



NSP- CSO Forum

Communique

We, Civil Society Organizations drawn from all 36 states of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory, working on the platform of National Social Protection Forum, NSPF, held a virtual meeting on 15th December, 2020 to discuss a number of issues, including the current economic recession in Nigeria amid the covid- 19 pandemic.

The meeting **noted** the following:

- Effort of the Federal and some State Governments to implement Social Investment Programmes targeting the poor and vulnerable population
- Official figures from National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) released in May this year says 83 million Nigerians are living below poverty line and this figure can soar with the current recession.
- COVID 19 palliatives distributed by the government and other stakeholders has failed to adequately address the gaps created by the COVID 19 pandemic
- The #endSARS protests, as well as insecurity in different parts of the country highlights the urgent need for government to prioritize investment on youth related social issues.
- Continued dependence on crude oil as main source of foreign exchange
- Unsuccessful attempts by successive governments to diversify the economy and reduce imports of products that can be easily produced locally to reduce the demand on dollars (foreign exchange)
- Local and foreign borrowing to finance annual budgets and debt service commitments in the face of the recession has further worsened the lives and livelihoods of Nigerians, particularly, women,

youths and Persons With Disabilities (PWDs).

- High cost of governance at all tiers and levels of government in spite of the nation being in recession
- Poor state of critical infrastructure such as electricity, roads and railways with uncondusive business environment

Consequently, the meeting **resolved** as follows:

- a. Call on the Federal Government to accelerate action on the development and passage of Social Protection Bill to help strengthen poverty eradication through Social Investment Programmes
- b. Adequate investment should be made to capture more people in the social register
- c. Introduce measures to bolster diversification of the economy with emphasis on agriculture and manufacturing sectors
- d. Urgently fix critical infrastructure, particularly electricity, roads and railway
- e. Expedite action on the negotiations to end current strike action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and properly fund education at all levels to boost Education, research and innovation
- f. Introduce Sound medium and long- term monetary policy to boost the economy
- g. We encourage Government to intensify the war against corruption and block all avenues of financial leakages as well as step up assets' recovery efforts.
- h. All tiers of Government are encouraged to take urgent steps to cut cost of governance by reducing number of political appointees and overhead costs to free more resources for social protection programmes.
- i. International community should consider debt relief for Nigeria and provision of grants in aid rather than more loans. Such support could be in the areas of supporting the provision of Covid- 19 Vaccines for the poor in Nigeria.

SIGNED:

1. Mr. Leo Atakpu, Deputy Executive Director, Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ)
2. Mr. Saheed Mustafa, Save the Children, Nigeria
3. Ayo Adebuseye Esq, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Lagos Civil Society Participation for Development, (LACSOP)
4. Fatima Abdulhafiz, Program Officer, Exceptional Leadership and Integrity Promotion Initiative, Jigawa state
5. Mr. George Monyei, Majesty Foundation
6. Mariam Ibrahim, Jigawa State
7. Nasiru Bilyabiki, Zamfara State
8. Jessica Barthlomew, Kaduna State

For and on behalf of the National Social Protection- CSO Forum