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Why It Is Important To Have Across Board Support For Nigeria's Population Census

EDITORIAL

For the national census scheduled to hold between March 29 and April 2, 2023, the need to address the inconsistency and statistical system which limits the efficiency of development initiatives as a result of obsolete data has to be taken into consideration.

We really want to believe that the National Population Commission (NPC) would ensure credible and reliable census process.

Almost two decades after the 2006 census was conducted, it has apparently become imperative and urgent for Nigeria to conduct another census as clearly spelt out in the National Development Plan 2021 – 2025.

In doing this, we urge that it is very important for us as a country to have across board and all-encompassing support from within and outside of the country that Nigeria's population census requires. This is because our major challenge over the years had been the lack of and/or inadequate funds to readily carry out such huge project in the face of pressing needs for social welfare and human capital development.

Just as Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Population said: "It is worthy to note that 60 percent of the funding and other

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Headline CPI In January 2023 Rose 21.82% Compared To 21.34% December 2022

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• As FG Makes 1.4trn From VAT, Company Income Tax In Q4 2022

By Kingsley Benson

The headline inflation rate for January 2023 rose to 21.82 percent compared to December 2022 headline inflation which was 21.34 percent. A glance at the headline inflation trend indicated that the January 2023 inflation rate showed an increase of 0.47 percent points when compared to December 2022 inflation rate.

Likewise, on a year-on-year basis, the headline inflation rate was 6.22 percent points higher compared to the rate recorded in January 2022, which was (15.60 percent). This shows that the headline inflation rate (year-on-year) increased in January 2023 when compared to the same period in the preceding year (i.e., January 2022). The increase in the Headline index was largely attributed to the rise in prices of bread and cereal 21.67 percent, actual and imputed rent 7.74 percent, potatoes, yam and tubers 6.06 percent, vegetables 5.44 percent, and meat 4.78 percent.

On a month-on-month basis, the percentage change in the All-Items Index in January 2023 was 1.87 percent, which was 0.15 percent higher than the rate recorded in December 2022 (1.71 percent). This means that in January 2023, the general average price level was 0.15 percent higher relative to December 2022.

The percentage change in the average CPI for the twelve months ending January 2023 over the average of the CPI for the previous twelve months was 19.36 percent, showing a 2.49 percent increase compared to the 16.87 percent recorded in January 2022.

The components of the food sub-index increased by 24.32 percent in January 2023 on a year-on-year basis, which was 7.19 percent points higher compared to the rate recorded in January 2022 (17.13 percent). The rise in food inflation was caused by increases in prices of bread and cereals, oil and fat, potatoes, yam and other tubers, fish, vegetable, fruits, and meat.

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Prince Adeyemi Adeniran, Statistician-General of the Federation and CEO of National Bureau of Statistics (m), and others during a briefing

How Nigeria's GDP Growth Beats IMF's Forecast

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FG Seeks Local, International Support For N869bn National Census

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DMO Offers 2 FGN Savings Bonds For Subscription

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FG Seeks Local, International Support For N869bn National Census

• IMF, UN Population Fund, Other Dev't Partners, Private Sector Pledge Commitment To Exercise

*At a high-powered stakeholder engagement for the forthcoming national census, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, **Mrs. Zainab Ahmed**, as well as her counterpart at the Budget and National Planning, **Prince Clem Agba**, highlighted the need for the census and the importance of national and international stakeholders in the exercise. **Musa Ibrahim** writes.*

Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning

Prince Clem Agba, Minister of State, Budget and National Planning

The federal government has called local and international support for the projected N869 billion 2023 population and housing census.

The government also made a case for technical and financial assistance in key activities yet to be implemented preparatory to the exercise.

The national census is scheduled to hold between March 29 and April 2, 2023.

In her address, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, said that the need to address the inconsistency in national census and statistical system which limits the efficiency of development initiatives premised on obsolete data cannot be over-emphasised.

According to her, almost two decades after the 2006 census was conducted, it had become imperative and urgent for Nigeria to conduct another census as clearly spelt out in the National Development Plan 2021 – 2025.

She said: "Our major challenge over the years had been the lack of and/or inadequate funds to readily carry out such huge project in the face of pressing needs for social welfare and human capital development.

"It is worthy to note that 60 percent of the funding and other requirements for the 2006 census could not have been achieved without the invaluable support of the development partners, corporate bodies and other key stakeholders.

"Indeed, the partnership and collaboration in carrying out the 2006 national census took a lot of burden off the government of Nigeria and enabled us to conduct a credible exercise whose outcome served through the years."

While appreciating European Union (EU), United Nations Population Fund, among other development partners and key stakeholders whose invaluable and generous support gave a huge credibility to the 2006 census, the Honourable Minister noted that Nigeria sincerely cherishes and acknowledges the impact of the support in entrenching systems and tenets of good governance in the economy.

"As we work towards actualising the conduct of the 2023 national census which is transformational for Nigeria, we are equally confident of a more robust network of partners that share in our aspiration for making available credible and acceptable population and housing data that will meet the needs of various stakeholders," she said.

She highlighted some major activities that had been successfully completed in preparedness towards the conduct of the 2023 population and housing census by the federal government. She disclosed the demarcation of 773 out of the 774 local government areas in the country into enumeration areas (EA) with the exception of Abadam Local Government in Borno State, adding that hybrid enumeration strategy is being developed for its demarcation.

She also disclosed that First, Second Pretests and Trial Census to test processes, procedures, and instruments developed for the census - conduct of the Trial Post Enumeration Survey- Mapping of Special Populations (homeless, hunting, fishing and nomads) to ensure that no resident in Nigeria was left uncounted had been completed.

Mrs. Ahmed stated that there has also been a compilation of historical events to aid accurate collection of data on age during census, a robust data quality management system to ensure data quality, a monitoring and evaluation system for the census to ensure real time tracking of census implementation against set indicators, among others, are in place.

The Honourable Minister stated that the 2023 exercise would be Green Census involving the use of digital maps, digital questionnaire and cloud computing to ensure compliance with the global climate change campaign for reduction of emission by 30 percent unconditionally and an additional 15 percent conditionally by 2030.

Also speaking, the Honourable Minister of state, Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba, commended the 36 states of the federation for expressing support for the forthcoming census.

However, he asked for financial commitment, describing census as a national project that benefits all the strata of the society and tiers of government.

Noting that the exercise was highly capital-intensive, Mr. Agba put the total requirement for the exercise (including post-census activities) at N869 billion ($1.88 billion).

"N626 billion ($1.36 billion) which was $6 per capita was the actual census requirement, while N243 billion ($527 million) was for post-census activities," he said.

So far, the federal government, he stated, had committed N291.5 billion (632 million) to the exercise, translating to 46 percent of total funding.

He stressed that an immediate sum of N327.2 billion (709.9 million) was required to complete the census.

Calling for financial, material and technical support from development partners, the private sector and other stakeholders, he listed some areas requiring support. These, he said, were in the areas of the acquisition of 405,000 additional local content tablets and accessories- and training of 885,000 persons for building numbering, among others.

Earlier in their goodwill messages, the representatives of various local and international organisations, development partners, Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), private sector players, among others, underscored the need for a credible census.

In his message, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale, urged all international partners to provide support for Nigeria's census, stating that the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was tied to a credible census.

Similarly, the Resident Representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Mr. Ari Aisen, said that the Fund recognises that census is very expensive and takes a lot of resources.

According to him, this calls for the support, cooperation and participation of all. He, however, admonished that a good, credible census with diagnostic elements was important for economic planning, noting that while there was the need for partnership and support, the ultimate goal should be the desire for Nigeria to succeed.

In the same vein, the Director-General (DG) of NGF, Asishana Okauru, advised that the exercise must ensure data confidentiality and the highest level of integrity. He expressed the total support and commitment of the 36 governors to the impending exercise.

Also speaking at the event, Founder of Tony Elumelu Foundation, Mr. Tony Elumelu, said that the census was critical and very important for the nation's future. He underscored the imperative of a credible census in the allocation of resources, expressing regrets that in the past, the exercise had been politicised.

He urged the National Population Commission (NPC) to carry out a census that meets public expectations, while pledging the support of his Foundation and the Nigeria's private sector.

Also speaking at the event, the Executive Director, Dangote Group, Mansur Ahmed, reiterated the desire of not only the Dangote Group but the private sector for a seamless, credible census, pledging the support of his organisation.

The UN Population Fund Resident Representative, Ullapool Elisabeth Mueller, said that by 2050, which is 25 years from now, Nigeria is projected to have a 450 million population. This, she said, puts the country as the third most populous in the world.

According to her, what that means is that Nigeria could have a 450 million population, which is an asset or 450 million weak population, depending on the choices it makes. She stated that with 70 percent of the population being youths in the under-30 category, some of them had already started producing the next generation of Nigerians.

Calling for a credible census that would help the country chart the right course, she observed that the complexities associated with a census are mind-blowing. However, she was quick to note that if Afghanistan could organise census, Nigeria could even do better, advising that women must not be left behind in the exercise. Mrs. Mueller underscored the importance of a credible census to the attainment of the SDGs.

...almost two decades after the 2006 census was conducted, it had become imperative and urgent for Nigeria to conduct another census as clearly spelt out in the National Development Plan 2021 – 2025

Headline CPI In January 2023 Rose 21.82% Compared To 21.34%, December 2022

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On a month-on-month basis, the food sub-index in January 2023 was 2.08 percent, this was 0.19 percent higher compared to the rate recorded in December 2022 (1.89 percent). This increase was attributed to the increase in prices of some food items like oil and fat, bread and cereals, fish, potatoes, yam, and tubers.

The average annual rate of food inflation for the twelve months ending January 2023 over the previous twelve-month average was 21.53 percent, which was 1.44 percent points increase from the average annual rate of change recorded in January 2022 (20.09 percent).

The Core Inflation rate, that is all-items index less farm produce, which excludes the prices of volatile agricultural produce recorded at 19.16 percent in January 2023 on a year-on-year basis; the index increased by 5.29 percent when compared to the 13.87 percent recorded in January 2022.

On a month-on-month basis, the core inflation rate was 1.82 percent in January 2023. This shows a rise of 0.49 percent when compared to the 1.33 percent recorded in December 2022. The highest increases were recorded in prices of gas, liquid fuel, passenger transport by air, vehicles spare parts, fuels and lubricants for personal transport equipment, Solid fuel etc.

The average twelve-month annual inflation rate was 16.52 percent for the twelve months ending January 2023; this was 3.19 percent points higher than the 13.33 percent recorded in January 2022.

The index for the urban consumers on a year-on-year basis for January 2023, stood at 22.55 percent, this was 6.38 percent points higher compared to the 16.17 percent recorded in January 2022.

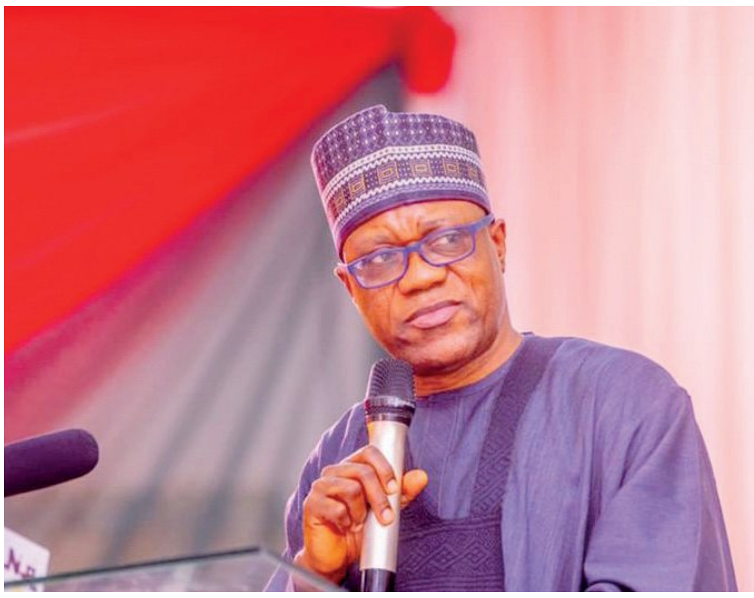
Similarly, on a month-on-month basis, the urban inflation rate was 1.98 percent in January 2023, this was 0.17 percent points higher compared to December 2022 (1.80 percent).

The corresponding twelve-month average for the urban inflation rate was 19.91 percent in January 2023. This was 1.86 percent points higher compared to the 17.44 percent reported in January 2022.

While the rural consumers' inflation rate in January 2023 stood at 21.13 percent on a year-on-year basis; this was 6.08 percent higher compared to the 15.06 percent recorded in January 2022.

On a month-on-month basis, the rural inflation rate in January 2023 was 1.77 percent, which is 0.14 percent points higher compared to December 2022 (1.63 percent).

The corresponding twelve-month average for the rural inflation rate in 2023 was 18.84 percent. This was 2.53 percent higher compared to the 16.31 percent recorded in January 2022.



Prince Adeyemi Adeniran, Statistician-General of the Federation and CEO of National Bureau of Statistics

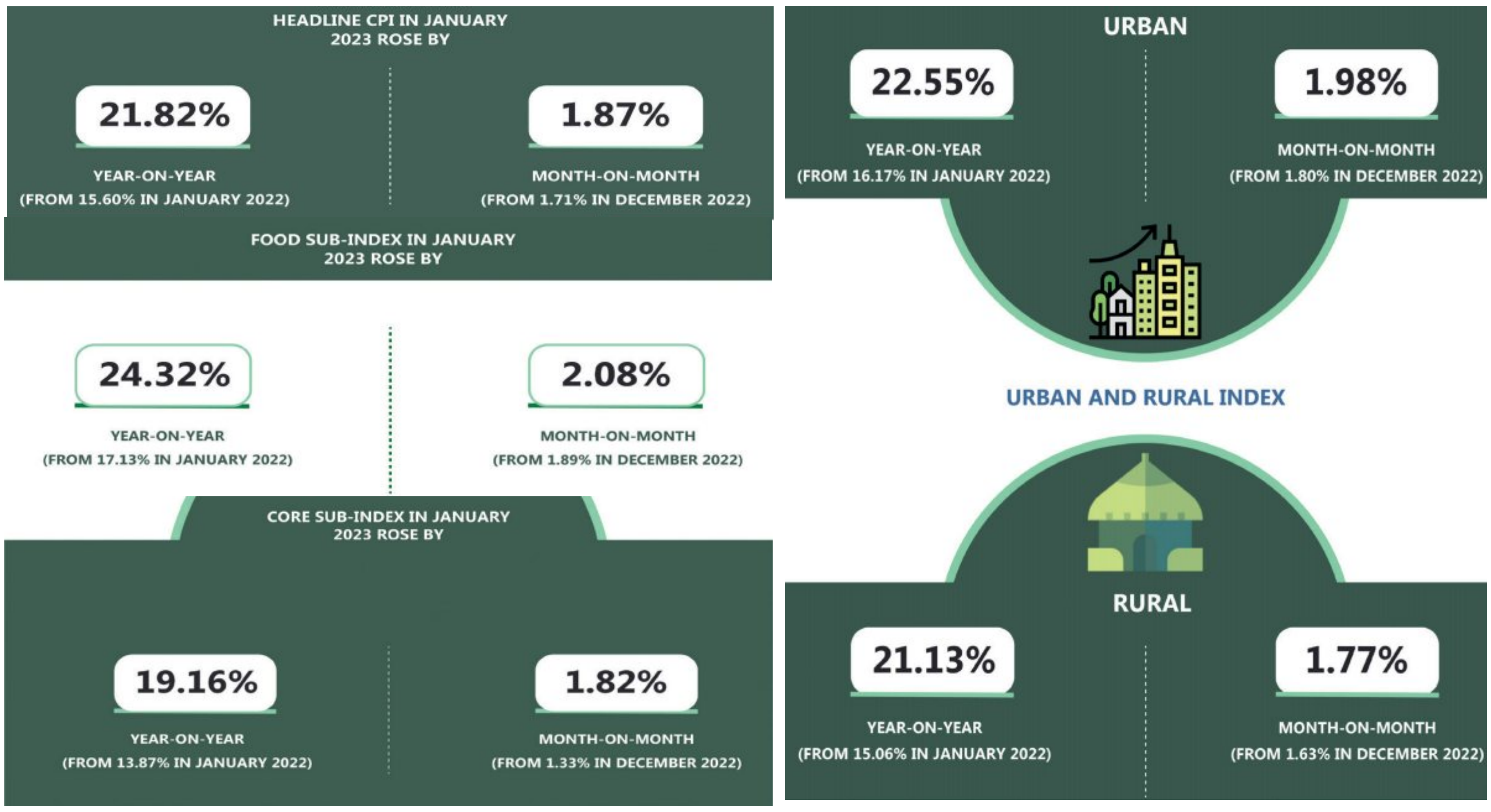
In the analyses of the states' profiles. The all-item index for January 2023, on a year-on-year basis was highest in Bauchi (24.79 percent), Ondo (24.54 percent), Anambra (24.51 percent), while Jigawa (19.09 percent), Borno (19.62 percent) and Sokoto (19.90 percent) recorded the slowest rise in headline year-on-year inflation.

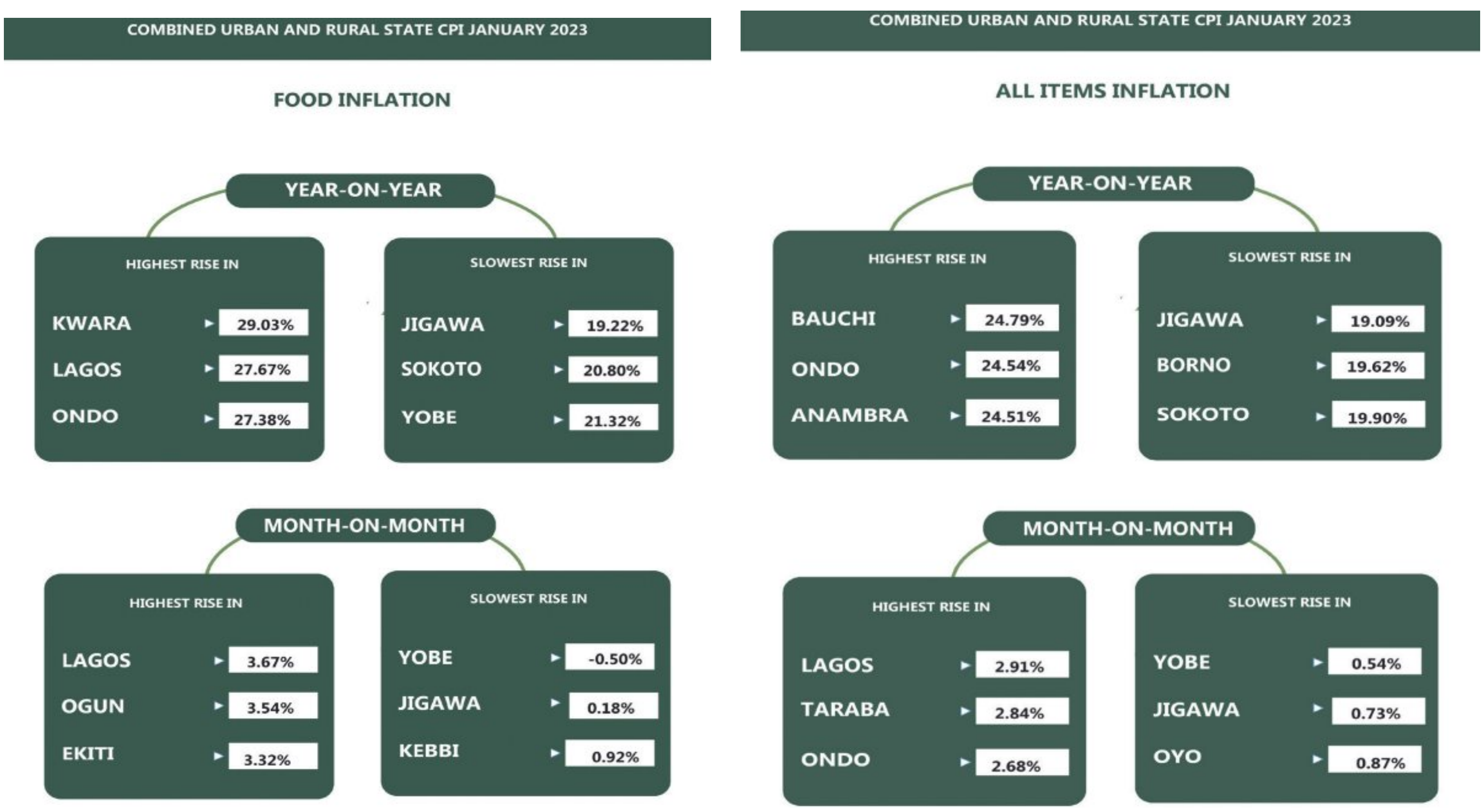
On a month-on-month basis, however, January 2023 recorded the highest increases in Lagos (2.91 percent), Taraba (2.84 percent), Ondo (2.68 percent), while Yobe (0.54 percent), Jigawa (0.73 percent) and Oyo (0.87 percent) recorded the slowest rise on month-on-month inflation.

In the assessment of the food sub-index at the states level in January 2023, the food inflation rate on a year-on-year basis was highest in Kwara (29.03 percent), Lagos (27.67 percent) and Ondo (27.38 percent), while Jigawa (19.22 percent), Sokoto (20.80 percent) and Yobe (21.32 percent) recorded the slowest rise in year-on-year food inflation.

On the other hand, the month-on-month food inflation in January 2023 was highest in Lagos (3.67 percent), Ogun (3.54 percent) and Ekiti (3.32 percent), while Yobe (-0.50 percent), Jigawa (0.18 percent) and Kebbi (0.92 percent) recorded the slowest rise on month-on-month inflation.

Source: NBS





FG Makes 1.4 trn From VAT, Company Income Tax In Q4 2022

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) stated that the federal government generated the sum of N1.45trillion from value added tax (VAT) and company income tax (CIT) in the last quarter of 2022.

The bureau in a report said that N753.8billion was generated from CIT, which was a -6.95 percent growth rate on a quarter-on-quarter basis from N810.19 billion in Q3 2022.

For VAT, it stated that N697.3billion was made showing a growth rate of 11.51 percent on a quarter-on-quarter basis from N625.39 billion in Q3 2022.

"On the aggregate, CIT for Q4 2022, local payments received were N353.9bn, while foreign CIT payments contributed N399.9billion in Q4 2022.

"On a quarter-on-quarter basis, water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities recorded the highest growth rate with 57.40 percent, followed by Activities of households as employers, undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use with 45.19 percent.

"On the other hand, information and communication activities had the lowest growth rate with –65.75 percent, followed by arts, entertainment, and recreation activities with -64.09 percent."

For sectoral contributions, it said the top three largest shares in Q4 2022 were manufacturing with N110.4billion (31.20 percent); financial & insurance activities with N45.87billion (12.96 percent) and information and communication activities with N45.87billion (12.77 percent).

Buhari Canvasses Duty-Free Access Market For LDCs

• Justifies Nigeria's Participation At UN Conference

By Ahmed Ahmed

President Muhammadu Buhari has urged developed and developing nations to grant duty-free and quota-free market access for products originating from the world's 46 least-developed countries (LDCs) to ensure their integration in regional and global value chains.

Speaking in Doha, the capital of the State of Qatar, at the United Nations (UN) Conference of LDCs, the president strongly criticised the current structure of the global financial system which places an unsustainable external debt burden on the most vulnerable countries.

He warned that such debt burdens would make it extremely difficult for LDCs to meet the 2030 Agenda for 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

He said: "In 2015, the world came together to endorse the 2030 Agenda for 17 SDGs. There was no doubt that it was highly ambitious and would require leaders around the world to be fully committed for the SDGs to be achieved within the projected timeframe.

"Eight years on, the possibility of achieving the SDGs remains bleak for many countries, particularly the LDCs. The difficulties in achieving the SDGs are numerous and were further compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, the continued threat of climate change, and recently the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

"The LDCs are often faced with developmental vulnerabilities and challenges that are not always of their making. These pose huge obstacles to their development efforts, hence the need for urgent and robust assistance to help unlock their potentials and build socio-economic resilience.

"This assistance can be provided within the framework of the Doha Programme of Action which is designed to help LDCs exit their current classification."

President Buhari challenged developed countries, civil society actors, the private sector, and the business community to partner with the LDCs in order to provide necessary resources and capacity to deliver development outcomes in the economic, social and environmental aspects of the 2030 Agenda.

He listed some measures that would help LDCs recover from COVID-19, achieve SDGs, develop and prosper over the long term.

"As a matter of urgency, there are a number of priorities we have to focus on to help achieve the SDGs in these countries and ensure their prosperity. First, COVID-19 has taught us that we must all work together to ensure that diseases do not thrive in the LDCs, due to their overall negative impact on productivity and economic growth and development.

"Accordingly, policy and budgetary provisions must be made to ensure equal access to medicare and vaccines, for both the poor and the rich alike. We must also work with manufacturers of medical equipment and pharmaceutical companies to provide adequate equipment, test-kits, vaccines and treatments for diseases," he said.

President Muhammadu Buhari

Expounding on the issue of rising debt burden, President Buhari underscored the need for reforms of the international financial architecture that prioritises the need of LDCs.

He aligned with the UN Secretary-General's description on the global financial system as an "unfair debt architecture that not only charges poor countries much more money to borrow on the market than advanced economies, but downgrades them when they even think of restructuring their debt or applying for debt relief".

On trade issues, President Buhari said that it is important to put in place modalities to facilitate transit cooperation, transfer of technologies and access to global e-commerce platforms, as they are critical for the integration of LDCs into the regional and global value chains and communications technology services.

"The adoption of a global coordination mechanism to systematically monitor illicit financial flows and engender support for a UN international convention on tax matters to eliminate base erosion and profit shifting, tax evasion, capital gains tax and other tax abuses is essential to achieving the SDGs, and promoting security and economic prosperity," he stressed.

On Nigeria's expectation for the conference, the president expressed optimism that the Doha Programme of Action would lead to the acceleration of exports from LDCs by 2031, through the facilitation of their access to foreign markets in line with World Trade Organisation (WTO) Facilitation Agreement.

On climate change, he said that LDCs would continue to suffer disproportionately despite contributing least to its causes, adding that countries must prioritise cutting global emissions and work with determination to hold warming to 1.5 degrees, thereby securing the children's future.

"We must also commit to helping build resilience in developing countries, while also providing the needed technical as well as financial support for a just transition to renewable energy," he said.

> **This assistance can be provided within the framework of the Doha Programme of Action which is designed to help LDCs exit their current classification**

President Buhari warned that climate change remains one of the biggest existential threats facing humanity today, posing challenges to lives and livelihoods and manifesting in different negative forms, including increase in temperature, rise in sea levels, flooding, drought and desertification.

"It has also led to significant loss of biodiversity. Worst still, climate change has exacerbated conflicts and led to unplanned migration, causing untold hardship in places like the Lake Chad Basin region.

"The LDCs, therefore, continue to suffer disproportionately from the effects of climate change, despite contributing the least to its causes. Deaths from climate related crises are higher in the most vulnerable countries, with projections that there will continue to be an upward trend.

"We must continue to focus on how best to ensure the provision of security, education, health and other basic services to our people, in order to guarantee a prosperous future for all," he said.

President Buhari commended the State of Qatar for hosting the conference and thanked Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, the Emir, for inviting him. He also expressed appreciation to the UN for its excellent organisation of the conference and its continued support for the LDCs.

The president also explained his presence at the conference despite the fact that Nigeria is not categorised as one of the LDCs. "Nigeria is here to show solidarity and support to the LDCs in the quest to achieve the SDGs, especially in this decade of action, where no one should be left behind," he said.

Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, earlier last year had noted that global tax rules are uneven, especially for developing countries. Speaking at a tax conference, she said that the current international tax rules were skewed against some countries, particularly developing nations, including Nigeria.

She also said that taxation was a matter of domestic law, adding that disputes arising from the interpretation of domestic legislation should only be resolved within those domestic legislations and by people properly schooled to interpret them.

According to her, Nigeria is committed to working with other jurisdictions and international bodies to achieve a win-win solution in the contentious matter. "Painfully, the skewedness in the current international tax rules is again influencing the two-pillar solution of the inclusive framework," she said.

"We have observed, for instance, that 'Amount A' profit meant for market jurisdictions is progressively being chipped away in favour of jurisdictions where the multinationals are resident. Another example of skewedness of the 'Amount A' rules are the requirement for jurisdictions to surrender domestic tax disputes to the mandatory and binding ruling of an arbitration panel composed and sitting outside the legal system of the respective jurisdictions.

"The discussion to change the rules must start now; the world must rework the profit allocation rules used for transfer pricing and the sharing of taxing rights by tax treaty partners.

"Nigeria is of the view that Commonwealth Association of Tax Administrators is that organisation that is best placed to start this dialogue. Nigeria is committed to working with other jurisdictions and international bodies to achieve a win-win solution.

"The 'Amount A' proposal being developed by the Inclusive Framework is not achieving consensus because it is founded on win-lose principles. Only rules that promote a win-win situation can achieve the support of all." she said.

The Honourable Minister, however, urged that countries must cast aside their differences or individual self-interest to jointly develop a workable, simple, and fair solution to the challenges confronting taxation.

She also highlighted other problematic areas, which include the digitalisation of tax administration, fair international tax rules, capacity development, and nomad workers.

She, therefore, encouraged delegates and experts to come up with an actionable communique that would help the government in formulating appropriate policies.

EDITORIAL

Why It Is Important To Have Across Board Support For Nigeria's Population Census

CONTINUES FROM COVER

requirements for the 2006 census could not have been achieved without the invaluable support of the development partners, corporate bodies and other key stakeholders.

"Indeed, the partnership and collaboration in carrying out the 2006 national census took a lot of burden off the government of Nigeria and enabled us to conduct a credible exercise whose outcome served through the years."

We acknowledge European Union (EU), United Nations Population Fund, among other development partners and key stakeholders whose invaluable and generous support gave a huge credibility to the 2006 census, and we note that Nigeria sincerely cherishes and acknowledges the impact of the support in entrenching systems and tenets of good governance in the Nigerian economy.

We note that there has also been a compilation of historical events to aid accurate collection of data on age during census, a robust data quality management system to ensure data quality, a monitoring and evaluation system for the census to ensure real time tracking of census implementation against set indicators, among others, are in place.

The Honourable Minister has already stated that the 2023 exercise would be Green census involving the use of digital maps, digital questionnaire and cloud computing to ensure compliance with the global climate change campaign for reduction of emission by 30 percent unconditionally and an additional 15 percent conditionally by 2030.

Also, considering the importance of the census, the Honourable Minister of state, Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba, commended the 36 states of the federation for expressing support for the forthcoming exercise. We join him in asking for financial commitment, because the exercise is highly capital-intensive. We also call for financial, material and technical support from development partners, the private sector and other stakeholders.

We strongly share in the expressive understanding that as we work towards actualising the conduct of the 2023 national census which is transformational for Nigeria, we are equally confident of a more robust network of partners that share in our aspiration for making available credible and acceptable population and housing data that will meet the needs of various stakeholders.

We do also note that the task of conducting the census is critical to our country's future in that if we do not know our population, we cannot properly plot our developmental path, our economic growth, our society's goals.

Unarguably, our country is the most populous in Africa, with an estimated population of over 200 million people. Population growth and development are inextricably related in Nigeria.

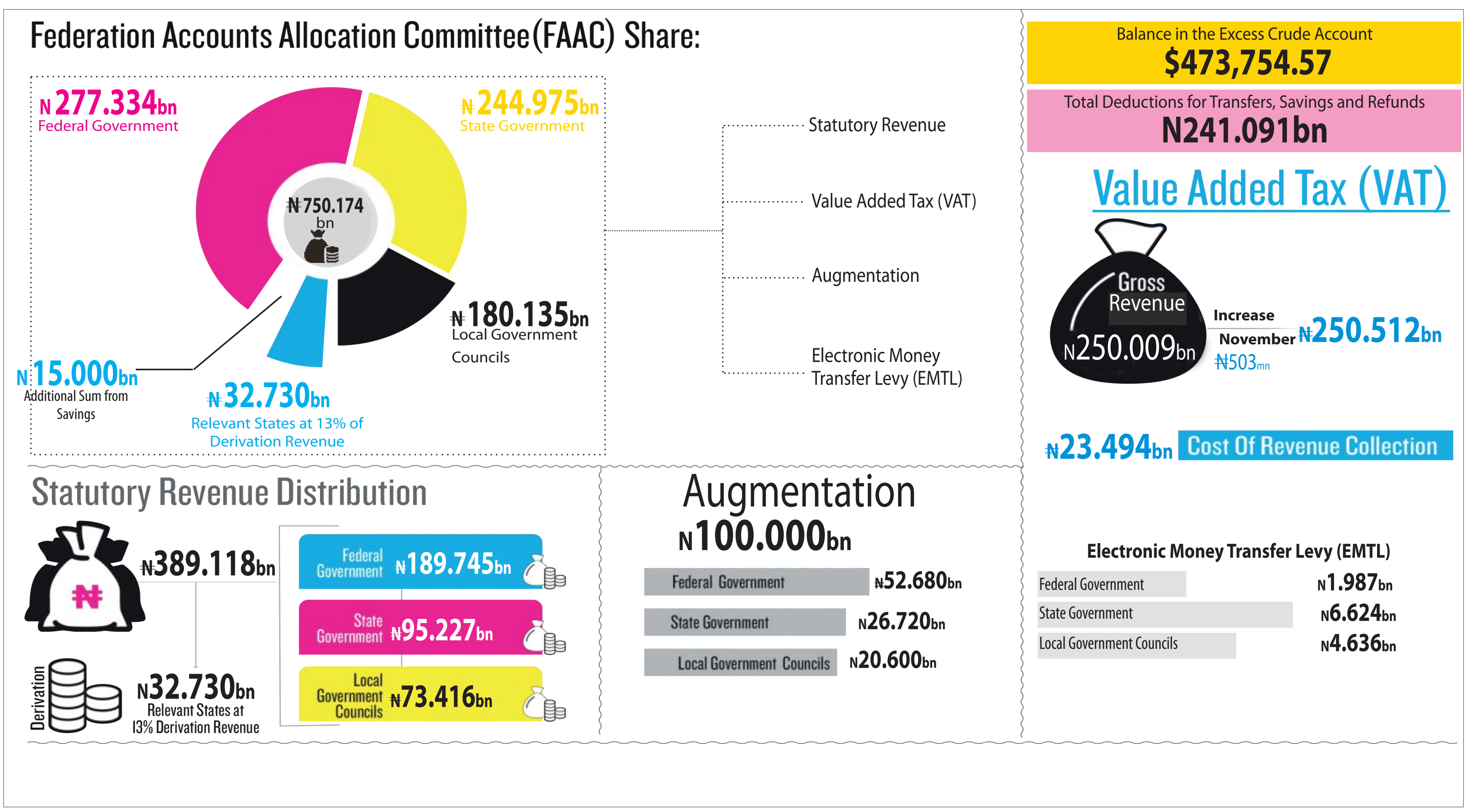
Remember the last time a census was conducted in Nigeria was 2006, then we recorded a population of 140 million people. Now, our population is estimated to be in excess of 200 million, being projected to 450 million by 2050, which could make Nigerian the third most populous country in the world.

We are proud that the upcoming census would make a significant milestone in Nigeria's development, as it would provide an opportunity to collect accurate and reliable data on the country's population and housing, and it would serve as a vital tool for policymakers, private sector actors, and civil society organisations. It is quite understandable that credible demographic data are of profound importance for both the public and private sectors.

After all, we all live in a data driven world. We call on the private sector to partner in the census project because private sector leaders with investments in key sectors of the Nigerian economy, could themselves understand the value and importance of available, accessible and accurate data. Data help in making informed decisions, driving development, and creating opportunities.

The census will affect how we allocate resources in Nigeria and so many other important decisions; therefore, we look to having a process that is credible and above board, having highlighted why it is important to have across board support for Nigeria's population census.

FAAC Shares N750.174 bn January 2023 Revenue To FG, States, LGCs



NEWS IN PICTURES

R-L: **Mr. Eivind Fjeldstad,** Business Counsellor, Royal Norwegian Embassy Abuja, **Mr. Knut Eiliv Lein**, Ambassador of Norway to Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon, and Togo, **Mrs. Zainab Ahmed,** Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, **Aisha Omar,** Director IER, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, **Ms Queen Esther Akudo,** Political Adviser, Royal Norwegian Embassy Abuja, and **Dr. Bola Akande,** Assistant Director, IER, Ministry of Finance**,** Budget and National Planning, during a recent visit in Abuja on Financing SafeSchools project.

NEWS IN PICTURES

How Nigeria's GDP Growth Beats IMF's Forecast

*Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the fourth quarter of 2022 climbed to 3.10 percent against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projection of N2.7 percent. In this report, **Musa Ibrahim** highlights what the federal government through the Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning has been doing differently to beat the odds.*

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) recently released its fourth quarter report which states that Nigeria's annual GDP for 2022 rose to 3.10 percent in real terms, a drop from 3.40 percent recorded in 2021.

The report, which indicates that the economy recorded slower growth when compared to 2021, however, shows that the growth surpassed the projection made by the IMF in 2021, showing that the economy would grow by 2.7 percent.

The giant feat could be alluded to the federal government's efforts in diversifying the economy through the Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning.

Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, at an event recently in Abuja said that the federal government designed the Economic Sustainability Plan which has helped the Nigerian economy to quickly exit the recession within two quarters.

"We also reviewed our National Budget and Finance Acts, which enabled us to amend a number of fiscal laws, realise more revenues and stabilise our economy. Consequently, we started reporting positive growth and had seven consecutive quotas of economic expansion, but then the Russia-Ukraine war happened.

"Fortunately, we are able to sustain positive macroeconomic indicators and continue growing the economy. We are still feeling the impact of inflation, however, because it is trending upward.

"Like in most countries, food prices are rising and hurting our people. We are working to see how we can minimise the impact of inflation and continue to stabilise our economy, so that we do not regress on the microeconomic front," she said.

Speaking further, the Honourable Minister also stated: "The federal government designed economic

Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning

sustainability interventions, including cash transfers to the poor and, importantly, support to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). We gave out payroll support to small businesses to enable them retain their employees. We also provided soft, low-cost loans to businesses to help them reinvest, grow and maintain jobs.

"We created a public works programme that enabled us to employ a large number of youths in public work projects, such as road and housing construction. We also developed a programme that helped farmers sustain their crop production.

"We created the Strategic Revenue Growth Initiative (SRGI). This is a suite of initiatives designed to enhance our capacity, identify new revenue streams, expand our revenue base and block revenue leakages. The SRGI has been quite successful. We have been systematically working to achieve key targets.

"We returned our budget cycle to January through December, which is important because even though the federal budget is small compared to the size of the economy, it acts as a determining factor for some of the decisions that the business sector and states take," she further stated.

Speaking on Finance Act as part of ways to boost growth, Mrs. Ahmed said: "The federal government introduced the annual Finance Act to support the implementation of our annual budgets and increased the value-added tax (VAT). We also introduced new taxes and were able to block a number of leakages. In addition, we reduced taxes for micro, small and medium enterprises.

Today, small businesses are paying zero company income tax. We also reduced medium-sized businesses taxes from 30 percent to 20 percent—tax relief that will enable them to retain revenue and reinvest,"

On the African Continental Free Area Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), Mrs. Ahmed stated: "The AfCFTA will open a bigger market for businesses in Africa. Of course, the Nigerian market is the largest market. We have an opportunity for industries to manufacture products that can be exported within regions, enabling us to earn foreign exchange. It will help us improve trade practices and remain competitive. It is already helping Nigerian entrepreneurs to strengthen partnerships with counterpart business owners in other countries, which is necessary for success," she further stated.

How Nigeria's GDP Beats The Odds

fmfinsights analysis shows that even though the international money lender raised its projection later in the year to three percent, Nigeria's economy had to overcome flooding, inflation, and reduced oil production among others to stay above the three percent threshold after the economy ranked to negative growth in 2020.

According to the NBS, quarterly growth during the year indicated that Q3 had the highest growth with 3.54 percent followed by Q4 with 4.52 percent, Q1 with 3.11 percent while Q3 had the lowest growth with 2.25 percent.

Nigeria's economy is broadly divided into oil and non-oil sectors. With the low production of crude oil over the years, the country has made attempts to reinvigorate the non-oil sector.

This attempt has been gaining ground with the annual growth rate of the non-oil sector growing by 4.44 percent in real terms, contributing 94.43 percent to the economy while oil declined to -19.22 percent in 2022 as it contributed 5.67 percent to the economy.

Overall, the top 10 contributing activities to real GDP were crop production - 24.10 percent, trade - 15.82 percent, telecommunications and information - 15.55 percent, real estate - 6.18 percent, crude petroleum and natural gas - 4.34 percent, food, beverage and tobacco - 4.14 percent, financial institutions - 3.67 percent, construction - 3.47 percent, professional, scientific and technical services - 3.34 percent, and other services - 3.27 percent.

Cumulatively, the sector is categorised into agriculture, industries and services, with each contributing 25.58 percent, 19.02 percent, and 55.40 percent respectively.

In nominal terms, the report notes that the country's economy as of December 2022 was worth N202 trillion.

Agriculture is the highest contributor with N47.9 trillion followed by manufacturing - N27.5 trillion, trade - N26.6 trillion, information and communication - N21.48 trillion, construction - N18.6 trillion, and mining and quarrying - N13.6 trillion.

Others include real estate - N10.2 trillion, financial institutions - N6.7trillion, transportation and storage - N4.29 trillion, professional, scientific and technical services - N5.3 trillion, public administration - N3.3 trillion, education - N3 trillion, electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply - N1.78 trillion, human health and social services - N1.19 trillion, and accommodation and food services - N1.75trillion.

DMO Offers 2 FGN Savings Bonds For Subscription

By Kingsley Benson

The Debt Management Office (DMO), on Monday offered two Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) Savings Bonds for subscription at N1,000 per unit.

According to the DMO, the first offer is a two-year FGN Savings Bond due on March 15, 2025, at an interest rate of 465 percent per annum.

The second offer is a three-year FGN Savings Bond due in March 25, 2026, at an interest rate of 10.465 percent per annum.

"They are offered at N1,000 per unit, subject to a minimum subscription of N5,000 and in multiples of N1,000 thereafter, subject to a maximum subscription of N50 million.

"Interest is payable quarterly, and bullet repayment (principal sum) is made on maturity," the DMO said.

It also said that FGN Savings Bonds qualified as securities in which trustees could invest under the Trustee Investment Act.

"They qualify as government securities within the meaning of the Company Income Tax Act (CITA) and Personal Income Tax Act (PITA) for tax exemption for pension funds among other investors.

"They are listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange Limited and FMDQ Securities Exchange Limited, and they qualify as liquid assets for liquidity ratio calculation for banks," it further said.

It also said that they were backed by the full faith and credit of the Federal Government of Nigeria and charged upon the general assets of the country.

Finance, Sports Ministers To Chair Committee On Policy Transforming Sports

By Chiamaka G. Okpala

The Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, and Sunday Dare, Minister of Sports and Youth Development, have constituted a technical committee to evaluate the incentives package approved in the National Sports Industry Policy (NSIP).

The federal executive council (FEC) approved the incentives package during its sitting on November 2, 2022.

In a statement, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Development said that the committee would be chaired by both Mrs. Ahmed and Mr. Dare.

It stated that the committee would include representatives from the Ministry of Sports and Youth Development, Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRs), Ministry of Trade and Industry, and Nigerian Customs Service.

The statement said that the committee would work out the fine details of the fiscal incentives outlined in the policy, which emphasises 'sports as a business' and prepares grounds for more private sector participation in the sports sector.

Mrs. Zainab Ahmed, Honourable Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning

Mr. Sunday Dare, Minister of Sports and Youth Development

The policy includes the application of the Renovate Operate Transfer (ROT), Build Operate and Transfer (BOT), Integrated National Financial Framework (INFF), Nigeria Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (NIIMP) or any other innovative public-private partnerships (PPP) financing model for the provision, rehabilitation of sports facilities in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning.

The incentives, as outlined, are tax exemption and rebate for a period of five years for investors in the value chain of sports, land provision and waiver for certain fees on lands meant for sports, and single-digit loan interest rates for corporate organisations and private individuals investing in the sports value chain.

Others are independent government grants through the establishment of an independent Athletes Welfare Fund (AWF) from which athletes representing the country can draw support for education and training.

NAICOM Tasks Businesses To Prioritise Insurance

• Licenses MP Platform As Web Aggregator

By Anita Dennis

To ensure businesses enjoy sustainable growth, the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) has advised operators in the insurance sector to incorporate insurance as an essential part of the financial plans of individuals and entities.

The Commissioner for Insurance and NAICOM Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr. Sunday Thomas, disclosed this at the recently-held Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN) 2023 Business Outlook Conference themed: 'Reshaping the Financial Sector: Emergent Challenges and Opportunities'.

The NAICOM boss noted that insurance should be accorded a priority place in the scheme of things, especially with regard to numerous financial services offered to Nigerians. He described insurance as a risk mitigation tool against unforeseen circumstances and losses; rather than plunging anyone into borrowing to stay afloat.

He tasked underwriting companies to come up with the right products that suit various types of businesses.

He said: "It is the deep understanding of the customers' businesses that aids insurers to gain insight into the financial status of the customers, thereby helping to market the right product, rather than struggling to sell what had been produced. That is, develop products that could be sold, but do not try to sell what had been produced."

In his remarks, the Chairman of the Council of the Institute, Edwin Igbiti, said that the forum was specifically designed to review the 2022 business environment while mapping a way forward for the insurance sector in 2023.

"It is a platform to discuss the national budget as it relates to the financial sector, meet professionals from different professions in the financial world, and share expertise on the issues pertinent to the growth and development of the Nigerian economy," he noted.

Mr. Sunday Thomas, Commissioner for Insurance/Chief Executive Officer, NAICOM

Mr. Igbiti pointed out that the programme, among other things, examined the national budget, reviews the thrusts of the fiscal and monetary policies of the government, and estimates how these would influence the insurance industry in particular and the economy in general.

"This first session of the review envisaged the 2023 national budget, most especially the aspect that relates to the insurance industry and how it can reposition itself. The objective was to review business and financial activities, share ideas, and project proponents for profitability, and proffer solutions and recommendations to operational challenges in the country", he explained.

In another development, NAICOM has granted operational license to MP Platforms Limited to operate as web aggregator.

It was gathered that applications from two more firms had also been approved, but they are yet to be granted operational licenses.

MP Platforms Limited, which has Oluwarotimi Daniel as Chairman and Okiemute Akoko as Managing Director (MD), secured the approval on December 8, 2022.

The Head, Corporate Communications and Market Development, NAICOM, Rasaaq Salami, had earlier disclosed that the commission received applications, and that they were being looked into by the licensing department.

NAICOM had pegged the minimum share capital of a web aggregator at N5 million and registration fee at N3 million.

A web aggregator is an insurance intermediary or an insurance company that provides information on insurance provided by different companies. A web aggregator also provides a comparison of insurance products and also the prices of different insurance products. The aggregator provides information on different products to various insurers.

The web aggregator concept is developed when at the end consumers get quotes on the prices of different financial products. The aggregator either maintains a website or owns a website to provide information on the insurance products. For regulating these companies, an Insurance Web Aggregator License is required.

A web aggregator plays the following role: Compares insurance products.

Agreements are made between web aggregators and insurers. All relevant information related to insurance products has to be provided and information related to insurance products is displayed on the website.

Having an insurance web aggregator license would not permit a web aggregator to provide ranking and comparison of different insurance providers and their products.

Web aggregators can display only insurance products. Solicitation of policies is allowed by web aggregators. Solicitation is done through an online portal where information would be directly provided to the customer.

According to NAICOM, a web aggregator is expected to have a minimum share capital not less than N5 million as at the date of application and shall continue to maintain same throughout the license period, even as the web aggregator shall submit to the commission a financial position duly certified by an external auditor every year, after finalisation of books of accounts.

The insurance regulator had equally pegged web aggregator's registration for license at N3 million.

Intending investor is to pay N500, 000 non-refundable application fee, after which such investor will pay N2.5 million as licensing fees, even as license renewal will cost N1million.

Stating that insurance levy payable by web aggregator shall be one percent of the gross commission income or minimum of N200, 000, whichever is higher, it added that the commission to be paid by the insurer partner to web aggregator shall not exceed 30 percent of the broker's commission as stated in Section 53 of the Insurance Act, 2003.

"A web aggregator shall put in place a robust LMS and transmit leads at no extra cost to the insurers. The insurer shall keep adequate records of commission paid to a Web Aggregator," it pointed out.

On payment of premium under web aggregation, operation, it said, shall be guided by Section 50(1) of the Insurance Act 2003 which provides for receipt of an insurance premium as condition precedent to a valid contract of insurance, and highlighted further that there shall be no cover in respect of an insurance risk, unless the premium is paid in advance that is: 'No premium, No cover.'

The operational guideline is to serve as a working document to register, supervise and monitor web aggregators.

The commission, in the guideline, said that insurance intermediary who maintains a website for providing information on products of different insurers is covered by the guideline. It stated that it is the responsibility of web aggregators to obtain any clarification required on the applicability of this guidelines, and any other regulations from the commission.

FIRS, LIRS Sign Pact To Harmonise Tax Administration, Raise System Efficiency

By Jennete Ugo Anya

R-L: **Prince Clem Agba,** Minister of State, Budget and National Planning, **Mr. Muhammad Nami,** Executive Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service, **Mr. Babatunde Sanwo-Olu,** Governor of Lagos State, and **Mr. Ayodele Subair,** Executive Chairman of the Lagos State Internal Revenue Service (LIRS), during the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between LIRS and FIRS, recently in Lagos.

The federal government and Lagos state government have signed a bilateral agreement to harmonise tax administration, raise system efficiency and proffer solution to challenges of multiple taxations.

Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu a few weeks ago presided over a ceremony where Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and Lagos State Internal Revenue Service (LIRS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a joint tax audit system that would address duplication of efforts and facilitate exchange of data that are relevant to enforcement of extant tax laws.

Minister of State for Finance, Prince Clem Agba, witnessed the agreement signing event held at the State House in Marina, Lagos which also had Commissioner for Finance, Rabiu Olowo, Lagos State Attorney-General, Mr. Moyosore Onigbanjo, Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, Hon. Sam Egube, and Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Gbenga Omotoso, in attendance.

Aside from offering joint jurisdiction in tax audit and bringing about an integrated system of tax compliance, the scope of the MoU also empowered both tax authorities to exchange information sourced under International Tax Treaties in line with global protocols, while creating a common tax collection platform to eliminate double taxations.

Governor Sanwo-Olu described the collaboration as 'epoch-making', noting that the consideration for the harmonisation of the two agencies' mandates started about a year ago, based on the need to forge a common front in widening the tax net to raise the country's tax to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio.

The Governor observed that Nigeria had maintained an unimpressive tax to GDP ratio of between six and eight percent, despite the yearly record-breaking turnovers by both FIRS and LIRS. This, he said, has mounted pressure on the nation's resources and created an imbalance in government's expenditure.

He said that Nigeria must operate at the same level with other nations within sub-Saharan Africa doing between 14 and 15 percent in tax to GDP ratio in order to support the government's development programmes and improve accountability.

In his words: "We have just witnessed an epoch-making ceremony between the FIRS and LIRS. This collaboration did not just happen by chance; it is a conversation we started about a year ago with the chairman of FIRS when both parties reviewed their successes and limitations. It was clear that there was a need for a relationship to be consummated. Both FIRS and LIRS have been breaking records of their tax collection and administration yearly, but this is not enough. We have an unimpressive tax to GDP ratio, which ranges between six and eight percent; this is totally unacceptable.

"Studies have shown that there would be better service delivery to the citizens and improvement in efficiency of tax collection when the two agencies work together. The cost of tax collection would be reduced, we would see better customer satisfaction and more resources would be generated for the government to deliver more dividends of democracy. For us as a state, we are humbled by this collaborative effort and we believe our citizens will be the ultimate beneficiaries of this initiative. The MoU is in the best interest of the public, as it affirms the reason why we need to come together and strengthen the cordial working relationship between the two agencies."

Governor Sanwo-Olu said that the bilateral agreement was initiated not to overburden tax-paying citizens, stressing that the objective was to widen the tax base and bring more people to equitability. With a sustainable tax administration system, the Governor also said that more resources would accrue to the government to reduce social burden and take care of the vulnerable.

The governor observed that the sizes of Lagos's budget were significantly lesser than what the state should be appropriating. He also said that the market study indicated a N5 trillion budget benchmark for the state, given the size of the state economy's GDP. With the collaborative effort, Mr. Sanwo-Olu said that Lagos State may have been on the right track to raise its budget level to what it should be.

He also said: "Our government will continue to raise the bar, so that we can do a lot more with more resources. This collaboration is not to overburden our citizens; it is to widen the tax base and bring people to equitability. This will reduce social burden, because we would have enough resources to take care of the vulnerable.

"This collaboration is a win-win for both agencies and our citizens. It means the government can do a lot more for the residents and provide resources to take care of their needs in health, in education, safety and security, and in everything that makes life meaningful to our people. We are set to remove red tape in the entire tax administration. This is another beginning for a mutually beneficial relationship between FIRS and LIRS," he further said.

Then Prince Agba said that the dwindling oil revenue necessitated the need to expand the nation's tax base to fund development projects. The minister said that duplication of efforts by both agencies would lower the efficiency of both Lagos and Federal governments in resource generation, while limiting both parties to collect tax.

The collaboration, Prince Agba said, would not short-change each party, but rather bolster the parties to raise finance to bridge infrastructure gap in their respective domains.

FIRS chairman, Mr. Mohammed Nami, said that the MoU would help both agencies to build capacity in respective areas of specialisation while helping Lagos and Federal governments to raise revenues for projects and development programmes.

"We will work together as a team during the investigation and have an automatic exchange of information. With this, we will be able to carry out our mandate seamlessly. As part of the joint operation, we will be able to implement presumptive tax as far as issues of tax administration are concerned," Mr. Nami said.

LIRS chairman, Mr. Ayo Subair, said that the collaboration would bring about quick solutions to tax disputes and incidents, thereby creating seamless reconciliation of issues. He listed other expectations to include reduced administration costs for both tax authorities and the elimination of hiding places for recalcitrant taxable persons and entities.

> Our government will continue to raise the bar, so that we can do a lot more with more resources

fmfinsights
Economy & Investment

ADVERT RATE

COLOUR

PRODUCT		
Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	557,916.68	41,843.76
H/P	316,462.50	23,734.68
Q/P	152,770.00	11,457.76
14.5x5	452,218.76	33,916.40
14.5x3	271,293.26	20,347.00
10x6	374,250.00	28,068.76
10x5	311,875.00	23,390.62
10x4	249,500.00	18,712.50
9x6	336,825.00	25,261.88
9x5	280,687.50	21,051.56
9x4	224,550.00	16,841.26
9x3	168,412.50	12,630.94
8x6	299,400.00	22,455.00
8x5	249,500.00	18,712.50
8x4	199,600.00	14,970.00
7x6	251,975.00	18,898.12
7x5	218,312.50	16,373.44
7x4	174,650.00	13,098.76
7x2	172,150.00	6,549.38
6x4	149,700.00	11,227.50
6x3	112,275.00	8,420.62
6x2	74,850.00	5,613.75
5x6	187,125.00	14,034.38
5x5	155,937.50	11,695.32
5x4	124,750.00	9,356.26
5x3	93,562.50	7,017.18
5x2	62,375.00	4,678.12
4x4	99,800.00	7,485.00
4x3	74,850.00	5,613.76
4x2	49,900.00	3,742.50
3x2	37,425.00	2,806.88
2x2	24,950.00	1,871.26
2x1	12,475.00	935.62
1x1	6,237.50	467.82

PUBLIC NOTICE POLITICAL		
Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	578,838.55	43,412.90
H/P	328,329.84	24,624.74
Q/P	158,498.88	11,887.42
14.5x5	234,558.65	35,183.80
14.5x3	284,858.44	21,364.38
10x6	388,303.80	29,122.78
10x5	323,586.50	24,268.98
10x4	258,869.20	19,415.20
9x6	349,473.42	26,210.50
9x5	291,227.85	21,842.08
9x4	232,982.28	17,473.68
9x3	174,736.70	13,105.26
8x6	310,643.04	23,298.22
8x5	258,869.20	19,415.20
8x4	207,095.36	15,532.16
7x6	271,812.66	20,385.94
7x5	226,510.55	16,988.30
7x4	181,208.44	13,590.64
7x2	90,604.22	6,795.32
6x4	155,321.52	11,649.12
6x3	116,491.14	8,736.84
6x2	77,660.76	5,824.56
5x6	194,151.90	14,561.40
5x5	161,793.24	12,134.50
5x4	129,434.60	9,707.60
5x3	97,075.95	7,280.70
5x2	64,717.30	4,853.80
4x4	103,547.66	7,766.08
4x3	77,660.74	5,824.56
4x2	51,773.84	3,883.04
3x2	38,830.38	2,912.28
2x2	25,886.92	1,941.52
2x1	12,943.46	970.76
1x1	6,471.72	485.38

BLACK AND WHITE

PRODUCT		
Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	366,792.56	27,509.44
H/P	198,423.18	14,881.74
Q/P	95,782.00	7,183.66
14.5x5	283,950.60	21,296.30
14.5x3	190,000.00	14,250.00
9x6	234,993.60	17,624.52
9x5	176,245.20	13,218.4
9x4	140,996.16	10,574.72
9x3	105,747.12	7,931.04
8x6	187,994.88	14,099.62
8x5	156,662.40	11,749.68
8x4	126,329.92	9,474.74
7x6	164,495.52	12,337.16
7x5	137,079.60	10,280.98
7x4	109,663.68	8,224.78
7x2	54,831.84	4,112.38
6x4	93,997.44	7,049.80
6x3	70,498.08	5,287.36
6x2	70,498.08	5,287.36
5x6	117,496.80	8,812.26
5x5	97,914.00	7,343.56
5x4	78,331.20	5,874.84
5x3	58,748.40	4,406.14
5x2	39,165.60	2,937.42
4x4	62,664.96	4,699.88
4x3	46,998.72	3,524.90
4x2	31,322.48	2,349.18
3x2	23,499.38	1,762.46
2x2	15,666.24	1,174.96
2x1	7,833.12	587.48
1x1	3,916.56	293.74

PUBLIC NOTICE POLITICAL		
Size	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
F/P	435,178.08	32,638.36
H/P	254,538.96	19,090.42
Q/P	131,226.90	9,842.02
14.5x5	38,040.56	2,853.04
14.5x3	232,825.87	17,461.94
10x6	319,512.00	23,963.40
10x5	266,260.00	19,969.50
10x4	213,006.00	15,975.46
9x6	287,560.80	21,567.06
9x5	239,634.00	17,972.56
9x4	191,707.20	14,378.04
9x3	143,780.40	10,783.54
8x6	255,609.60	19,170.72
8x5	213,008.00	15,975.60
8x4	170,406.40	12,780.48
7x6	223,658.00	16,774.36
7x5	186,382.00	13,978.66
7x4	149,105.60	11,182.92
7x2	74,552.80	5,591.46
6x4	127,804.80	9,585.36
6x3	95,853.60	7,189.02
6x2	63,902.40	4,792.68
5x6	159,756.00	11,981.70
5x5	133,130.00	9,984.76
5x4	106,504.00	7,987.80
5x3	79,878.00	5,990.86
5x2	53,252.00	3,993.90
4x4	85,203.20	6,390.24
4x3	83,902.40	6,292.68
4x2	42,601.60	3,195.12
3x2	31,951.20	2,396.34
2x2	21,300.80	1,597.56
2x1	10,650.40	798.78
1x1	5,325.20	399.40

SPECIAL POSITION	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
FPS 6x2	1,291,193.44	96,839.50
BPS 6x2	923,375.00	69,253.12
STRIP (FRONT) 2X6	1,322,912.50	99,218.44
STRIP (BACK) 2X6	1,037,500.00	77,812.50
STRIP (INSIDE) 2X6	218,460.38	16,384.52
EARPIECE (FRONT) 2X2	517,094.30	38,782.08
EARPIECE (BACK) 2X2	405,145.10	30,385.88
EARPIECE (INSIDE) 2X2	240,000.00	18,000.00
CENTERSPREAD (FULL)	3,320,000.00	249,000.00
CENTERSPREAD (HALF)	1,992,000.00	149,400.00
CENTERSPREAD (STRIP)	594,300.00	44,572.50
DOUBLESPREAD	2,982,952.00	223,721.40

WRAP	Rate	Vat (7.5%)
FULL WRAP	41,500,000.00	3,112,500.00
10 X 6	28,620,690.00	2,146,551.76
HALF PAGE (FRONT)	20,800,000.00	1,560,000.00
5X6 (FRONT)	14,312,344.00	1,073,425.80
4X6 (FRONT)	11,448,274.00	858,620.56
2X6 (UNDER MASTHEAD	7,262,500.00	544,687.50
2X6 (FRONT POLITICAL)	1,560,000.00	117,000.00

LOOSE INSERT	
RATE PER 1,000 SHEETS	60,000.00
HANDLING CHARGE (SINGLE)	1,000,000.00
HANDLING CHARGE (SINGLE)	1,000,000.00

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Between Mobilising Infrastructural Development And The Need For Addressing Food Insecurity In Africa

POLICY BRIEF

with

ENAM **OBIOSIO**

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) a few days ago stated that Africa needs a cumulative sum of $614billion by 2030 to address its rising challenge of food insecurity and transform the food system.

The Associate Vice President for External Relations and Governance of IFAD, Satu Santala, disclosed this in a report titled 'Financing food systems resilience in Africa: A starting point for transformation'.

He called for more finance and investments in Africa's food systems, innovations that reorient towards fairer outcomes, create jobs and harness the potential of Africa's youth. According to him, in the wake of the war in Ukraine, IFAD launched a crisis response initiative to protect the livelihoods and productive assets of small-scale farmers.

"Bringing more and fairer investments into African food systems requires innovation and commitments from governments, the private sector, and international partners. This is where I see room for leaders to focus their attention. New research indicates that transforming African food systems is estimated to require $77billion a year until 2030 – $614billion in total," he explained.

Mr. Santala noted that the demand for IFAD's work and financing was far greater than the level of commitment. He revealed that the agency would be presenting the investment case to its member states later this year to scale up through the fund's next replenishment.

"By taking a medium- to long-term development perspective, leaders can target the root, underlying causes of food insecurity and build resilience to future shocks. Doing this successfully in Africa would be a huge step in ending global hunger and transforming food systems globally. The Fund will continue to champion this cause," he reiterated.

The agency had emphasised that one of the major factors causing the fragility of Africa's food systems and the pressing need for increased investment in food security was the effect of global shocks.

Recall that Africa is the region worst affected by hunger, with more than one in five people chronically under-nourished as captured three years ago.

Based on reports, the war in Ukraine and the increasingly severe impacts of climate change have worsened the situation. He stated that the agency's regional teams had projected a doubling of food, fuel, and fertilizer prices compared to 2021.

"This threatens to undermine food security and agricultural productivity in the present, and recovery in the future. Small farms deserve particular attention. The vast majority of Africa's farms are under two hectares and account for most of the food consumed by the continent's most vulnerable population," Mr. Santala disclosed.

The body stated that a humanitarian response was essential, but it was not a long-term solution. It also stated: "The financing gap between long-term resilience building and short-term emergency food assistance is significant and rising. This undermines the ability of poor rural people to cope with future shocks. We need to tackle the underlying factors of food insecurity to avoid recurring crises, and to tap into Africa's significant potential to produce food for herself–and for others."

The Fund would point to studies that show that investing in agriculture is significantly more effective in reducing poverty than investment in any other sector.

"Through our work on the ground, we see that investing in fair and sustainable food systems can transform small-scale farms into sustainable agribusinesses. This builds local production capacity and improves Africa's food sovereignty. It creates jobs along the value chain, particularly in processing, transport, and marketing," it claimed.

More so, it would highlight that when rural economies were thriving, they offered opportunities for decent work, asserting: "Migration becomes a choice, not a necessity, and the foundation is laid for better livelihoods, resilience, and peace.

"We are working on innovations in food systems financing, this including the World Bank, and significantly scaling up partnerships with the Green Climate Fund."

> The continent also needs to address its substantial infrastructure deficit, if it is to successfully address the food insecurity

Meanwhile, African economies could make the pivotal juncture through their private sector.

The private sector will have to play more of a role in different sectors of economic development if countries are to address food insecurity and avoid economic stagnation.

Infrastructure—both physical (roads, electricity) and social (health, education)—is one area where the private sector could be more involved. Africa's infrastructure development needs are huge—in the order of 20 percent of GDP on average by the end of the decade. How can this be financed? All else equal, the main source of financing would be more tax revenue collections, something that most countries are working towards. But, given the scale of the needs, new financing sources will have to be mobilised from the international community and the private sector.

Africa is a continent that holds immense opportunity for private investors. It has a young and growing population and abundant natural resources. Cities are seeing massive growth. Many countries have launched long-term industrialisation and digitalisation initiatives. But significant investment and innovation are necessary to unlock the region's full potential.

Given the limited availability of public funds, Africa and development partners could consider reallocating some resources used for public investment towards financing public incentives for private projects. When this reallocation is gradual and supported by sound institutions, transparency and governance, it could increase the amount, range, and quality of services for people in Africa. More innovative thinking can help realise the transformative potential of infrastructure on the continent, which could give rise to addressing the food insecurity.

Given the pressure on investment yields in developed markets, African nations have an opportunity to attract private-sector funding as they embark on infrastructure development programmes to boost their economies.

As is the case in other markets, infrastructure investments will be key to reigniting Africa's economic growth and development going forward. The continent also needs to address its substantial infrastructure deficit, if it is to successfully address the food insecurity.

Considering that many African nations now find themselves in weak fiscal positions, due to many global shocks, governments have to turn to public-private partnerships to deliver large-scale projects.

Market dynamics could as well support the mobilisation of private-sector capital and expertise. Compared with developed economies, where interest rates are zero or negative in many cases, returns in Africa can be highly attractive to both global and local investors.

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