

OSUN STATE



Geographical Profile: Osun State came into existence on August 27, 1991 having been carved out from the old Oyo State. The state is located in the south-western part of Nigeria with an area approximately 14, 875 square kilometres. It lies between longitude 04° E and 05°5 and latitude 05° 55⁸⁸N and 08° 07^W. It is bounded by Ogun, Kwara, Oyo, Ondo and Ekiti states in the south, North, West and East respectively. The state lies within the tropical rain forest belt. According to the National Population and Housing Census exercise conducted in 2006, Osun State has a population of 3,423,535. With the growth rate of 3.2; the 2014 projection of Osun State population is put at 4,449,319 (UNFPA).

Tourist centres abound across the state. Some of the popular ones include: the Oranmiyan Staff, Ife Museum, Obafemi Awolowo University Zoological Gardens, Ile-Ase, Yeyemolu and Oduduwa Shrines and Grove, all at Ile-Ife. Others are Osun-Osogbo Shrine, which is the venue of the internationally-recognised Osun-Osogbo Festival, the Mbari-Mbayo Cultural Heritage, Idi-Baba Cultural Centre, Adunni Susan Wengers Centre and Nike Arts Gallery all based in Osogbo. There are also the Olumirin Water-

Falls at Erin-Ijesa, Igbo-Sango, Ede; Kiriji War Site, Igbajo; and the Ayikunnugba Water-Falls at Oke Ila orangun.

The state government attaches great importance to tourism. All issues relating to tourism are handled by the State Ministry of Home Affairs, Culture and Tourism. This Ministry is charged with the responsibility of modernizing and developing tourism and culture in the state. Osun Osogbo Grove has been recognised by UNESCO as a world heritage site, while the Osun Osogbo Festival has been listed as an international festival. UNESCO has also established the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding in Osogbo, the state capital.

The State is made up of 30 LGAs with 26 member of the House of Assembly. All the members of the State House of Assembly are male and predominantly made of the All Progressive Congress (APC) Political party. The Sitting Governor of the State is Engr Rauf Aregbesola of the All Progressive Congress and he has been elected for another 4 year-tenure on the August 9th, 2014 Governorship election in the State. The National Assembly delegation from Osun State comprises three senators and ten representatives.

Economic Potentials and Investment Policies: Traditionally, greater percentage of the people of the state (about 80%) engage in agriculture and produce sufficient food and cash crops for domestic consumption as inputs for agro-allied industries and for export. Segments of the populace are also traders and artisans. Other occupations include hand-weaving, mat-making, dyeing, soap-making and wood carving-among others. In the nineteen nineties, Gold deposits were discovered in Ilesha and Oriade axis of the State.

Situational Analysis of the State: The State of Osun is relatively peaceful and accommodating to all and sundry; the last governorship election and various political activities in the State in the past months has been widely adjudged relatively free, fair and peaceful. The State is also safe in terms of security of lives and properties. The State bureaucracy could be best described as ‘discouraging’ as most public servants hoards information and most times hostile in providing public documents and obviously harmless information.

FINDINGS

Public Access to budget documents

Osun state scores 18 out of 100 on the State Budget Transparency Index. The State Budget Appropriation Law is not published on time but its available on request. The majorities of the remaining documents are produced, but are not publicly available.Citizen's Budget and Quarterly Reports are not produced.

Public participation in the budget

Citizens and CSOs in Osun state have limited spaces for to be involved in the budget process with a score of 25 out of 100. Few citizens and CSOs are invited to town hall meetings during the **budget formulation** process. The Osun State House of Assembly opens very few committee hearings to the public during the **budget approval** process. The governor has very few mechanisms to solicit inputs during the **budget execution** process. Meanwhile, the **auditing** process is closed off to the public.

Public access to procurement information

With a score of 37 out of 100, citizens have minimal access to procurement information in Osun state. While there is no formal law regulating the procurement process, the Osun State Tenders Board regulates the procurement process.

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 Osun state by timely publishing online the following documents that are already produced:

- Budget Call Circular Letter
- State Draft Budget Estimates along with the Medium Term Sector Strategy
- Osun state Appropriation Law.
- State Mid-Year Review
- State Accountant-General's Report
- State Auditor-General's Report

The Osun State Ministry of Finance, Budget, And Economic Planning should do the following:

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

Public Participation

To effectively take advantage of knowledge of CSOs and citizens, the government of Osun 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.
- improve the detail of the 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 Osun 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 introduce a bill regulating the procurement process; 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.
- this State Tenders Board should open bidding documents in public immediately after the bidding process is closed.
- this State Tenders Board should publish all procurement decisions along with their justifications 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