

## DELTA STATE



**Geopolitical Profile:** Delta State was created by fiat through a military decree on August 27, 1991 by then Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) headed by General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida. The then military head of state Gen Ibrahim Babangida (Rtd) split the former Bendel State into two namely Delta and Edo states. The capital of the state was put at Asaba. Geographically, the State occupies a landmass of about 18,050 Km<sup>2</sup> of which more than 60% is land. The State lies approximately between Longitude 5°00 and 6°.45' East and Latitude 5°00 and 6°.30' North. It is bounded in the North by Edo State, the East by Anambra State, South-East by Bayelsa State, and on the Southern flank is the Bight of Benin which covers about 160 kilometres of the State's coastline. Delta State is generally low-lying without remarkable hills. The State has a wide coastal belt inter-laced with rivulets and streams, which form part of the Niger-Delta. Its population, based on the 2006 national census exercise, of 4,098,391 (Males: 2,674,306; Females: 2,024,085 (according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Official gazette, No. 24, vol. 94 of 2007) indicates that the Delta is one of the states with a high density of human population in the country.

Politically, Delta State is governed by a democratically elected Governor and a House of Assembly based in the capital Asaba. The present Governor is Senator (Dr) Okowa Arthur Ifeanyi , an Anioma descent from Delta North Senatorial district. He is a member of the ruling political party in the state - the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). The PDP also controls a majority of the seats in the Delta State House of Assembly with minority parties comprising less than fifteen percent of the total seats in the state legislature. He is in his one-term as the Executive Governor of the oil-rich state. There are twenty-five (25) Local Government Areas. The Delta State House of Assembly has 29 members, and out of the twenty-nine seats, the ruling People's Democratic Party controls 24 seats, Accord Party 1 seat, Labour Party 2 seats and Social Democratic Party has 2 seats. The state is also divided into ten Federal constituencies each of which present a member at the Federal House of representatives namely: Aniocha North/Aniocha South, Oshimili North/Oshimili South, Bomadi/Patani, Burutu, Ethiope

East/Ethiope West, Ika North East/Ika South, Isoko North/Isoko South, Ndokwa East/Ndokwa West/Ukwuani, Okpe/Sapele/Uvwie, Ughelli North/Ughelli South/Udu, and Warri North/Warri South/Warri South-west. In addition to the three (3) senatorial districts, the ruling party has all the Federal Constituencies seats and the three senators at the National Assembly.

**Economic Potentials and Investment Policies:** Economically, as one of the states situated in the Niger Delta region in the South-south geo-political zone, Delta State is an oil and gas producing state of Nigeria contributing about 35% of Nigeria's crude oil and some considerable amount of natural gas. Two principal towns namely; Asaba- the capital city, located in the northern part of the state with an estimated area of 762 km<sup>2</sup> - and Warri – the economic nerve centre, located in Latitude 5°31'N and Longitude 5°45'E in the southern part of the state occupying an estimated land area of 1,520 km<sup>2</sup> markedly represent the political and economic hubs of the state respectively. Warri, the major commercial city in Delta State has a population of over 311,970 people according to the national population census figures for 2006. The nation's second refinery as well as petrochemical plant is located in the state at Warri. The state is among states with high level of agricultural activities in the country which include; farming, fishing, livestock and forestry. The state is also endowed with other mineral resources aside oil and gas amongst them are ironstone, sandstone. The state is known as the highest producer of tabioka (cassava product). Warri and its environs, Sapele and Oghara are noted for their Rubber and Timber processing industries while the Osubi airport location (now being expanded to international status) has accelerated the socio-economic developments in the Osubi/Effurun axis of the state. From a monopolist state for depending on oil as the mainstay of her resources, Delta State is presently pursuing a policy known as “**Delta Beyond Oil**”, thus, the state is now focusing on the potentiality of tourism and agriculture as the source of earnings.

### **Situational Analysis of the State**

**Security Challenges:** The state is associated with several security challenges which includes-kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, amongst others. The level of cultism among the youths is at alarming stage in the state such that even primary school pupils are members of different cult groups in the state. Youths below 18 years of age are members of different cult gangs carrying dangerous weapons at the day time, which they are using in molesting and harassing innocent citizenry. Kidnapping is another social menace in the state, although under control by security forces with the help of local vigilantes.

**Political Challenges:** Due to the one party system in the state, it has not created room for political and economic developments and participation. The ruling party (PDP) deprived the people who are interested in political participation in the state. And the opposition parties are not organized as a result of lack of funding and structures. The situation has deprived vibrant, purposeful and patriotic Deltans from showing interests in political offices in the state. Since the inception of this democratic regime, the Peoples Democratic Party has continued with the

leadership of the state, which is run as a secret cult. Thus, the state is yet to get it right in terms of political participation, even development and delivery of good governance to the people.

**Bureaucracy:** Due to the absence of opposition parties and weak civil society groups in the state, getting access to public documents such as budgets and financial documents are not possible. Delta State is like a BANANA REPUBLIC where the Executive Governor is regarded or seen as a demi-god, thus, getting access to aforementioned documents requires the Governor's approval, which one a seeker of such documents cannot get as a result of the bureaucratic barrier.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Public Access to budget documents**

Delta state scores 32 out of 100 on the State Budget Transparency Index. The State Draft Budget Estimates are publicly available online while the Auditor-General's Report is available on request. Citizens have access to all documents in the budget formulation stage that can serve as a basis to monitor how the government is executing the budget; however, none of the budget execution documents is publicly available to the public. The State Budget Call Circular, State Budget Appropriation Law, Quarterly Reports, Mid-Year Review, and Accountant-General's report are only produced for internal use.

### **Public participation in the budget**

Citizens and CSOs in Delta state have minimal space to be involved in the budget process with a score of 39 out of 100. During the **budget formulation** stage, the state government with the help of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) developed information centers where citizens can provide inputs on the State Draft Estimates. The Delta House of Assembly opens some committee hearings on **budget approval** process. The UNDP Information Centers are also used to solicit inputs during the **budget execution** process. The Office of the State Auditor-General of Delta State maintains its own separate website where citizens can submit an "Audit Alarm" to facilitate their role as the "watch-dog of the resources of the public held on trust by the Government."

### **Public access to procurement information**

With a score of 17 out of 100, citizens have limited access to procurement information in Delta state. The Delta State Fiscal Responsibility Law of 2008 regulates the entire procurement process and established the Due Process Office.

## **Recommendations**

CIRDDOC recommends the following to improve budget transparency, public participation in the budget process, and transparency in the procurement process:

### **Budget Transparency**

The government can increase budget transparency in Delta state by timely publishing, online, the following documents that are already produced:

- Guidelines for the Preparation of the Delta State Budget
- State Budget Appropriation Law
- Delta State Government Quarterly Reports
- Delta State Mid-Year Budget Performance by MDAs
- Delta State Government Accountant-General Report

In addition to publishing these documents, the Delta State Budget Office should partner with CSOs in the state to develop a Citizen's Budget.

### **Public Participation**

To effectively take advantage of knowledge of CSOs and citizens, the government of Delta state should do the following:

- promote the UNDP Information Centers as a way for all citizens to provide inputs on what should be included in the budget; clearly articulate what the government expects to do with these inputs; and develop a report on how these inputs were used in both the formulation and the execution phases of the budget.
- publish a list of beneficiaries of projects, subsidies, social plans and other targeted spending from MDAs.
- Constitute the state public procurement body.

Similarly, the Delta State House of Assembly should do the following:

- open all committee hearings on the budget to public where citizens and CSOs can testify and publish reports on these hearings.

Lastly, the Auditor-General should do the following:

- promote the "Audit Alarms" throughout the state.

### **Procurement Process**

To improve the entire procurement processes, the following should be done:

- the Due Process Office should be granted more powers to be single procurement authority and publish all contract guidance documents per award.
- the Due Process Office should promote the State Public Complaints Bureau Office to ensure that procurement complaints are adequately addressed.
- the Due Process Office should publish awarded contracts along with justifications of each award and community projects.

### **Access to Information**

To improve access to information in the state, the government should do the following:

1. Domesticate the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2011.
2. Establish Freedom of Information (FOI) Agency in the state