issues where constituents hold divergent views, and
- Provide a platform for building coalitions with local groups, leaders and opinion makers.

For the constituents, constituency outreach can:

- Help in acquiring useful advocacy, representational or leadership skills,
- Assist to gain access to important information,
- Help to learn where and how to mobilize resources and services, strengthen community infrastructure and development, and
- Reinforce accountability and transparency among elected and appointed officials.

For political parties, constituency outreach can:

- Boost the chances of re-election.
- It can also be a powerful tool for political education and mass mobilization.

Here, greater emphasis is on individual legislators as representatives of their respective constituencies, rather than as

an institution. Though a known feature of legislator-constituency relations the world over, the significance of this function has come to assume more prominence in developing countries, especially in Africa where legislators are expected to, beyond their 'representational roles', make positive and practically verifiable impacts on the well-being of constituents. For this reason, constituency services in Africa are known to have taken two formats:

1. Lawmakers regularly visiting their home districts to meet constituents and offer them assistance for individual needs; and
2. They support small to medium-scale development projects that provide district residents with public goods such as roads, water-supply systems, schools, health clinics and meeting halls (Barkan, 2010: 35).

Like in most other African countries, the imperative of the constituency services of legislators in Nigeria has been accorded some reasonable measure of importance. One way of doing so is the controversial measure called constituency allowance and projects. Another medium through which this function is facilitated is through the mandatory requirement of all parliamentarians at all levels to establish a functional constituency office in their home district, which they are expected to visit at regular intervals. Through the rents paid for the office accommodation, and the personal emoluments of the secretariat staff, the lives of constituents are, directly or indirectly, being positively affected. But whether these measures are being accorded adequate attention, is a different matter altogether. This is the primary focus of the next section.



Beyond Symbolism: Assessing Representation Functions by the 8th NASS

a. Symbolic/Numerical Representation

At the symbolic level, all states of the federation could be said to have been adequately represented numerically through the principle of equality of representation at the Senate and the use of population for the House of Representatives. Tables and two one below offers numerical representation at NASS by states and geopolitical zones respectively.

No	State	Population 2006 Census	No of LG	House of Representatives	Senate
1	Abia	2,833,999	17	8	3
2	Adamawa	3,168,101	21	8	3
3	Akwa Ibom	3,920,008	31	10	3
4	Anambra	4,182,032	21	11	3
5	Bauchi	4,676,465	20	12	3
6	Bayelsa	1,703,358	8	5	3
7	Benue	4,219,244	23	11	3
8	Borno	4,151,193	27	10	3
9	Cross River	2,888,966	18	8	3
10	Delta	4,098,391	25	10	3
11	Ebonyi	2,173,601	13	6	3
12	Edo	3,218,332	18	9	3
13	Ekiti	2,384,212	16	6	3
14	Enugu	3,257,298	17	8	3
15	FCT	1,405,201	6	2	1
16	Gombe	2,353,879	11	6	3
17	Imo	3,934,899	27	10	3
18	Jigawa	4,348,649	27	11	3
19	Kaduna	6,076,562	23	16	3
20	Kano	9,383,682	44	24	3
21	Katsina	5,790,578	34	15	3
22	Kebbi	3,238,628	21	8	3
23	Kogi	3,278,487	21	9	3
24	Kwara	2,381,089	16	6	3
25	Lagos	9,013,534	20	24	3
26	Nasarawa	1,863,275	13	5	3
27	Niger	3,950,349	25	10	3
28	Ogun	3,728,098	20	9	3
29	Ondo	3,441,014	18	9	3

30	Osun	3,423,535	30	9	3
31	Oyo	5,591,589	33	14	3
32	Plateau	3,178,712	17	8	3
33	Rivers	5,185,420	23	13	3
34	Sokoto	3,696,999	23	11	3
35	Taraba	2,300,736	16	6	3
36	Yobe	2,320,591	17	6	3
37	Zamfara	3,259,846	14	7	3
	Total	140,021,541	774	360	109

Table 4.1: Electoral Map of Nigeria, showing population, LGAs and NASS composition per state
Source: Adapted with modifications from Benjamin, 2015

Zones	Population	Senate	HoRs
North Central: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, FCT	20,276,357	19	51
North East: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe	18,970,965	18	48
North West: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara	35,794,944	21	92
South East: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo	16,381,829	15	43
South-South: Akwa, Bayelsa, Cross River, Rivers, Delta, Edo	21,014,475	18	55
South West: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo	27,581,982	18	71
Total	140,020,552	109	360

Table 4.2: Composition of the NASS by Geopolitical Zone
Source: Developed by the author from various sources. See also Benjamin, 2015.

As can be seen from Tables 1 and 2 above, the allocation of seats in the Senate and HoRs is based on equality of states and population respectively. To that extent, each state and by extension geopolitical zone could be said to have been fairly represented. Yet, some lop-sidedness is still discernible. For instance, each geopolitical zone has six states except South East (SE), which has five, and North West (NW) with seven. In a way, the loss of the SE became the gains of the NW. But the population, and arguably landmass of each of the zones may have played a decisive role in this process. If we consolidate, for example, it becomes crystal clear that the NE has a total population of 18,970,965, which amounts to 11.69% of the total population; compared to a total population of 35,794,944 for the NW,

which amounts to 25.56% of the total national population. Accordingly, the NE and NW are entitled to 42.08 and 92.01 seats in the HoRs respectively. And that is what they got (43 and 92 respectively), showing that population was key in the allocation of seats per state/geopolitical zones in a fairly representative way. This cuts across all the states and geopolitical zones. Notwithstanding, this perceived imbalance has been one of the main premises for the agitation for political restructuring particularly by the SE (see National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies, NILDS, 2017).

b. Legislations promoting peace, order and good governance

Section 4 (2) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) mandated the NASS to make laws for peace, order and good governance of the country. Any legislature that delivers on this important mandate could be said to have represented the people effectively beyond numbers. This is the whole essence of substantive representation, promoting legislations that advance the interest and welfare of the people. In this connection, Suberu (2015) offers an insight into how such legislations could be identified. Specifically, he identified three broad categories of legislations, namely laws: a) promoting national unity and responding to disintegrative tensions and crises, b) enhancing vertical and horizontal accountability, c) promoting transparency, fiscal responsibility and anti-corruption reform. To these one can add laws and motions addressing national security issues, human rights and economic development.

With respect to the foregoing, the 8th NASS could be said to have largely lived up to expectations. Notable examples of such legislations passed during the period, in the estimation of the Senate President, Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki, include the North East Development Commission Act, which established and adequately resourced the commission for the speedy and effective transformation of the region following the Boko Haram insurgency; the unbundling of the decade-old Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) into a quartet of workable bills including the Petroleum Industry Governance Bill (PIGB), reform of the Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) regarded as the most comprehensive reform law governing Nigeria's business environment in nearly 30 years; and the Nigeria Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) Bill, which represents one of the major anti-corruption laws passed during the period and 'it saved the country from being expelled from the global body of the Egmont Group' (Saraki, 2019).

In their own independent assessment, Nigerians would appear to share this positive rating of the 8th NASS. Specifically, 14.4%, 55.1% and 22.9% of the respondents were

of the view that the legislations and motions passed by the 8th NASS promoted peace, order and good governance to 'a large extent'; 'some extent'; and 'a little extent' respectively. This gives a total of 92.9%. Only 7.2% of the respondents thought that the legislations and motions did not promote peace, order and good governance 'at all'.

If these and related laws are reputed for promoting for peace, order and good governance of the country, it follows, by logical extension, that they would also have addressed some of the important concerns of the people, which is also a critical component of representation. The leadership of the Senate alluded to this fact in an interview with them at the Senate Chamber when they noted that 'The quality and capacity of members as in the case of legislation will affect representation' (Saraki, et al, 2019). Most of the respondents expressed this perception. Specifically, 273 (17.2%), 691 (43.5%) and 448 (28.2%) of the respondents rated the laws and resolutions passed by the 8th NASS as "Very Relevant"; "Relevant" and "Somewhat Relevant" respectively. However, 108 (6.8%) of the respondents considered these legislations as "Irrelevant", while another 67 (4.2%) of the respondents expressed no views.

Another expression of relevance of legislation passed by the 8th NASS is found in the high number of respondents who considered the passage of the Not Too Young To Run Bill as commendable. In specific terms, not lesser than nine in ten (97.3%) of the respondents either "highly commended" or "commended" the passage of the bill, a perception shared almost in equal proportion by majority of respondents on the HoRs (95.9%) and Senates (97.4%). Similarly, not fewer than nine in ten (96.7%) of the respondents believed that the passing of the People with Disabilities bill was at least "commendable". Only 3.3% of the respondents had no comment on the bill. This also cuts across both chambers as more than half of the respondents (51.5%) at least commended the Senates while 48.5% commended the House of Representatives for the passage of the bill.

c. Inclusiveness of Legislations

Inclusion, especially of marginal and vulnerable groups such as women, youth and People with Disabilities (PWDs) in parliament is an important indicator of representation. In the Nigerian context, valid concerns remain about the representation of these groups. Take women, for example. As can be seen from Table 3 below, women have always been underrepresented in both chambers of the

NASS under the Fourth Republic. In a Senate of 109 senators, the highest representation of women was attained in 2007 when only 9 (8.2%) women were elected. Rather than improve, as was the case in 2003 when it moved from 3 (2.8%) in 1999 to 4 (3.7%), it disappointingly dropped from 9 in 2007 to 8 (7.3%) in 2011 and remained constant at 8 in 2015. It however slightly decreased to 7 (6.42%) in 2019.

NASS	1999	2003	2007	2011	2015	2019
Senate	3 (2.8%)	4 (3.7%)	9 (8.2%)	8 (7.3%)	8 (7.3%)	7 (6.42%)
HoRs	12 (3.3%)	22 (6.1%)	27 (7.5%)	24 (6.7%)	14 (3.9%)	11 (3.05%)

Table 4.3: Women representation in the NASS, 1999–2019
Source: Hamalai, Egwu and Omotola, 2017, p. 238, 249; Onyeji, 2019

Similar pattern was noticeable in the House of Resources where the highest rate of women representation was recorded also in 2007 when only 27 (6.1) women were elected in a House comprising 360 members. As it happened in the Senate, women representation also declined from 27 in 2007 to 24 (6.7%) in 2011; and the lowest representation of women recorded in 1999 when only 12 (3.3%) women were elected, followed by an increase to 22 (6.1%) in 2003. The fortune declined to 14 (3.9%) in 2015 and further downward to 11 (3.05%) in 2019 (Onyeji, 2019).

The situation is not any different for young people and PWDs. For the young people, available statistics indicate that a total of 1515 of them contested for either Senatorial or HoRs election in the 2019 election. This number, according to YIAGA AFRICA (2018), represents 27.4% for House of Representatives and 13.5% for the Senate; compared to 18% and 10% for the HoRs and Senate in the 2015 general elections respectively (see also The Punch, 6 February, 2019; Sanni, 2019).

The import of the foregoing is that these constituencies would appear to have gained what they lost in terms of numerical representation through some other means, notably the passage of some inclusive legislation. Two of such legislations are particularly promising. These are the Not Too Young to Run Act and the Disability Act. The Not Too Young to Run Act, for example,

ensured a reduction in the age qualifications for contesting elections to both executive and legislative positions in the country. More specifically, the Act altered Sections 65, 106, 131, 177 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) to reduce the age qualification for the Office of the President from 40 years to 30 years; Governor 35 to 30, Senate 35 to 30, House of Representatives from 30 to 25 and State House of Assembly 30 to 25 (Omotola, 2017). This Act remains one of the major signposts of the 8th NASS in its representational credentials. As Saraki (2019: 5) puts it, the law 'opened the pathways for the inclusion of fresh young faces in the 2019 elections, in a victory for participatory politics and democracy'.

But the failure to pass the gender equality bill may have undermined, temporarily, the struggle for gender inclusivity. The bill sought to give effect to: (a) Chapters II and IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; (b) The International Covenants on Human Rights which affirm the principle of non-discrimination and proclaims that all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that everyone is entitled to all the rights set out without distinction of any kind including distinction based on sex; (c) The domestication of certain provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa and the National Gender Policy. Pursuant to these



goals, the bill has provisions for: a) prohibition of discrimination (Section 3), promotion of equality, full development and advancement of all persons (Section 4), the adoption of temporary special measures to eliminate discrimination (Section 5), modification of socio-cultural practices (section 7) and elimination of discrimination in political and public life (section 8), among others (Gender Equality Bill, 2011). Hailed as a potential game changer in the struggle for gender equality in Nigeria, the bill was unfortunately rejected by the NASS. The main premises of the argument of those opposed to the bill were that it would contradict the provisions of the Sharia Court of Appeal as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria as amended; and that it also contradicts or undermines the religious and

cultural beliefs of some Nigerians (Makinde, et al, 2017; Payton, 2016).

The refusal to pass this particular bill into law may have accounted for the mixed reactions of Nigerians to the subject of inclusiveness of legislations passed by the 8th NASS. To be sure, although not less than nine in 10 (94%) of the respondents believed that the 8th NASS passed legislations and made resolutions that were inclusive, the degree of rating varies from one respondent to the other. In particular, 14.4% of the respondents considered the legislations to be inclusive "to a large extent"; 53.9% "to some extent"; 25.8% "to a little extent" while 6.0% respondents did not see any inclusion in the legislations passed. These perceptions were almost balanced for the two chambers. For instance, almost same number of respondents (House of Representatives - 55.1% and Senates - 52.8%) believed that these legislations passed were inclusive 'to some extent' (14.9%) and 'to a large extent' (13.8%), respectively.

There are reasons to believe that respondents' responses to the issues of the relevance and inclusiveness of legislations passed by the 8th NASS are reliable. One of such is that most of the respondents were able to identify some of the bills passed by the 8thNASS, which they considered as relevant, inclusive and/or impactful. These included the Minimum Wage Bill; Not Too Young To Run Bill; People With Disability Bill; Child Protection Bill; Local Government Autonomy Bill; Electoral Act Reform Bill; Grazing Bill; Public Procurement Bill; Basic Health Care Bill; Bill on Prompt Treatment of Accident Victims; Judicial System Protection Amendment Act; Whistle Blower Protection Bill; Petroleum Industry Bill; Nigerian Financial Intelligence Bill; Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act; Abolition of Dichotomy between HND and Degrees Bill; Agricultural Loan Bill; Nigerian Railways Authority Bill; Public Treasury Bill; Police Act Amendment; Digital Rights Bill; Bill Against Sexual Harassment of Students in Tertiary Institutions; Bill on the Removal of Age Limit in Employment; Federal Audit Service Commission Bill; Local Industry Bill; Peace Corps Bill; Bill on test for HIV Status Before Marriage; and Girl-child Marriage Bill.

d. Satisfaction with Oversight

The consensus in the literature seems to be that the NASS has not lived up to expectations in the performance of oversight functions. Some of the reasons often advanced for this include: inadequate funding, corruption, low level of technical competence, political interference and the lackadaisical attitude of legislators (Ojo and Omotola, 2015, Hamalai, 2015).

However, all has not been doom and gloom. Respondents expressed some reasonable degree of satisfaction with the performance of oversight responsibilities by the 8th NASS. In fact, 116 (7.3%) of the respondents considered the activities of the committees as "Excellent", 254 (16.0%) as "Very Good," 483 (30.5%) as "Good," 450 (28.4%) respondents as "Fair"; 161 (10.2%) as "Poor," 72 (4.5%) as "Very Poor," 49 (3.1%) respondents were indifferent. When aggregated from 'excellent' to 'good'

responses, we have a total of 1,303 (53.8%) positive responses, which is a little more than average. If we add the category of 'fair' to it, it becomes 1753 (82.2%) positive responses.

The positive rating of oversight performance by the 8th NASS is somewhat surprising. This is because the dominant strand of arguments in the mainstream media in Nigeria has been that the 8th NASS was a clog in the wheel of democratic progress due to its widely publicized 'antagonistic' dispositions to the executive. The leadership of the ruling All Progressive Congress (APC) was among those championing this dominant narrative. However, the leadership of the 8th NASS holds a completely different perspective, which seems to be more in tune with the perception expressed by the sample population of this study. In his valedictory speech, for example, the Senate President was of the view that:



...if the Executive sees the National Assembly's work on the budget as interference despite the provision of the constitution, then there will continue to be problems between both arms of government. If the presidency refuses to have engagements and consultations with the leadership of the National Assembly before the President submits the budget to the legislature, then there will continue to be frictions. If the Executive sees the failure of a few of its appointees to secure confirmation by the Senate as a disagreement, then the relationship will not improve. If the Executive encourages its appointees who fail to secure Senate confirmation to remain in office, then there will continue to be disagreement. If the Executive believes the Legislature is a rubber stamp without the right to question its actions, then it will be a subversion of the Principles of Separation of Powers and Checks and Powers. My advice is that both arms of government have a role to play in our quest for good governance and their leadership should work for co-operation and fruitful engagement (Saraki, 2019: 6).

This was the same position maintained by the leadership of the 8th NASS in an interview session with them at the Senate chamber (Saraki, et al, 2019). By implication, while the

executive arm considers the dispositions of the legislature with respect to oversight as meddlesomeness, Nigerians though otherwise, so also the leadership of the 8th NASS.

e. Visits and Public/Town Hall Meetings with Constituents

Periodic (quarterly, for example) meetings have been established as one of the effective methods of keeping in touch with constituents. Through such meetings, representatives are able to meet and interact with constituents. Such meetings also provide platforms for collective need assessment and joint decision making, especially when information is not only disseminated to constituents, but provisions are also made for their feedback.

Under the 8th NASS, legislators would appear not to have taken good advantage of the opportunities and benefits of such meetings. Only 1.9% and 9.0% of the respondents said their senators visited 'very frequently' and 'frequently' respectively. Another 41.7% claimed they visited but 'not frequently'. Worse still, 31.4% of the respondents said that they did not visit at all. 16.0%, however, opted for 'no comment'. This same pattern was noticeable in the HoRs where 43.3% of the respondents noted that the members of the HoRs representing their constituencies did not visit their constituency

frequently. In fact, only 4.6% observed that members visited 'very frequently,' and another 15.9% rated the visits as 'frequently.' Another 23.2% of the respondents noted that the members did not visit at all.

But as an institution, the 8th NASS visited some constituencies, families and individuals in times of need. One notable example was the Senate visit in August 2015 to Maiduguri, Borno State – the first ever National Assembly delegation, to see first-hand the living conditions of thousands displaced by the insurgency. During the visit, the Senate assured the Shehu of Borno that rebuilding the North East was high on their agenda. The senate also 'visited IDP camps, spoke with the people, carried their babies, comforted them, letting them know that their well-being was a priority for the Senate'. This visit, according to the Senate President, played an important role in the establishment of the North East Development Commission (Saraki, 2019: 3). As The Vanguard newspaper reported:

The delegation led by Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki was actually in Maiduguri to have an on-the-spot assessment of the situation, empathise with the people and encourage the political, military and traditional leadership so that they can continue to soldier on, despite the difficult times, many Nigerians have been filled with admiration for the Eight Senate. (Quassim, 2015: p.?)

The visit was well received among the people of the state and beyond. Speaking during the visit, the state Governor noted that 'it was the first time that the federal legislature deemed it fit to send a delegation to the troubled-zone', adding that 'the trip gave hope to his people that they have not been forgotten' (Quoted in Quassim, 2015).

Another Senate delegation led by the Deputy President of the Senate, Senator Ike Ekweremadu, also visited Adamawa state for the same reasons as the visit to Borno. There was also the important visit to the Kuchingoro IDP Camp in Abuja during the holy month of Ramadan in 2017, during which the senate donated essential supplies to the inhabitants, while making commitment to getting them

back on their feet. The senate also visited the Abagena IDP Camp in Benue State, all leading to useful interventions in these situations (Saraki, 2019: 4).

The situation is not any different with respect to holding meetings with constituents. Findings from our survey reveal that most of the lawmakers did not hold meetings with their constituents regularly. Specifically, 39.4% of the respondents observed that the senators representing them did not meet frequently with their constituents. The rating was so bad to the extent that only 1.3% of the respondents observed that Senators met their constituents "very frequently," another 6.5% rated meetings as "frequently," making a total of 7.6% positive response. However, 39.0% of the respondents observed that the senators met their constituents "not frequently;" and another 39.4% said they did not hold meeting at all. 13.9% however, expressed no view. The trend was very similar for the HoRs, where 3.7% and 13.8% of the respondents said members representing them had meetings with constituents 'very frequently' and 'frequently' respectively. This amounts to a total of 17.5% positive response. On the other hand, a whopping 42.2% of the respondents claimed their representatives held meetings 'not frequently,' while 28.6% said they held meetings with constituents 'not at all'. When aggregated, irrespective of degrees (very frequently, frequently or not frequently), it shows that members of the HoRs held more meetings with their constituents (69.7%) than their counterparts in the senate (46.8%).

f. Setting up and managing a Constituency Office

This has also been identified to be very critical to the effectiveness of constituency outreach. The advantages of a constituency office have been identified to include:

- A constituency office can convey a sense of permanence about the elected representative to the constituents
- A constituency office ensures that there is always a physical site for meetings, programs, issues, concerns and constituency administration.

- Constituents identify one central location through which they can contact and reach their elected representative.
- There is one central location where resources, such as materials can be obtained or disseminated.
- Information regarding development in a particular constituency can be obtained at one central location. This is important for NGO and donor partners that are interested in working in your constituency
- A constituency office, whether it is in a house, an old shop and proper office premises symbolize organizational capabilities and seriousness, both of which are prerequisites for government, donor and NGO support.
- Through a constituency office, management and access to information is institutionalized. An informed constituency is likely to lead in development than a constituency that is in the dark (see Constituency Handbook, nd: 16-17).

On the other hand, the disadvantages of establishing a constituency office also abound. For example, it has been argued that 'a constituency office may inhibit legislators from thinking creatively about how to reach out to the constituents'. It is said not to be 'an end in itself, but only one of several mechanisms for reaching out to the constituents and managing constituency issues'. Opening a constituency office is said to be 'only one part of a constituency outreach programme and its effectiveness connected to that of the elected representative managing it because 'a constituency office cannot manage an elected representative, but vice versa' (Constituency Handbook, nd: 17).

With specific reference to the Nigerian experience, constituency offices are known to be confronted with some challenges. These include, among others, inadequate and inexperienced staff, lack of an independent body to monitor and evaluate the performance of constituency office, lack of institutionalised periodic performance appraisal mechanism of



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members over their constituency, inadequate public awareness on the existence and significance of constituency office, and inadequate working facilities.

As pertinent as constituency offices are to effective representation, the records from our survey are not encouraging. At the aggregate level, only 12 (0.8%) of the respondents expressed any knowledge on the establishment of constituency offices by members of the 8th NASS across the sampled constituencies. Again, 26.6% of the respondents only found these offices in one quarter (25%) of the identified constituencies. Again, 19.1% of the respondents did not know about any established constituency offices. However, when disaggregated, there was variation between the senate and the HoRs. For the senate, 28.4% of the respondents had knowledge of constituency office by Senator, as opposed to 30.9% who do not know. Another 40.7% of the respondents do not know whether the Senators have constituency office or not. The situation is not fundamentally different in the HoRs where only 36.7% of the respondents had knowledge of constituency office by member of the HoRs; 26.0% of respondents had no such knowledge and 37.3% don't know of constituency offices. In both chambers, however, findings reveal that knowledge of the existence of constituency offices was generally poor among respondents.

It is one thing to have constituency offices. It is another thing altogether for the offices to be functional. We define functionality basically in terms of the location, visibility and accessibility of the office, presence of adequate, qualified and competent staff, as well as overall responsiveness to the interests of constituents. The foundation, therefore, lies in first establishing the offices before

talking about their functionality or otherwise. Only what is in existence can function, either well or not. As we have already established above, very few respondents had any form of knowledge about the existence of such offices. With respect to their functionality or otherwise, however, a little less than half, specifically 47.6% of the respondents, rated the constituency offices positively, though in varying degrees. The breakdown shows that 8.5% considered them to be "very functional," 21.2% as "functional," 10.8% as "fairly functional," and 7.1% as "somewhat functional." On the other hand, not less than one in ten (11.5%) deemed this office to be "not functional." The rating was almost the same for the two chambers, with 87.4% and 84.8% 'functionality' for senate and HoRs respectively.

However, when unpacked into its component parts, the functionality of such offices becomes suspect. In terms of accessibility, for example, only 36.5% of the respondents observed that the offices were "very accessible" or/and "accessible" to majority of the constituents. On the other hand, 25.5% of the respondents noted that the offices were accessibly but with difficulty, while another 15.5% felt the offices were not even accessible at all. Though generally poor, the caveat here is that a large proportion of the respondents, totalling 37.9% expressed no view on this pertinent question, opting for 'no comment'. It should be noted, however, that there was some degree of consistency between the senate and the HoRs, each standing at 36.7% and 39.6% for accessibility, respectively.

g. Responsiveness to Constituents' Demands

In terms of responsiveness to the demands of the constituents, much depends on the kind of issues presented to the constituency offices by the people. In this respect, a representative view of issues highlighted by most of the respondents include: a) youth empowerment; b) job placement/employment; c) provision of social amenities like schools, hospitals, roads, among others; d) insecurity; e) personal issues, especially financial assistance of all forms, including school fees, hospital bills, house rent, naming and burial ceremonies; f) flood and erosion control; g) dispute resolution; and h) other issues that required urgent attention. This list of items is in tandem with those highlighted by the Senators during an interview session with the leadership of the 8th NASS (Saraki, et al, 2019).

The ways in which the representatives (Distinguished Senators and Honourable Members) respond to these demands also matter. For most of the respondents, most of these demands receive timely interventions from their representatives, who they said often respond by treating the issues with some reasonable degree of importance. Some form of responses they highlighted included: a) sending delegate(s) to assess the issues; b) contacting the people through their personal assistants and party leaders; and c) meeting with relevant stakeholders to tackle these issues. Again, this is in line with the responses of the leadership of the senate during an interview session where most of them listed their pattern of responses to demands from their constituents to include: a) Empowerment programs such as skills acquisition; b) Support of government agencies in their empowerment programs; c) Dissemination/circulation of job adverts through their constituency offices; d) Employment of more aides at the constituency office; e) Facilitating start up loans to constituents; and f) creating mechanisms for monitoring and feedback (Saraki, et al, 2019). Despite this generally positive outlook, some of the respondents still noted that while their representatives were usually open to listening to their plights, they sometime made promises

without doing anything until the next election. However, members of the HoRs were found to respond more positively than the senators to these issues.

The way representatives and constituents communicate with one another is a critical indicator of responsiveness and effective representation. It is always better when it is simple and easy. Findings from the survey indicate that the easiest ways to communicate with their representatives, in their order of significance, is as follows: a) face-to-face (32.8%); b) phone call (15.6%); c) sms (15.0%); d) Online (13.5%); e) letters (12.0%); and f) other contact (11.0%). Specifically, Furthermore, findings from the survey shows that constituents are almost twice more likely to reach members of the HoRs through face-to-face contact (29.0%) than through phone call (15.4%). This pattern is similar to that of the senate's, who are also slightly more than twice likely to reach out to their Senator through face-to-face contact (36.4%) than through phone call (16.3%). But the direction, in terms of means of communication and degree remains the same for both senators and members of HoRs.

Again as an institution, the 8th NASS seemed responsive to the yearnings of Nigerians. In the wake of sex-for-marks scandal involving Miss Monica Osagie of the Obafemi Awolowo University, the Senate did not only back up the Sexual Harassment law it enacted with a resolution on the issue, it also conducted an investigation into the allegation. The Senate also took a motion and passed a resolution that was critical in ending the two-year impasse at the Ladoko Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) in Ogbomoso, which according to the Senate President 'had kept the 34,000 student body in limbo, due to the closure of the institution'(Saraki, 2019). The resolution grew out of the motion moved in July 2017 by Senator Abdulfatai Buhari of APC, Oyo state. In his motion, the Senator noted that:



Strike has crippled the activities of the school for more than one year due to the inability of the parent states to provide the sum of N4 billion to pay accumulated salaries and arrears of members of staff, thereby leaving over 3000 staff of the university to wallow in hardship and poverty . The careers of over 34,000 students are currently in jeopardy, turning them to social miscreants and leaving parents who have laboured to give their wards quality education to languish in pains and agonies for no fault of theirs... The current pitiable situation of LAUTECH has pathetically shown that the continuous joint-ownership in the management of the affairs of the university by the parent states is difficult and has become necessary for the federal government to intervene and review this nature of ownership (Adebayo, 2017: 1).

The students were able to resume their education in September 2017.

h. Attraction and Execution of Constituency Projects

Attraction and execution of constituency project is also pivotal to effective constituency outreach. The idea behind it is that legislators, like the president or governors, are also elected in a general election and should have something to present to their constituents in return for electing them. However, it has been one of the most controversial issues in legislative governance in Nigeria. Its meaning, essence and applications remain contentious; with some calling for its outright cancellation not only as a duplication of executive powers and lack of effective oversight, but also as a veritable tool for corruption (see Egburonu, et al, 2017; Opara, 2017). In fact, some have even challenged its constitutionality, labelling it as an aberration (Orimogunje, 2015).

As a concept, it connotes developmental projects sited in the constituencies of elected representatives by various Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) of government as appropriated in the budgets. Usually financed through Constituency Development Funds (CDFs), the common features of CDFs, according to Orimogunje

(2015: 181), include the following:

- The constituency project sought to be carried out or implemented is usually identified by the legislator representing the host constituency, acting in the parliament, or in a CDF Committee of his constituency;
- The project is designed, funded and executed, with some participation or collaboration of the legislator in the process;
- The project is funded directly from the budget of the central or state government;
- The project is usually identified with the legislator as his/her constituency project.

Despite widespread criticisms against constituency projects, especially in Nigeria, studies have identifies its potential benefits to include:

- The provision of infrastructure, promptly, without prolonged bureaucratic red-tape formality;



- The active involvement of the constituents in the identification of developmental projects for implementation in their constituency;
- Better articulation and utmost satisfaction of the pressing needs of the constituency;
- The creation of opportunity for elected representatives to directly participate in the alleviation of the challenges or problems faced by their constituents (Orimogunje, 2015).

It follows, logically, that if well managed, it holds potentials for constituency development, which can in turn boost the standing and reputation of the legislator. However, if constituency project will ever measure up to expectations among constituents, representatives must be prepared to undertake certain reform initiatives aimed at repositioning the programme. One, the need assessment of constituencies must be done collaboratively by the representatives and the constituents. Two, the constituency offices of representatives must be fully equipped with adequate human and material resources. It must also be duly carried along, in fact, play central role in the aggregation and articulation of such needs. Three, openness and transparency must be strictly adhered to in the processes of contract awards, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

In reality, findings from the survey across selected states suggest two things. It is either the representatives did not much in this regard, or adequate awareness and publicity were not given to what they did. For the senate, most of the respondents (42.4%) claimed that they did not know of such projects sponsored by their Senator in their districts. This is huge by any standard. However, another 34.7% claimed awareness of sponsored projects, while 22.9% reported there were no such sponsored projects by their senators in their districts. For the HoRs, 43.7% of the respondents observed projects sponsored by members of the HoRs in their Federal Constituency. Another 17.0% of the respondents however claimed there were no such sponsored projects in their Federal Constituency. However, 39.2% of respondents claimed that they did not know if there were sponsored projects by the members of the House of Representatives. Comparatively, respondents who reported sponsored projects by their Senators and members of the HoRs amounted to 34.7% and 43.7% of the respondents respectively.

i. Overall Assessment

In the final analysis, respondents were asked to assess public confidence in the quality of representation given by members of the 8th NASS. The verdict was not very encouraging. To be sure, only 3.7% of the respondents rated the quality of representation as 'excellent', 6.0% as 'very good', and 20.1% as 'good'. This gives a total of 29.8%, which is far below average. Indeed, it is a little above a quarter of the respondents. However, a larger proportion of the respondents (34.0%) rated the quality of representation to be 'fair'. Another 22.5% and 11.5%, however, rated it to be 'poor' and 'very poor' respectively. This amounts to a total of 34.0%. The import of this is that the same proportion of respondents (34.0) rated the quality of representation as either 'fair' or 'bad', which is higher than those who rated it positively (29.8%). In comparative terms, the HoRs was better rated positively (33.4%) than the senate (26.6%). But in the 'fair' standing, the Senate was also better rated at 35.4% compared to HoRs' 32.6%. However, the senate scored higher in the category of poor quality of representation (36.6%) compared to

the HoRs (31.3%).

These responses largely cohere with the ones earlier offered by respondents in response to Questions 22, 23, 24 and 25 on the survey instrument (questionnaire). Question 22 addressed the quality of representation given by the members of the 8th NASS to their constituents. Specifically, 58 (3.7%) of the respondents rated the performance of the 8th NASS as 'excellent;' 150 (9.4%) as 'very good,' and 364 (22.9%) as 'good'. This gives a total of 36.0% of positive responses. Another 533 (33.6%) of the respondents, almost the same with the other rating (34.0%), rated the performance as "Fair." However, 307 (19.3%) and 153 (9.6%) of the respondents rated the performance of representation function as "poor" and 'very poor' respectively. This gives a total of 11.0% negative response, compared to 34.0% in the subsequent rating. Specifically, most of the respondents viewed the quality of function by the House of Representatives as either "Good" (26.3%) or "Fair" (34.3%) in relation to "Fair" (32.9%) and "Poor" (22.9%) for the Senate.

On their evaluation of the performance of the 8th NASS with regards to its representation functions, 3.8%, 12.5% and 26.1% of the respondents rated them as 'excellent', 'very good' and 'good', respectively. This gives a total of 42.4%, which is also far below average. Another 34.2% rated it as 'fair', while 15.3% and 6.0% rated it as poor and very poor respectively. This amounts to a total of 21.3% negative rating. In the final question on the same subject (Q24), respondents were asked about the extent to which the representation

functions carried out by members of the 8th NASS promoted peace, order and good governance as enshrined under section 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as Amended). In their responses, 7.5% and 38.1% of the respondents said it did 'to a large extent' and 'some extent' respectively. This gives a total of 45.6% positive response. Another 41.1% said it did as to 'a little extent'. However, 9.8% said it did not promote peace, order and good governance at all.

Across the five questions on the performance, quality and effect of representation by the 8th NASS, the responses were generally poor, below average in all cases. There were, however, some variations, which manifest only in degree, not in kind. But in its own estimation, the Senate is of the view that its scorecards should be higher. In their own personal assessment, for instance, Senator Bala Ibn Na'Allah (member of the NASS for 12 years) scored the 8th NASS 9/10. Other scores included Senator Gbenga Ashafa (member of the Senate for 8 years) 7.5/10; Senator Chukwuka Utazi (4 years membership of the Assembly) 7/10; and Senator Monsurat Sunmonu, 8/10 (Saraki, et al, 2019). These are excellent grades, with an average score of 7.9/10. More senators shared this positive sentiment during their valedictory session on 6th June, 2019 (see Nigerian Senate, 2019). It was also the same for the HoRs, whose members highlighted the achievements in law making, motions and representation during their valedictory session (House of Representatives, 2019).

(House of Representatives, 2019).



Challenges of Effective Representation

Effective representation in Nigeria has been hampered by certain challenges. One of such challenges has to do with managing the weight of rising constituents' expectations. Almost across board, experiences have shown that legislators are coming under an increasing weight of pressure for one form of assistance or

the other in the name of constituency outreach. While rising poverty, youth unemployment and general economic downturn may have played some role in this development, the prevalence of certain misconceptions about constituency outreach, particularly constituency project, may have accentuated the challenge. It is partly for

this reason that the Senators advocated the need for 'more sensitization of the electorate on the functions of lawmakers as well as the need to elect competent representatives in order to enhance the law-making process' (Saraki, et al, 2019).

Abiding stereotypes and misconceptions about legislative emoluments represent another serious challenge. There is a widespread perception that Nigerian legislators are the highest paid the world over. This may be real nominally. However, when this is situated within the context of legislative competence, the reverse may become the case (see Hamalai, et al, 2016). Unfortunately, this impression is shared even in supposedly informed circles. But the legislators should accept responsibility for the negative controversies surrounding their emoluments. Nigerians have the right to know how much legislators earn since they are paid from the public purse, taxpayers' monies. Not even the revelation by Senator Shehu Sani about the salaries and allowances of Senators has been able to clear the air on the controversy. Until there is more openness and transparency on the matter, pressure from the constituency on legislators may continue to increase. The Senators noted this challenge thus: 'The negative perception of the National Assembly, especially with regard to the alleged jumbo pay discourages law makers' (Saraki, et al, 2019).

Managing tensions between collective legislative interests and constituent's interest remains another challenge. Often times, this can be hard to do. But given trade-offs that usually characterise tensions between national and constituency's interests, it is important to always find a balance between the two. As noted earlier, while representation

'requires members to advocate the particular concerns of their respective constituencies' (Barkan, 2010), 'legislating requires bargaining and compromises across these and other interests, and therein lies a huge challenge'. This is because as Joel Barkan further argues, 'there is tension between legislating and constituency service: the former seeks to arrive at decisions that serve the entire nation, whereas the latter by definition serves a smaller subsector of society' (Barkan, 2010: 35). Establishing a balance between the two has been problematic for obvious reasons. One, the legislature in Nigeria has not been stable in form and character. It is active today and inactive tomorrow. This makes it difficult for the legislators to act in public interest. Two, self and party considerations often tend to influence their accountability and responsibility so as to secure re-election tickets (see Ojo and Omotola, 2015).

Yet, the challenge of competent staff (legislative aides) has not been totally addressed. This problem is not unconnected to the recruitment processes of legislative aides, most of who are often selected on the basis of extraneous considerations outside merit, that is, academic qualifications and relevant experiences. Besides, opportunities for training on the job have also been limited for most legislative aides. Worse still, there is also a seeming high level of turnover among legislators and legislative aides, especially once their principals lose their re-election bids. Consequently, not all legislative aides are well equipped to effectively discharge their responsibilities, including managing constituency offices and other constituency-related functions. The Senators themselves acknowledged this challenge when they noted in an interview session that:

The quality and capacity of members as in the case of legislation will affect representation. However, the National Assembly as an institution has no control of the kind of people who get elected into the Assembly. Therefore, Nigerians in various Senatorial Constituencies should elect senators who have capacity, competence and character to provide effective representation (Saraki, et al, 2019: p?).

Another important challenge noted by the Senators has to do with the lack of citizen participation in the legislative process. This, according to the senators, is discouraging because efforts had been made to ensure that legislative activities become more open and transparent by the 8th Assembly, especially with the holding of public hearings. As they put it:

... after the passage of Bills, citizens begin to criticize and cast aspersions on the process, and the National Assembly and the Bills thereby deriding the institution of parliament. This is more disheartening and discouraging when such criticisms come from people who ordinarily should understand the National Assembly better given their professional backgrounds. Hence, various analysts make uninformed analyses of what they could easily verify (Saraki, et al, 2019).

This contribution has undertaken a critical assessment of the 8th NASS, with specific emphasis on their performance of representation functions. The assessment shows a mixed record. While the 8th NASS could be said to have lived up to expectations in some areas, there were also areas where more were desired. This judgment is predicated upon the perception of the constituents.

In terms of the positives, the 8th NASS was well-rated in the areas of landmark legislations they made aimed at promoting peace, order and good governance, inclusiveness, anti-corruption, etc. These include the Not Too Young to Run Act, the Disability Bill, the North East Development Commission Act, and amendments to the Federal Character Law to ensure balance, inclusion and fairness in governance, among others. Also in terms of oversight, the 8th NASS was also generally well rated. Effective performance of these functions, in our own reckoning, translates into effective representation because in the final analysis, the people are the primary beneficiaries of such legislative gestures.

However, the records are not as glowing with respect to core components of representation such as visits and meetings with constituents, establishment and management of constituency offices, responses to constituents'

demands, attraction and execution of constituency projects, and communication with constituents. More specifically, visits and meetings with constituents were found to be very poor by both Senators and Members of the HoRs. While meetings with constituents were also found to be generally poor, it was rated to have been better done by members of the HoRs than their Senate counterparts. Again, despite generally poor knowledge of constituency offices, respondents were of the view that the extant offices during the study period were functional. This assessment of functionality becomes suspect, if not problematic when broken into its component parts. For instance, access to these offices was rated to be poor. Performance in terms of attraction and execution of constituency projects was also not well rated. Generally considered to be below average in both chambers, it was a little better rated in the HoRs than the Senate. It is either much was not done in this regard or limited or no awareness/publicity was created by the legislators about such interventions. But in terms of responses to demands from constituents, the representatives were well rated. Respondents noted that their representatives respond to their demands in multiple forms either directly or indirectly through their aides.

At the aggregate level, the overall assessment

was below average for the 8th NASS. The positive rating stands at 29.8% of the respondents ('excellent', 'very good' and 'good' combined); 34.0% as fair and another 34.0% as poor (a combination of 'very poor' and 'poor'). But if we take 'fair' as an indication of pass mark, then the positive assessment becomes a total of 63.8% of the respondents. When disaggregated, the rating was a little better for the HoRs than the Senate.

In the light of the foregoing findings, the following recommendations are considered imperative. First, it is important to pay increasing attention to the quality and capacity of members, which will affect the quality of legislation, oversight and representation. Unfortunately, as the Senate rightly pointed out, this task is beyond the capability of the NASS as an institution. It does not have control over the kind of people who get elected into the Assembly. Responsibility for this, therefore, rests squarely on the shoulders of Nigerians to assume ownership for the election of their representatives. In doing so, they should focus on those 'who have capacity, competence and character to provide effective representation.' Second, the high rate of legislative turnover in successive elections also affects the quality of representation. This deserves serious attention

and political parties have important roles to play in this respect. Third, there is need for more sensitization of the electorate on the functions of lawmakers, as well as the imperative of their participation in the legislative processes.

Fourth, the NASS needs to do more in terms of creating awareness and publicity about what they do. The establishment of a NASS Television Station (NASS TV) has been a good starting point. As the Senators pointed out, it 'has helped to improve representation in the 8th Senate. However, this can be further improved if legislators are allotted time to appear on the NASS TV to give an account of their performance. Moreover, legislators need to do more in terms of visits, meetings and communication with their constituents. Based on the findings, constituents placed premium on these channels of communication in their order of significance: face-to-face, phone calls, SMS, online and letters. For these to be effective, there must be a functional constituency office that is not only accessible, but also well-staffed and equipped. Finally, there are other instruments of promoting constituency outreach and effective representation that legislators should exploit. These include media and publicity, constituency newsletters, as well as research and opinion poll.



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CHAPTER 5

Summary and Conclusion



been signed into law by the President (perhaps as result of the executive-legislative frictions). Similarly, a number of the 8th National Assembly's key Senate and House) Committees have actively and vigorously conducted oversight functions, with positive and impactful results on governance and good order of the country.

4. The conduct of the oversight generally, and Committees' hearings specifically, would however require remarkable improvements, with fine-tuned procedures and transparency and accountability. There is a general perception that some oversight 'visits' ministries and other government agencies are laden with dubious, if not corrupt intent, and that some public hearings were conducted arbitrarily and/or with other than wholesome objectives. Injection of greater doses of accountability and transparency, and improvement of the procedures and processes of conducting these, would go along way to improve public confidence in legislative oversight and public hearings.
5. In general, the effective and efficient discharge of the core mandate of the legislature seems to have been hampered by inadequacy of resources, in particular relative underfunding of some essential Committee work, as well as lack of capacity and professionalism of legislators and their support staff. Increased but transparently accountable budgetary allocations, as well

as continuous training and re-training for capacity building of both the legislators and their support staff are necessary.

6. The evident communication gap, as well as friction and/or tension, which characterised the relationship between the legislature and the executive arms of government in the 8th National Assembly needs to be effectively addressed and mechanisms put in place to prevent a future reoccurrence. Stability, accommodation and mutual respect, in the working relationships amongst all the three arms of government, and especially between the executive and the legislature, are necessary conditions for good democratic governance and consolidation of democracy and must therefore be nurtured and entrenched.

The report contains a number of specific and general recommendations, which if implemented would increase and improve the performance of the 9th and subsequent national Assemblies in the discharge of their constitutionally assigned responsibilities of law making, oversight and representation. It is hoped that the leadership of the 9th National Assembly, as well as all the major stakeholders would find these useful give them appropriate consideration.

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Appendix 1

An Assessment of the 8th National Assembly in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

Survey Questionnaire A - For National Assembly Staff and Legislative Aides

Introduction

The Centre for legislative Engagement of YIAGA AFRICA is conducting a Research Project to assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly from its Inauguration on 9th June 2015 to date. You are invited to kindly answer the following questions, which will generally assist the Research Team to gain greater insight into the work of the 8th National Assembly. Specifically your answers will enable Researchers to understand the challenges faced, how they have been addressed, and the overall accomplishments of the 8th National Assembly. Be assured that your answers will be treated in the strict confidence and used only for the purpose of the research.

Date

Background Information

Tick (✓), as appropriate, unless otherwise indicated:

1. Gender: a) Male b) Female.....
2. Age: a) 18 – 35years
 b) 36 – 45 years
 c) 46 – 55 years
 d) 56 - 65 above
 e) 66 & A above
3. Qualifications:
 a) Primary School Leaving Certificate
 b) Secondary School Leaving Certificate
 c) A Levels
 d) University degree or Equivalent
 e) Post-graduate qualifications (Masters)
 f) Post-graduate qualifications (PhD)
 g) Other (Specify):
4. What are you:
 a) Staff in the National Assembly Bureaucracy
 b) Legislative Aide:
 f) Other (specify):.....
5. What is your full title / designation?
.....



6. If employed by the National Assembly, for how long?
- a) Less than 4 years
 - b) 4 – 8 years
 - c) 9 – 12 years
 - d) 13 – 16 years
 - e) 17 – 20 years
 - f) 21 years & above

7. What is your estimated Annual Income from all sources? (in Naira)
.....

Views and Opinion on the Performance of the 8th National Assembly

8. How would you rate the role of the legislature in Nigeria?
- a) Very Important
 - b) Important
 - c) Not Important
 - d) No Comment
9. How do you view the performance of the 8th National Assembly with regards to its legislative responsibilities?
- a) Excellent
 - b) Very Good
 - c) Good
 - d) Fair
 - e) Poor
 - f) Very Poor
10. To what extent have the legislations passed by the 8th National Assembly promoted peace, order and good governance as enshrined under sections 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended)
- a) To a large Extent
 - b) To some Extent
 - c) To a little Extent
 - d) Not at All
11. How relevant do you consider the Bills, Laws and Resolutions passed by the 8th National Assembly?
- a) Very Relevant
 - b) Relevant
 - c) Somewhat Relevant
 - d) Irrelevant



e) No Comment

12. What is your opinion regarding the passage of the Not Too Young To Run Bill by the 8th National Assembly?

a) Highly Commendable

b) Commendable

c) Somewhat Commendable

d) Condemnable

e) No Comment

13. What is your opinion regarding the passage of the Persons with Disabilities Bill by the 8th National Assembly?

a) Highly Commendable

b) Commendable

c) Somewhat Commendable

d) Condemnable

e) No Comment

14. Are you aware of the passage of any other Bills similar to Not Too Young To Run and Persons with Disabilities Bills by the 8th National Assembly?

a) Yes b) No

15. If Yes to 014. List the Bills you are aware of:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

16. How do you view the performance of the 8th National Assembly with regards to its Oversight functions?

a) Excellent

b) Very Good

c) Good

d) Fair

e) Poor

f) Very Poor

g) No Comment

17. To what extent have the Oversight functions carried out by the Committees of the 8th National Assembly promoted peace, order and good governance as enshrined under sections 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as Amended)?



- a) To a large Extent
- b) To some Extent
- c) To a little Extent
- d) Not at All
- f) No Comment

18. How would you rate the quality of the Oversight functions carried out by the Committees of the 8th National Assembly?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

19. What in your view is the main purpose of conducting Oversight functions by the Committees of the 8th National Assembly?

- a) To hold government Ministries/Departments/Agencies to account
- b) To Embarrass Ministers/Permanent Secretaries/Directors-General
- c) To make obtain money and/or favours from the MDAs
- d) All of the Above
- e) None of the Above
- f) Other (Specify)

20. How do you view the performance of the 8th National Assembly with regards to its Representation functions?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

21. To what extent have the Representation functions carried out by Members of the 8th National Assembly promoted peace, order and good governance as enshrined under sections 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as Amended)?

- a) To a large Extent
- b) To some Extent



- c) To a little Extent
- d) Not at All
- f) No Comment

22. What in your view is the quality of representation given by the members of the 8th National Assembly to their constituents?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

23. To your knowledge in what percentage of Constituencies have members of the 8th National Assembly established constituency offices?

- a) 100%
- b) 75%
- c) 50%
- d) 25%
- e) 0-10%
- f) Don't know

24. In your view, how accessible to the majority of the Constituents are the established Constituency offices?

- a) Very Accessible
- b) Accessible
- c) hardly Accessible
- d) Not Accessible
- e) No Comment

25. How frequently do you think members of the 8th National Assembly visit their Constituencies?

- a) Very frequently
- b) Frequently
- c) Not frequently
- d) Not at All
- e) No Comment

26. How frequently do you think members of the 8th National Assembly meet with their constituents?

- a) Very frequently



- b) Frequently
- c) Not frequently
- d) Not at All
- e) No Comment

27. How would you assess public confidence in the quality of representation given by members of the 8th National Assembly?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

28. Identify and list 5 major achievements of the 8th National Assembly in order of priority:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

29. Identify and List 5 major Challenges faced by the 8th National Assembly in order of priority:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

30. What would you say are the causes of the frictions, which characterized the relationship between the Executive – 8th National Assembly?

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.....

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31. What do you recommend should be done to prevent frictions and conflicts, as well as improve future relations, between the Executive and the Legislature?

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32. What do you consider to be the main obstacles to citizens' participation in the activities of the 8th National Assembly, such as public hearings, public petitions, etc.?

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.....

33. Recommend what should be done to enhance citizens' participation in the activities of the 9th National Assembly and others in the future:

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.....
.....

34. What measures would you recommend for the National Assembly to ensure inclusivity especially in the discharge of its legislative activities?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

[If to be Administered

Name of QA:.....

Signature of QA:

Appendix 2

An Assessment of the 8th National Assembly in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

Survey Questionnaire B - For Respondents from the 12 Sampled States

Introduction

The Centre for legislative Engagement of YIAGA AFRICA is conducting a Research Project to assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly from its Inauguration on 9th June 2015 to date. You are invited to kindly answer the following questions, which will generally assist us to gain greater insight into the work of the 8th National Assembly. Specifically your answers will enable the Research Team to understand the challenges faced, how they have been addressed, and the overall accomplishments of the 8th National Assembly. Be assured that your answers will be treated in the strict confidence and used only for the purpose of the research.

Date

Background Information

Tick (✓), as appropriate, unless otherwise indicated:

1. State:
2. Senatorial District:
3. Federal Constituency:
4. Gender: a) Male b) Female.....
5. Age: a) 18 – 35years
 b) 36 – 45 years
 c) 46 – 55 years
 d) 56 - 65 years
 e) 66 & Above
6. Qualifications: a) No Formal Education
 b) Primary School Leaving Certificate
 c) Secondary School Leaving Certificate
 d) A Levels
 e) University degree or Equivalent
 f) Post-graduate qualifications (Masters)
 g) Post-graduate qualifications (PhD)
 h) Other (Specify):
7. Employment Status:
 a) Unemployed
 b) Self-employed

c) Employed

8. If employed, state name of your Employer:

9. If employed what is your designation?

10. What is your estimated Annual Income from all sources?(in Naira)

.....

Views and Opinion on the Performance of the 8th National Assembly

11. How would you rate the role of the legislature in Nigeria?

a) Very Important

b) Important

c) Not Important

d) No Comment

12. How do you view the performance of the 8th National Assembly with regards to its legislative responsibilities?

a) Excellent

b) Very Good

c) Good

d) Fair

e) Poor

f) Very Poor

13. To what extent have the legislations passed by the 8th National Assembly promoted **peace, order and good governance** as enshrined under sections 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as revised)?

a) To a large Extent

b) To some Extent

c) To a little Extent

d) Not at All

14. How relevant do you consider the Bills, Laws and Resolutions passed by the 8th National Assembly?

a) Very Relevant

b) Relevant

c) Somewhat Relevant

d) Irrelevant

e) No Comment

15. What is your opinion regarding the passage of the Not Too Young To Run Bill by the 8th National Assembly?

a) Highly Commendable



- b) Commendable
- c) Somewhat Commendable
- d) Condemnable
- e) No Comment

16. What is your opinion regarding the passage of the Persons with Disabilities Bill by the 8th National Assembly?

- a) Highly Commendable
- b) Commendable
- c) Somewhat Commendable
- d) Condemnable
- e) No Comment

17. Are you aware of the passage of any other Bills similar to Not Too Young To Run and Persons with Disabilities Bills by the 8th National Assembly?

- a) Yes
- b) No

18. If Yes to 017. list the Bills you are aware of:

.....

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.....

.....

19. How do you view the performance of the 8th National Assembly with regards to its Oversight functions?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

20. To what extent have the Oversight functions carried out by the Committees of the 8th National Assembly promoted peace, order and good governance as enshrined under sections 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as Amended)?

- a) To a large Extent
- b) To some Extent
- c) To a little Extent
- d) Not at All
- f) No Comment



21. How would you rate the quality of the Oversight functions carried out by the Committees of the 8th National Assembly?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

22. What in your view is the main purpose of conducting Oversight functions by the Committees of the 8th National Assembly?

- a) To hold government Ministries/Departments/Agencies to account
- b) To Embarrass Ministers/Permanent Secretaries/Directors-General
- c) To make obtain money and/or favours from the MDAs
- d) All of the Above
- e) None of the Above
- f) Other (Specify)

23. How do you view the performance of the 8th National Assembly with regards to its Representation functions?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

24. To what extent have the Representation functions carried out by Members of the 8th National Assembly promoted **peace, order and good governance** as enshrined under sections 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as Amended)?

- a) To a large Extent
- b) To some Extent
- c) To a little Extent
- d) Not at All
- f) No Comment

25. What in your view is the quality of representation given by the members of the 8th National Assembly to their constituents?



- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

26. To your knowledge in what percentage of Constituencies have members of the 8th National Assembly established constituency offices?

- a) 100%
- b) 75%
- c) 50%
- d) 25%
- e) 0-10%
- f) Don't know

27. Is there a Constituency Office established by the Senator in this Senatorial District?

- a) Yes..... b) No..... c) Don't Know

28. If Yes to 027, when was it established?.....

29. If Yes, how functional is the constituency office?

- a) Very functional
- b) Functional
- c) Fairly functional
- c) Somewhat functional
- d) Not functional
- e) No Comment
- f) Don't Know

30. Is there a Constituency Office established by the Member of the House of Representative representing this Federal Constituency?

- a) Yes b) No c) Don't Know

31. If Yes to 030, when was it established?.....

32. If Yes, how functional is the constituency office?

- a) Very functional
- b) Functional
- c) Fairly functional



- c) Somewhat functional
- d) Not functional
- e) No Comment
- f) Don't Know

33. In your view, how accessible to the majority of the constituents are the established Constituency offices?

- a) Very Accessible
- b) Accessible
- c) Accessible with difficulty
- d) Not Accessible
- e) No Comment

34. How frequently does the Senator representing this Senatorial District visit his/her Constituency?

- a) Very frequently
- b) Frequently
- c) Not frequently
- d) Not at All
- e) No Comment

35. How frequently does the Member representing this Federal Constituency visit his/her Constituency?

- a) Very frequently
- b) Frequently
- c) Not frequently
- d) Not at All
- e) No Comment

36. How frequently does the Senator representing this Senatorial District meet with his/her constituents?

- a) Very frequently
- b) Frequently
- c) Not frequently
- d) Not at All
- e) No comment

37. How frequently does the member of the House of Representatives representing this Federal Constituency meet with his/her constituents?

- a) Very frequently
- b) Frequently
- c) Not frequently

- d) Not at All
- e) No comment

38. What are the issues commonly taken to the Constituency Offices?

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39. How do your representatives (Senator and Member) respond to these issues?

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40. Are there constituency projects sponsored by your Senator in this Senatorial District?

- a) Yes
- b)
- c) Don't Know

41. If Yes, please list them:

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42. Are there constituency projects sponsored by your member of the House of Representatives in this Federal Constituency?

- a) Yes
- b)
- c) Don't Know

43. If Yes, please list them:

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44. In your view, what is the easiest way of communicating with / reaching your representatives (Senator/Member)?

- a) Letters
- b) Phone call
- b) SMS

- c) Online
- d) face-to-face
- e) Other means (Specify)
-

45. How would you assess public confidence in the quality of representation given by members of the 8th National Assembly?

- a) Excellent
- b) Very Good
- c) Good
- d) Fair
- e) Poor
- f) Very Poor
- g) No Comment

46. Identify and list 5 major achievements of the 8th National Assembly in order of priority:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

47. Identify and List 5 major Challenges faced by the 8th National Assembly in order of priority:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

48. What would you say are the causes of the frictions, which characterized the relationship between the Executive – 8th National Assembly?

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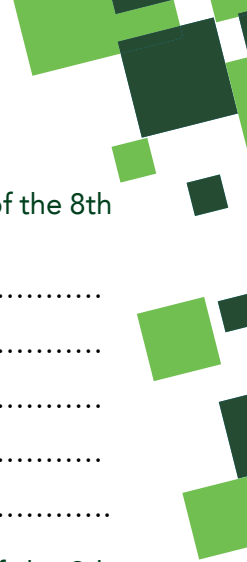
49. What do you recommend should be done to prevent frictions and conflicts, as well as improve future relations, between the Executive and the Legislature?

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50. What do you consider to be the main obstacles to citizens' participation in the activities of the 8th National Assembly, such as public hearings, public petitions, etc.?

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51. Recommend what should be done to enhance citizens' participation in the activities of the 9th National Assembly and others in the future:

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52. What measures would you recommend for the National Assembly to ensure inclusivity especially in the discharge of its legislative activities?

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.....

[If to be Administered

Name of QA:.....

Signature of QA:

Appendix 3

An Assessment of the 8th National Assembly in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

Interview Guide for Leaders of the National Assembly, Chairs and Secretaries of the Selected Committees

Introduction

The Centre for Legislative Engagement of YIAGA AFRICA is conducting a Research Project to assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly from its Inauguration on 9th June 2015 to date. You are invited to kindly answer the following questions, which will generally assist the researchers to gain greater insight into the work of the 8th National Assembly. Specifically your answers will enable the research Team to understand the challenges faced, how they have been addressed, and the overall accomplishments of the 8th National Assembly. Be assured that your answers will be treated in the strict confidence and used only for the purpose of the research.

Date of Interview

Committee of:

Senate

House of Representatives

Name of Committee:

Designation of Respondent:

- a. Senate President
- b. Deputy Senate President
- c. Speaker
- d. Deputy Speaker
- e. Majority Leader of Senate/House
- f. Deputy majority Leader
- g. Minority Leader
- h. Deputy Minority Leader
- i. Chief Whip
- j. Deputy Chief Whip
- k. Committee Chairman
- l. Deputy Committee Chairman

1. For how long have you been Chairperson of this Committee?
2. What are the main functions of your Committee/Office?
3. List the range of activities carried out by your Committee during the 8th National Assembly



4. What do you consider the five (5) main achievements of your Committee during the 8th National Assembly?
5. What do you consider the 5 main challenges faced by your Committee/Office in the discharge of its responsibilities during the 8th National Assembly?
6. What recommendation(s) can you make on how to improve Executive – Legislature relationship?
7. How has the 8th Assembly tried to promote inclusive legislations during its tenure?
8. What recommendations would you make to improve the smooth and successful execution of the Committee’s / National Assembly’s responsibilities in the future?
 - a. With regards to law making functions
 - b. With regards to Oversight functions
 - c. With regards to Representation responsibilities
9. In your view, has the 8th National Assembly satisfied the expectations of the citizens whom you are representing?
10. What has the 8th National Assembly done successfully to promote inclusivity in its legislative activities?
11. On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you personally rate the performance of the 8th National Assembly?
12. What should the 9th National Assembly do differently from the 8th Assembly in order to improve its performance?
13. Have you established a functional Constituency office(s)?
14. Where is it/are they located?
15. How many staff is there in your constituency office(s)?
16. Do you hold regular meetings with your Constituents, in your constituency?
17. What issues are normally brought to your constituency office(s)?
18. How do you address these?

Name and Signature of Interviewer:

Appendix 4

An Assessment of the 8th National Assembly in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

1. What is your assessment of the role of the legislature in Nigeria?
2. How would you assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in discharging its constitutional responsibilities of law making, oversight and representation?
3. What are the main challenges that affected the performance of the 8th National Assembly? **Probe for factors that undermined its performance**
4. What is the general perception of the public about the 8th National Assembly?
5. What avenues are available for citizens' engagement with the 8th National Assembly?
6. How sufficient are the available avenues?
7. Did these perceptions influence citizens' participation in the activities such as Public Hearings, Oversight, etc.?
8. Has the 8th National Assembly been responsive to the yearning of the youths, persons with disabilities and women?

Probe for inclusive legislation

9. What factors do you think were responsible for getting the 8th National Assembly to pass inclusive legislation? **Probe for pressure from CSOs**
10. How would you assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly within its mandate for making laws for **peace, order and good governance** as enshrined under sections 4(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as Amended).
11. How relevant have the laws passed by the 8th National Assembly been in addressing contemporary challenges in Nigeria?
12. What were the legislative agenda of the 2 Chambers of 8th National Assembly and how successfully has the Agenda been executed?
13. Would you say that the 8th National Assembly adhered to its legislative agenda and calendar in the period of its operation?

Appendix 5

Analysis of Survey Data from the Selected / Sampled States

(A) RESPONDENTS DEMOGRAPHICS

In the survey, there were 1,044 male representing 66% and 549 female representing 34% of the total respondents. This distribution is presented in Figure 1

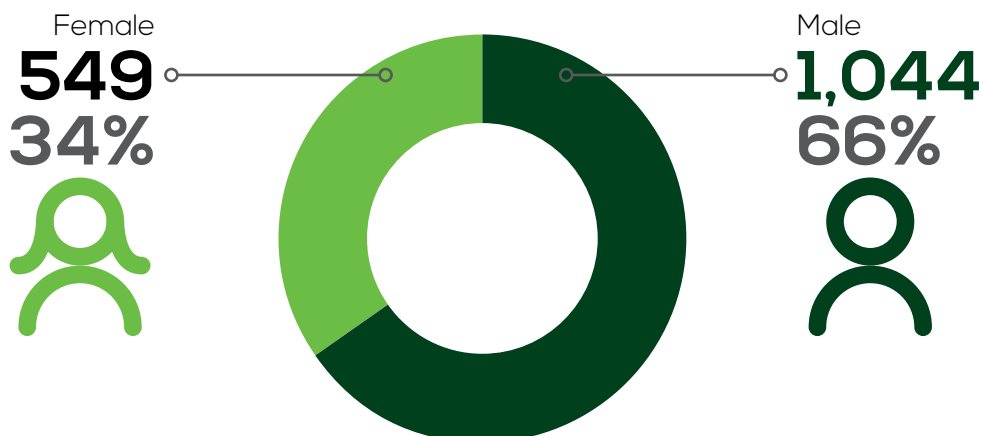


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Similarly, majority of the respondents (600) were in the age group 18 – 35; this represents 37.7% of the total respondents. Also, 517 (32.5%) respondents were in the age group “36 – 45”; 313 (19.7%) in the age group “46 – 55”; 110 (6.9%) in the age group “56 – 65”; and 52 (3.3%) of the respondents were in the age group “66 & above”. This indicates that the youth constitute the largest proportion of respondents for the survey.

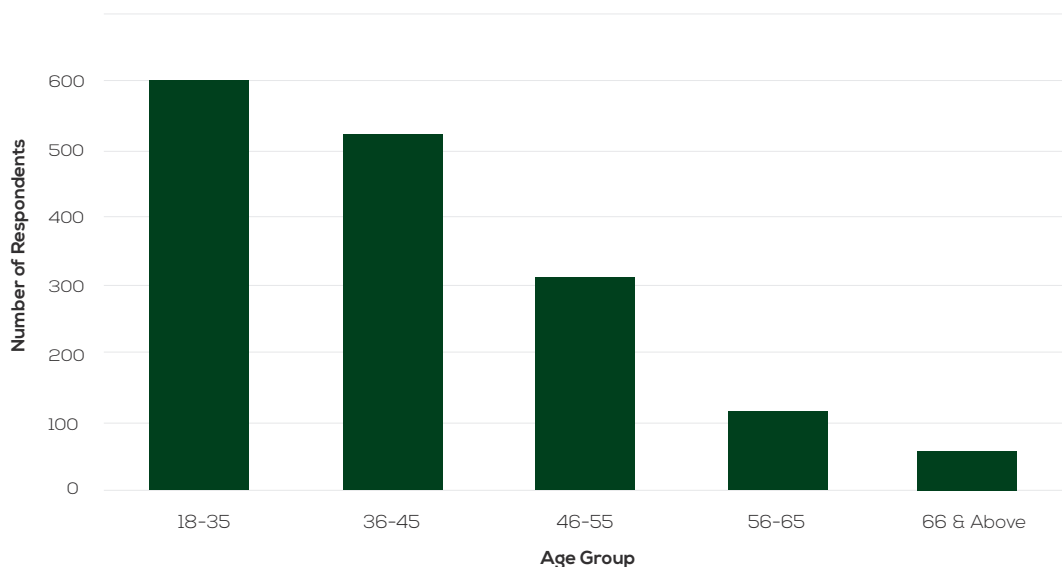


Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

The respondents consist of individuals with no formal education (91); primary school leaving certificate (108); secondary school leaving certificate (422); A levels (202); university degree or equivalent (649); post-graduate qualifications (Masters – 94 and PhD – 15); and other qualifications (7). Table 1 shows that most of the respondents (40.9%) have a university degree or its equivalent.



Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No Formal Education	91	5.7%
Primary School Leaving Certificate	108	6.8%
Secondary School Leaving Certificate	422	26.6%
A Levels	202	12.7%
University degree or Equivalent	649	40.9%
Post-graduate qualifications (Masters)	94	5.9%
Post-graduate qualifications (PhD)	15	0.9%
Others	7	0.4%
Total	1588	100.0%

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Qualifications

More than half of the respondents were either employed or self-employed. In particular, 24.5% were unemployed, 38.1% were self-employed and 37.4% were employed



Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Unemployed	390	24.5%
Self-employed	606	38.1%
Employed	594	37.4%
Total	1590	100.0%

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Employment Status

(B) RESULT OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Research Objective One: Assess the performance of the 8th National Assembly in discharging its constitutional mandate of law making, oversight and representation

The respondents assessed the performance of the 8th National Assembly in the discharge of its mandate. The study shows that greater number of respondents (483) considered the 8th NASS to be "Good" in the discharge of its constitutional mandate while 72 (4.5%) respondents were indifferent on the performance of the NASS. Table 3 shows the overall assessment of the respondents.



Assessment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	116	7.3%
Very Good	254	16.0%
Good	483	30.5%
Fair	450	28.4%
Poor	161	10.2%
Very Poor	72	4.5%
No Comment	45	2.8%
Total	1585	100.0%

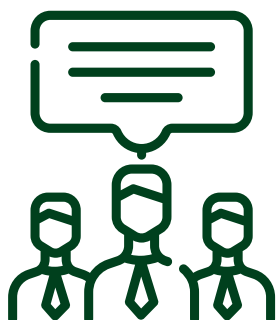
One of the constitutional mandates of the NASS is to provide oversight function. 130 (8.2%) respondents considered the 8th NASS to have performed its oversight function "To a large extent", 701 (44.1%) respondents "To some extent", 543 (34.2%) respondents "To a little extent", 134 (8.4%) respondents "Not at all" while 81 (5.1%) respondents had "No comment". Regarding the quality of

oversight functions provided by the committees of the 8th NASS, 75 (4.7%) respondents considered the activities of the committees as “Excellent”, 197 (12.4%) as “Very Good”; 487 (30.7%) respondents as Good; 493 (31.1%) respondents as “Fair”; 195 (12.3%) as “Poor”; 66 (4.2%) as “Very Poor”; 74 (7.4%) respondents were indifferent. Majority of the respondents (1,139) identified the purpose of the oversight function provided by the committees of the 8th NASS as “To hold government Ministries/ Departments/Agencies to account”. Other purpose of the oversight function as viewed by the respondents is given in Table 4.

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To hold government Ministries/Departments/Agencies to account	1139	71.7%
To Embarrass Ministers/Permanent Secretaries/Directors-General	31	2.0%
To make obtain money and/or favours from the MDAs	169	10.6%
All of the Above	159	10.0%
None of the Above	59	3.7%
Other (Specify)	31	2.0%
TOTAL	1588	100.0%

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents on the Purpose of Oversight Function carried out by Committees of the 8th NASS

Another constitutional mandate of the NASS is to provide representation function. 61 (3.8%) respondents considered the quality of representation given by members of the 8th NASS as “Excellent”; 198 (12.5%) respondents as “Very Good”; 415 (26.1%) respondents as “Good”; majority of the respondents, 543 i.e. 34.2% as “Fair”; 243 (15.3%) respondents as “Poor”; 96 (6.0%) respondents as “Very Poor”; and 31 (2.0%) respondents were indifferent on the quality of representation provided. With respect to the quality of representation function provided by members to their constituents, 58 (3.7%) respondents as “Excellent”; 150 (9.4%) as “Very Good”; 364 (22.9%) respondents as “Good”; 533 (33.6%) respondents as “Fair”; 307 (19.3%) respondents as “Poor”; 153 (9.6%) respondents as “Very Poor”; and 23 (1.4%) respondents had no comment. The respondents assess the extent to which the representation function of the members has promoted peace, order and good governance and their responses are given in Table 5.



Extent of Assessment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To a large extent	119	7.5%
To some extent	604	38.1%
To a little extent	652	41.1%
Not at all	155	9.8%
No comment	55	3.5%
Total	1585	100.0%

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on the Extent of Representation Function of the 8th NASS

Research Objective Two: Evaluate the extent to which the 8th Assembly has adhered to its legislative agenda and calendar.

The assessment of the performance of the 8th NASS with regards to its legislative responsibilities shows that not less than one-third (587 i.e. 36.9%) of the respondents viewed the activities of the Assembly as “Good” while 61 (3.8%) respondents had “No comment”. The responses of other respondents are given in Table 6.



Assessment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	169	10.6%
Very Good	307	19.3%
Good	587	36.9%
Fair	331	20.8%
Poor	136	8.5%
Very Poor	61	3.8%
Total	1591	100.0%

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents on the Performance of the 8th NASS with regards to Legislative Responsibilities

The roles of the legislature were examined and 755 (47.6%) respondents rate the roles carried out by the legislature as “Very Important”; 702 (44.2%) as “Important”; 98 (6.2%) as “Not Important” and 32 (2.0%) respondents had no comment.

Research Objective Three: Examine and document the challenges that may have undermined the performance of the 8th Assembly

The 8th NASS was identified with some challenges right from its inauguration, which continued all through till the end of the Assembly. The challenges that have been highlighted by majority of the respondents include:

- i. Court cases against the leadership of the NASS
- ii. Leadership tussle
- iii. Interference of the executive arm of government
- iv. Impasse with the Executive in the form of the Executive declining accent to bills passed by the NASS
- v. Delay in the passage of the budget
- vi. Poor relationship with the executive arm of government
- vii. Difference in party’s ideology (party affiliation)
- viii. A disconnect between the legislators and their constituents
- ix. Personal interest, corruption and greed
- x. Inexperience of some legislators in the NASS

Research Objective Four: Assess public perception of the 8th Assembly and evaluate the extent to which such perceptions influenced citizens’ participation in legislative activities such as public hearings, oversight visits, interactive sessions, etc.



Perception	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	59	3.7%
Very Good	95	6.0%
Good	316	20.1%
Fair	535	34.0%
Poor	354	22.5%
Very Poor	182	11.5%
No Comment	33	2.1%
Total	1574	100.0%

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents on Public Perception of the 8th NASS

Table 7 shows that 3.7% respondents had an “Excellent” perception on the 8th NASS; 20.1% had “Good”; 34.0% had “Fair”; 22.5% had “Poor”; 11.5% had Very Poor”; and 2.1% of respondents were indifferent on the 8th Assembly. In addition, the relationship between the employment status of the respondents and their perception on the quality of representation given by members of the NASS indicates that the relation between these variables was significant $\chi^2(d.f.=12, N=1574)=61.283$, $p < 0.01$. The unemployed respondents were less likely to have good confidence on the quality of representation provided by the members of the NASS. On the other hand, the employed were most likely to have a good confidence on the quality of representation.

		Employment Status			Total
		Unemployed	Self-employed	Employed	
How would you assess public confidence in the quality of representation given by members of the 8th National Assembly?	Excellent	13	11	35	59
	Very Good	18	27	50	95
	Good	73	112	131	316
	Fair	129	204	202	535
	Poor	84	159	111	354
	Very Poor	46	81	55	182
	No Comment	20	8	5	33
Total		383	602	589	1574

Table 8: Cross tabulation of Responses on Employment Status and Public Perception of Respondents on the 8th NASS

The major obstacles to citizens’ participation in legislative activities as determined by the respondents include:

- i. Ignorance on the basic function of the NASS/public enlightenment
- ii. Taking public hearing far away from the grassroots/inadequate meeting or consultation at the grassroots level
- iii. Perceived unaccountability of the legislators by the people
- iv. Distrust of the public for members of the NASS
- v. Lack of communication/untimely notice of public hearing

In order to increase citizens’ participation in the activities of the 9th NASS, the respondents recommended: public enlightenment on the roles of the NASS; increased consultation with the electorates at the grassroots through creation of functional offices by the legislators in their constituencies – this builds

the confidence of the electorates in the legislators that they are accountable. Also, the respondents identified the need for improved technological system to make the activities of the legislators easily accessible; improved/timely communication of activities like public hearing; empowerment of the people at the constituencies; and respect for democratic principles and transparency in the activities of the NASS.

Research Objective Five: Evaluate the extent to which the 8th National Assembly has passed legislations and made Resolutions that are inclusive and determine factors responsible for them.



Extent of Assessment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
To a large extent	119	14.4%
To some extent	856	53.9%
To a little extent	409	25.8%
Not at all	95	6.0%
Total	1588	100.0%

Table 9 shows that about nine in ten of the respondents believed that the 8th NASS has passed legislations and made resolutions that are inclusive. In particular, 14.4% respondents considered the legislations to be inclusive "To a large extent"; 53.9% "To some extent"; 25.8% "To a little extent" while 6.0% respondents did not see any inclusion in the legislations passed.

However, there were only 25.3% respondents that had knowledge of various bills passed by the 8th National Assembly. Some of the bills identified included: the minimum wage bill; not too young to run bill; people with disability bill; child protection bill; local government autonomy bill; electoral act reform bill; grazing bill; public procurement bill; basic health care bill; bill on prompt treatment of accident victim. Others include: judicial system protection amendment act; whistle blower protection bill; petroleum industry bill; Nigerian financial intelligence bill; bankruptcy and insolvency act; abolition of dichotomy between HND and degrees bill; agricultural loan bill; Nigerian railways authority bill; public treasury bill; police act amendment; digital rights bill; bill against sexual harassment of students in tertiary institutions; bill on the removal of age limit in employment; federal audit service commission bill; local industry bill; peace corps bill; bill on test for HIV status before marriage; and girl child marriage bill.

Regarding the Not Too Young to Run and People with Disabilities Bills, Tables 10 and 11 show the opinion of respondents on the bills. Specifically for the Not too Young to Run bill, about nine in ten (89%) of the respondents either rated the bill as "highly commendable" or "commendable" compared to less than 2% who rated the bill as "somewhat commendable" or indifferent (no comment). For the people with disabilities bills, 46.5% respondents rated the bill as "highly commendable"; 30.2% as "commendable"; 11.9% as "somewhat commendable"; 3.3% respondents had no comment on the passage of the bill.



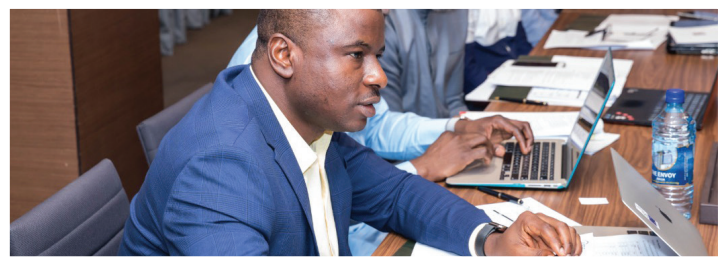
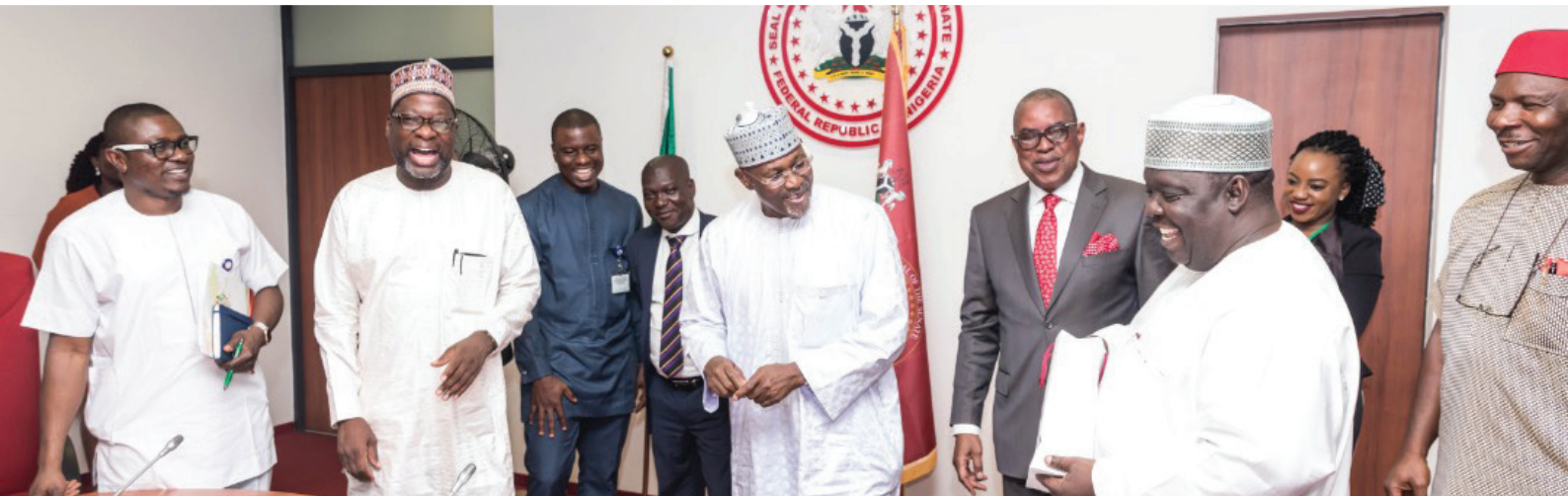
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly Commendable	936	58.8%
Commendable	480	30.2%
Somewhat Commendable	132	8.3%
No Comment	44	2.8%
Total	1592	100.0%

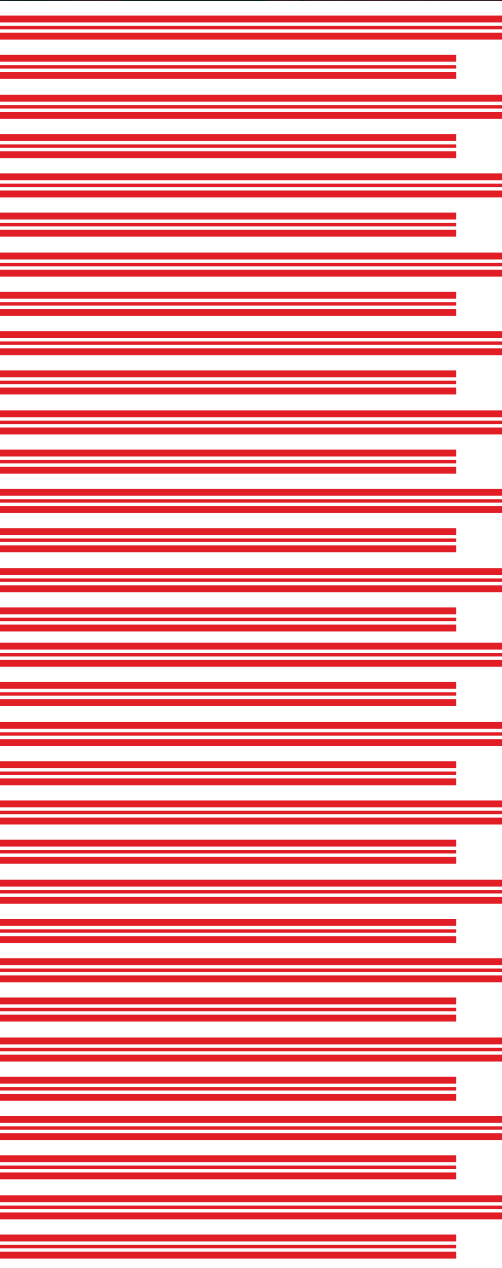
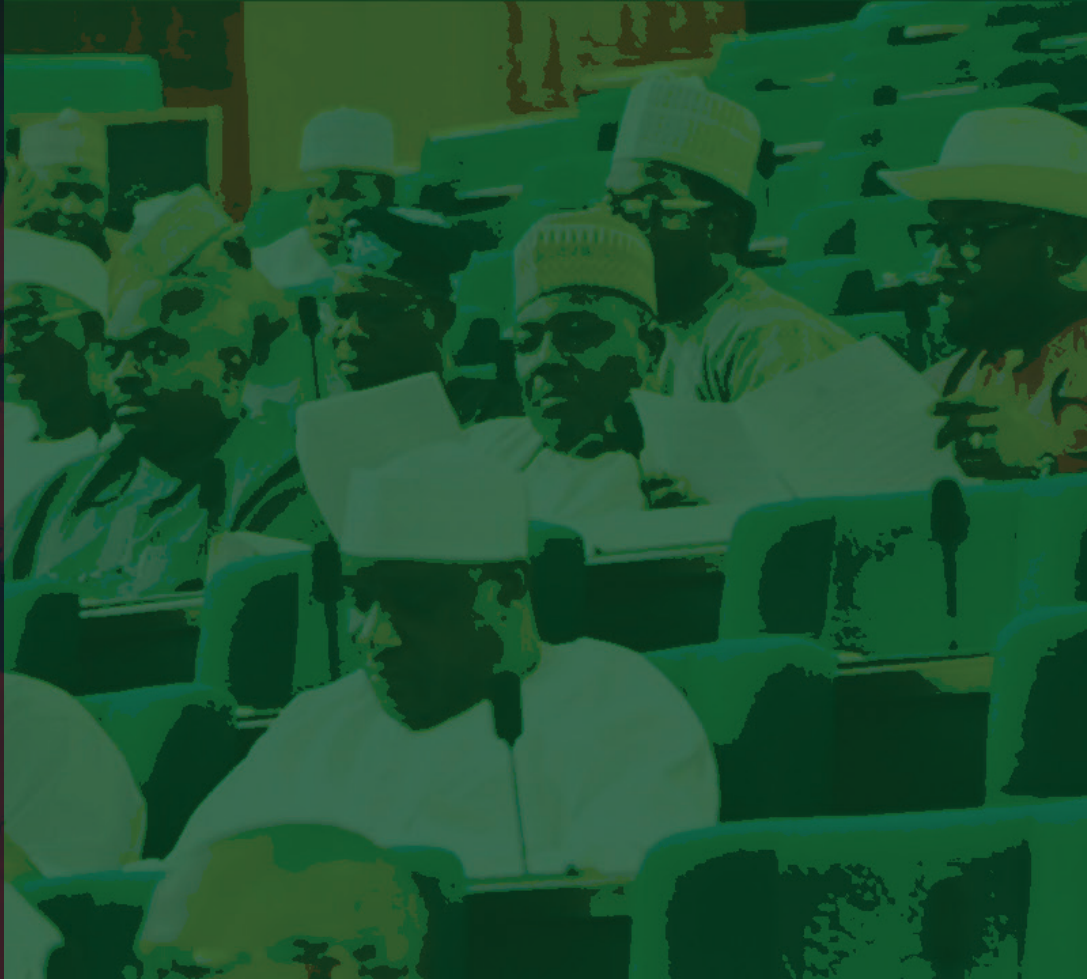


Opinion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly Commendable	740	46.5%
Commendable	609	38.3%
Somewhat Commendable	189	11.9%
No Comment	53	3.3%
Total	1591	100.0%

Table 11: Respondents opinion on the passage of People with Disabilities Bill

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