**NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (NIGERIA)**

**Inputs of the National Human Rights Commission to Human Rights Council resolution 52/8 on promoting human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals through transparent, accountable and efficient public service delivery**

The National Human Rights Commission, Nigeria is pleased to offer our inputs to Human Rights Council resolution 52/8 on promoting human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals through transparent, accountable and efficient public service delivery as follows:

1. What are the main challenges identified in your country/region in relation to public service delivery? Please address both institutional and practical barriers in your response.

**Response:** The Nigerian public service system faces some challenges that impact on public service delivery. Some of the key challenges include corruption, underfunding of public service, appointment of politicians to oversee Ministries, Departments and Agencies based on partisan politics, bureaucratic bottlenecks, as well as inadequate data and records management. It is however important to emphasize that the government and various stakeholders have recognized these challenges and are taking notable steps to reform and address these challenges.

1. What are the examples of good practices and approaches taken to overcoming identified challenges to the provision of public services.

**Response:** The following initiatives aim to improve governance, increase transparency, enhance efficiency, and ensure better service delivery in the Nigerian public service:

1. Nigeria has established anti-corruption agencies, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offenses Commission (ICPC), to investigate and prosecute corrupt practices in public service. These agencies work to deter corruption and promote transparency.
2. The Nigerian government has promoted accountabilitythrough various means, including the implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) to centralize government funds, which enhances transparency and reduces leakages.
3. Another reform within the public service is the implementation of performance management systems and merit-based recruitment. In 2023, the Nigerian government amended the Public Service Rules to introduce a new system of Performance Management System for public servants’ performance evaluation. The new system replaced the previous system of Annual Performance Evaluation Report and is planned to reinvigorate effective service delivery in the public service system. It will also create a digitally-driven culture of performance management in the civil service.
4. Digital platforms and e-government initiatives have been launched to enhance service delivery. For instance, the Treasury Single Account, National Identity Management Commission (NIMC), and the Nigeria Immigration Service have introduced online services to reduce bureaucratic bottlenecks and improve efficiency.
5. Public-Private Partnerships collaboration with the private sector have been increasingly used to bridge funding gaps and improve service delivery in sectors like healthcare and education.
6. In 2023, the Nigerian government amended the Public Service Rules to introduce a new system of Performance Management System for public servants’ performance evaluation. The new system replaced the previous system of Annual Performance Evaluation Report and is planned to reinvigorate effective service delivery in the public service system. It will also create a digitally-driven culture of performance management in the civil service.
7. To what extent does corruption play in excluding individuals and households from accessing public services? How does corruption affect the delivery of public services to population groups in your country?

**Response:** Corruption plays a significant role in excluding individuals and households from accessing public services in Nigeria. It has a detrimental impact on service delivery, limits access to essential services, and perpetuates inequality. Bribery, extortion, resource diversion, underinvestment in critical services and misappropriation of funds within the public service and the Nigerian society have contributed to limited access to resources for the masses especially vulnerable groups.

1. What percentage of eligible individuals and households do not claim and/or benefit from public services in your country (non-take up)? What are the barriers that hinder them from accessing public services to which they are entitled? How can non-take-up be reduced?

**Response:**  Most individuals and households are unable to access public services due to factors that include corruption, bureaucratic bottelnecks and issues of accessibility to these services especially for the rural population. Other factors are lack of information regarding certain public services as well as poor infrastructures.

However, the government of Nigeria established the Service Compact (SERVICOM) in order to address these issues. SERVICOM is an initiative of the Federal Government of Nigeria conceived to promote effective and efficient service delivery in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to ensure customer satisfaction and to manage the performance-expectation gap between Government and the citizenry as well as other members of the public.

1. Please refer to challenges and good practices of public services delivery to persons belonging to groups in situations of vulnerability and marginalization including persons living in poverty, women and girls; children and youth; ethnic, national and linguistic minorities; persons with disabilities; indigenous peoples; migrants; and older persons.

**Response:** The Nigerian government takes cognisance of vulnerable persons within its territory and makes laws and policies to cater to their needs. Some of such efforts include:

1. The provision of free services at the National Human Rights Commission to enable all persons including the indigent access protection of their human rights. This also allows for transparency and acts a preventive measure on bias;
2. The passage of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disability Act in 2018 advocated for the full integration of persons with disabilities into the society. A notable provision of the law is Section 4 which requires all public buildings to be constructed with the necessary accessibility aids such as lifts ramps and any other facility for ease of access for persons with disabilities. The Act also provides a definite timeline for implementation.
3. The National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) is established by the Nigerian government to handle issues concerning refugees, migrants, and internally displaced persons (IDPs).
4. The Child Rights Act in Section 3 provides that the best interest of the child should be of paramount interest in all matters concerning children and all agencies within the public service are mandated to uphold this principle in the discharge of their respective mandates.
5. Sections 14 (3) and (4), 171 (5), 217 (3) and 223 (1) (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) requires the composition and affairs of government agencies, the Armed Forces and other public offices to reflect the federal character of Nigeria to promote national unity. The Federal Character Commission was established in 1996 to effectively implement these provisions.
6. In 2021 the National Senior Citizens Centre was established to provide adequate social services for the elderly in the society and also to improve their quality of living as senior citizens as provided in Section 16 (2)(d) of the Constitution.
7. National Development Plan 2021-2025 is important initiative to achieve Social Justice, sustained inclusive growth through increasing national productivity and achieving sustainable diversification of production to significantly grow the economy and achieve maximum welfare for the citizenry.
8. Are public services digitalized in your country? Please provide details including challenges and good practices in digitalization of public services that ensures transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the delivery of public services.

**Response:** Integrated digital platforms like the Remita payment system, digital identity systems by the National Identity Management Commission and several e-government strategies have helped to digitise the Nigerian public service and improve accountability.The enactment of the Data Protection Act in 2023 has also facilitated this process.The digitalization of public services in Nigeria has contributed to transformation in service delivery. However, certain factors such as cyber security concerns, data privacy, and digital illiteracy hamper the progress of these initiatives.

1. How is the participation of private actors in public service delivery regulated and monitored in your country/region? Please share challenges and good practices.

**Response:** In Nigeria, private sector participation in public service delivery is regulated and monitored through legal frameworks, public-private partnership units in all government agencies, and regulatory authorities. The enactment of the Nigerian Investment Commission Act which deals with promotion of investment in the Nigerian economy and connected matters is one of such initiatives.

Challenges include capacity issues, corruption, and legal gaps. Good practices involve transparency, competitive bidding, performance-based contracts, capacity building, and social impact assessments to ensure inclusivity and accountability.

1. Describe economic policies, legislation, promising practices, or strategies and national, regional or local processes aimed at:
* increasing social spending, through national and local budgets, for the provision of public services;
* addressing structural discrimination in the provision of public services;
* maximizing available resources for the provision of public services;
* preventing corruption and associated illicit financial flows in the provision of public services;
* reallocating public expenditure for the provision of public services

**Response:** Government efforts aimed at addressing the above include**:**

1. Implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) to centralize government funds, which enhances transparency and reduces leakages.
2. The institutionalisation of federal character policy and the requirement for all public buildings to be accessible for persons with disabilities have helped to considerably reduce structural discrimination.
3. Independent financial audit of all government ministries, departments and agencies for accountability and transparency in budgetary funding and spending.