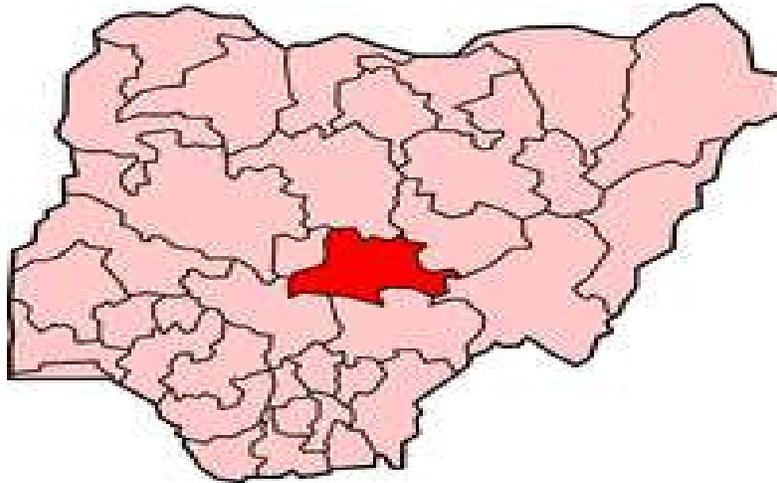


NASARAWA STATE



Geopolitical Profile: Nasarawa state is one of the 36 states in Nigeria that was created alongside 5 other states by the late Head of state Gen. Sani Abacha on the 1st October, 1996. It is located in the middle belt region between latitude 7^o and 9^o North and longitudes 7^o and 1^o East. It has a population of 2 million based on 2006 population census. It has a total area of 27,1117km² (10,470sqm). It is bounded in the north by Kaduna State, in the west by Kaduna state, in the west by Abuja (FCT), in the south by kogi and Benue and in the east by Taraba and plateau states. It lies within guinea savannah region and has a tropical climate. Rainfall is moderate with an annual rainfall of 1311:75cm.

There are 13 local Government areas in the state. Nasarawa Was carved out of plateau state in 1996. Nasarawa State is located in North central geopolitical zone of the country, It has Umaru Tanko Almakura as its Governor who was twice elected to serve for the first tenure in 2011 to 2015 under the platform of the Congress for Progressive change (CPC) which later merged with other parties to form the All progressive Congress (APC) and again under the new party which saw him winning for the second time during the last general election.

The state has 2 senators at the National assembly who are members of the APC and 1 from the PDP. Similarly out of the 5 seats in the Federal House of Representatives, 3 are from the PDP while APC retains the remaining 2. There are altogether 22 members in the Nasarawa State House of Assembly out of which 18 are from the APC while the remaining 6 legislators are PDP members.

Economic Climate and Potentials: Nasarawa State is tagged “Home of solid minerals” because in all the 13 LGAs, there is none without the presence of one form of mineral deposit or the other.

It has Agriculture as the mainstay of its economy with the production of varieties of cash crops throughout the year. It guarantees fast moving markets for its various agricultural crops and produce, which include Yam, sesame, guinea corn, tomatoes, groundnuts millets, cassava, oranges and banana. It also has some mineral deposits like salt village in keana, barites in Azara, gypsum in Awe. Galleria, Tin, Gemstone, Mica, kaolin and kolumbite are found in many parts of the state. Also available are clay, Zircon, Feldspars, Cassiteterite and limestone.

In view of its proximity to the federal Capital Abuja, the state has been witnessing a steady influx of people from other parts of the country, seeking to settle for one form of business or the other. This explains why the government has decided to embark on new hotels and ultra modern markets that are currently going on in Karu, Keffi, Akwanga and Lafia. Other township include: Wamba, Akwanga, Keffi and Nasarawa Towns. There are other Road networks that are currently going on in both Lafia the state capital and in other Local Government Areas. Some Tourist attraction includes: Farin ruwa water falls, Eggon hills, Giza crocodile pond, Akiri warm water, Peperuwa lake in Assakio, Dying pit in lafia amongst others.

Investment Policies And Climate/Institutions: The Nasarawa Investment and property Development Company Limited was established to serve as a catalyst and an engine of industrial growth and development since inception in 1996. The major objectives are:

1. To initiate and implement industrial projects that would facilitate industrial growth and development in the state.
2. To effectively participate in technically feasible and commercially viable companies equity in order to boost the company's earnings base and associate benefits.
3. To acquire, develop and manage properties with high return content nationwide.
4. To package attractive promotional activities that would showcase the state's investment potentials to the investing public, particularly the private sector.

5. To advise government on economic and investment matters while monitoring owned, and state's holding in various companies in the country.
6. To work closely with the private sectors in order to promote viable industrial and economic projects in the state.

The company has a package of incentives in place to provide a favorable climate for the establishment of industries by investors in the state. It has also been able to develop and manage some business outfits like hotels, water project and the karu international market.

FINDINGS

Public Access to budget documents

Nasarawa state scores 18 out of 100 on the State Budget Transparency Index. The State Budget Appropriation Law, Accountant General's and Auditor General's Reports are available on request. The majority of the remaining documents are produced, but are not publicly available. The Citizen's Budget and Quarterly Reports are not produced.

Public participation in the budget

Citizens and CSOs in Nasarawa state have limited spaces to be involved in the budget process with a score of 11 out of 100. Only the Nasarawa State House of Assembly opens few committee hearings to the public during the **budget approval** stage.

Public access to procurement information

With a score of 20 out of 100, citizens have limited access to procurement information in Nasarawa. The Nasarawa Tenders Board Office in the Ministry of Finance regulates the procurement process and publishes guidance documents for potential bidders.

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 easily increase budget transparency in Nasarawa state by timely publishing online the following documents that are already produced:

- Nasarawa State Call Circular for Budget Estimates from Ministries, Departments and Agencies
- Nasarawa State Draft Budget Estimates with Nasarawa State Medium Term Expenditure Plan

The Nasarawa State Ministry of Finance & Economic Development should do the following:

- partner with CSOs in the state to develop a Citizen's Budget.
- produce and publish Quarterly Reports and a Mid-Year Review.

Public Participation

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

- open the budget formulation process to all constituencies; establish effective mechanisms to solicit the public's inputs on what should be included in the State Draft Estimates; and clearly articulate what the government expects to do with these inputs.
- publish a list of beneficiaries of projects, subsidies, social plans and other targeted spending from MDAs.
- establish practical mechanisms for the public to provide inputs on how the budget is being implemented along with reports on how these inputs are used.

Similarly, the Nasarawa 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.

- open the hearings on the Auditor General's Report to the public.

Lastly, the Auditor General should do the following:

- establish practical mechanisms for the public to submit inputs on what should be audited.

Procurement Process

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

- the government should ensure that the procurement law is published; give the State Tenders Board the authority to regulate the procurement process in the state and the necessary resources to fulfill its duty and establish a procurement complaint board that manages an alternative dispute resolution mechanism.
- the State Tenders Board should open bidding documents in public immediately after the bidding process is closed.
- the State Tenders Board should publish all procurement decisions along with their justifications and for all 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