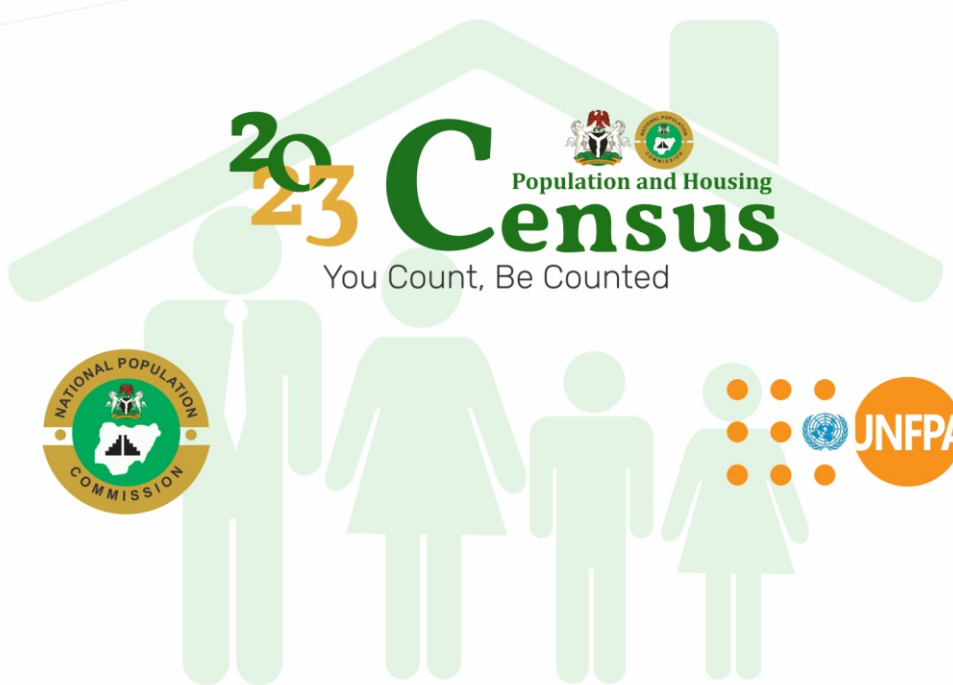


# IMPERATIVES FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE 2023 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS

(COLLECTION OF ARTICLES/OPINIONS)

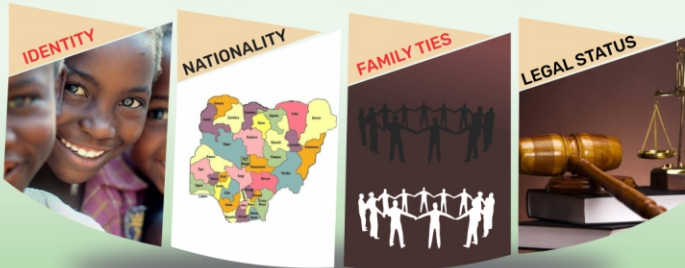
20  
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# NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION



## 2023 **Census** Population and Housing You Count, Be Counted




### OUR MISSION

To Be the Leading Demographic Agency in Africa, Meeting the Data Needs of all End-Users and Ensuring a Robust Population Quality for National Transformation

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# Foreword

In line with the United Nations principles and recommendations for the 2020 round of population and housing censuses and with the approval of the President and Commander in Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the next Population and Housing Census has been scheduled to take place in April 2023.

As the Commission prepares earnestly for the conduct of the census in 2023 to generate up-to-date data for national development planning, there are a few opposing views with varying positions calling for the postponement or cancellation of this important national exercise. According to them, the timing is not right.

Despite dissenting voices, preparations for the 2023 Population and Housing Census are on course and the Commission is confident that the prospect for an accurate and reliable census appears brighter than ever. This optimism is galvanized by the fact that the present Commission has taken time to identify and deliberate on issues that bedeviled past censuses and to avoid such pitfalls through the adoption of scientific planning and modern digital technology. This methodology will enhance accuracy and timeliness, and will therefore provide reliable and sustainable data necessary for governmental planning, policy-making, security, budgetary allocation, and development.

These new approaches will no doubt enhance the credibility of the process by eliminating double enumeration of respondents and improving the accuracy of the census results and the acceptability of the census outcome both locally and internationally.

Census taking is a people-oriented exercise, therefore, getting the people involved to participate and own in totality the process and its outcome is paramount to its overall success. It is in the realization of this that the National Population Commission is leaving no stone unturned in its advocacy and publicity drive to bring to the understanding of the people the right information on the imperative of conducting the census in 2023.

The mobilization of the Nigerian people through education and enlightenment to support and take ownership of this process to achieve the desired outcome is imperative and it hinges absolutely on our ability to reach the people with language that conveys appropriate messages that will galvanize and mobilize the people to participate in the 2023 census.

The production of this Pamphlet couldn't have come at a better time than now, this is in furtherance of the implementation of the Advocacy and Publicity work plan for the 2023 Population and Housing Census with the overarching goal of dissolving misconceptions and misrepresentation that resulted in controversies in past engender credibility and acceptability of the census project.

The Pamphlet contains strong analytical views articulated to broaden the understanding of the people on the imperative of the conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census. The well-researched articles dealt with any negative biases that have been posited against the conduct of this very important national exercise whose outcome is fundamental to the overall development of the country.

I wish to commend the Commission’s Public Affairs Committee for its commitment and guidance in the 2023 census publicity drive and the actualization of this document. My appreciation also goes to our worthy partner, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the support it has provided in the publication of this pamphlet as well as the tremendous role it has been playing in the census process.

Finally, I salute the management and staff of the Public Affairs Department, members of the editorial team, and the various authors for putting together these great publicity tools.

Hon. Nasir Isa Kwarra  
Chairman  
National Population commission

# Preface

As part of the Publicity strategies of the Commission to educate and sensitize the general populace on desirability of the 2023 Population and Housing Census, articles were written by staff and other stakeholders to address concerns and fears raised by some individuals and convince them on why the next census must hold.

Censuses in Nigeria have been unduly subjected to harsh criticisms by a vocal few and this time around, they have found another opportunity to call for postponement of the forthcoming 2023 Population and Housing Census on grounds of disproportionate reasons. These elements have raised concerns that are not sufficient enough to either cancel or postpone the next census because they are influenced by misconception, misrepresentation and misperception of the census process. It is therefore necessary to engage and educate the public ahead of the 2023 census to clear some of the negative prejudices and prepare their minds that the next census will be scientific in capturing the demographic characteristics of the Nigerian nation so to aid the acceptability of the census results.

This pamphlet titled Imperatives for the conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census contains well-researched articles with rich contents that addresses census topical issues ranging from security challenges; proximity of the next census with general election; census as economic empowerment tool;



procedure for enumeration of the Internal Displaced Persons in the 2023 Census; engagement strategies with traditional and religious rulers for the next census and acceptability challenges of the census results.

The pamphlet is well encompassing, comprehensive, educative and informative on imperative of the next Population and Housing Census, its importance and all that needs to know about the next census. It provides the tool to combat misconception and misrepresentation that had unduly fuelled the criticisms of past census figures. It will further deepen understanding and appreciation of the procedures and processes for the conduct of the 2023 Census.

I recommend this collection of articles and opinions on the imperatives for the conduct of the 2023 Census to governments across all levels, organizations, development partners, researchers and all well-meaning Nigerians to read and understand that conduct of the next Population and Housing Census is a must for the country, for any meaningful development to take place.

Dr. Eyitayo Oyetunji  
Chairman, Public Affairs Committee  
National Population Commission  
25th April 2022

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# WHY NIGERIA NEEDS TO CONDUCT THE 2023 CENSUS

By Dr. Inuwa Bakari Jalingo, Census Manager,  
National Population Commission

Population is a critical factor in a nation's efforts towards achieving sustainable development. The people are both the agents and beneficiaries of the development process. Knowledge of the national population in terms of size, distribution and socio-economic characteristics is required for planning purposes. This therefore, makes the conduct of census an essential governance activity. The imperatives for the conduct of the next population and housing census rest on the following grounds:

1. Nigeria has one of the fastest growing populations, with a growth rate of 3.2% and estimated population of over 200 million. Capturing the essential dynamics of such a rapidly growing population requires a regular conduct of censuses, preferably every 10 years as recommended by the United Nations. The country's inability to conduct a population census in the last 16 years has created an information vacuum as the data from the last Census conducted in 2006 has been rendered less useful for planning purposes.

2. Preparations for the conduct of the next Census have reached an advanced stage with the demarcation of 99% of the total land area of the country into enumeration areas. The

demarcation exercise began in 2015 and further delay in conducting the next census will make the products thereof less optimal for the next census in view of the rapidly changing environmental landscape and settlement patterns in the country.

3. Since the assumption of office in 2015, the Federal Government has introduced several poverty reduction and youth empowerment programmes, which are making concrete improvements in the living standards of the people. There is need to ensure that, further implementation of these programmes is driven by current data from the next census, that will improve the implementation of programmes, targeting vulnerable populations and ensure we Leave No One Behind.

4. The continuous usage of the 2006 Census for the estimation of Nigeria's population has created a data gap in global population which does not do credit to the nation's reputation. Nigeria is the seventh most populous nation on earth and will be the third most populous country after China and India in 2050 going by the current rate of growth. Relying on estimated parameters based on a census conducted 16 years ago to make important decisions to drive the country's development agenda forward is counterproductive.

5. Deriving from the above is the fact that a Nigerian census is bound to attract profound international support and participations on various levels for strategic reasons. Development partners and countries have shown interest in

providing technical assistance, materials support, and funding for the exercise. However, this support may only be released with a strong show of commitment from the Federal Government through financial and material support, as well as making unequivocal public statements in support of the Census process (including issuance of a Presidential Proclamation).

6. While the Commission is mindful of the current economic recession, which has reduced revenue at the disposal of the government against the background of competing demands including Covid-19 pandemic, the Commission is convinced that conducting the next census is one huge investment the nation must make to launch Nigeria into the path of economic prosperity through proper planning and optimal allocation of resources.

7. The Commission is also not unmindful of concerns that have been expressed over the grave security implications. However, with the recent successes being recorded by the gallant Armed forces in the fight against insurgency banditry, and the technical defeat of Boko haram, and the successful conduct of general elections in 2015 and 2019, the security situation for the census can be handled.

# THE 2023 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS: THE JOURNEY SO FAR

By Mrs Evelyn Arinola Olanipekun, Director, Census  
National Population Commission

Preparations for the conduct of the next Population and Housing Census began with the formulation of an Implementation Plan with detailed information on the strategies, activities, timeframe, and budget covering all phases of the Census process. The Plan addresses census components such as Mapping and Enumeration Area Demarcation, Information Technology, enumeration procedures and advocacy and publicity. The document, which was formulated in accordance with the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for 2020 World Programme on PHCs and international best practices, sought to leverage on technology to make the census process more efficient and cost effective through the conduct of a fully digital census process. In furtherance of the Plan, the following activities have been implemented:

1. Mapping and Enumeration Area Demarcation: The most significant preparatory step taken by the Commission is the Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD), which is the process of delineating the entire land area of the country into small (mutually exclusive) geographical and demographic units called Enumeration Areas (EAs). The units comprise a

specified number of persons and households, which a team of enumerators can cover during a Census. Planning for the census is anchored on the EAD as the basis for estimating both the human and material resources required for the census. The Commission as of today is the repository of the country's most accurate and reliable geospatial database.

The Commission made efforts to ensure that the EAD exercise was carried out meticulously, professionally, and scientifically. This involved the deployment of very high-resolution satellite imageries, the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) for geo-referencing and the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) for data management. Also, Personal Data Assistants (handheld devices/tablets) that include computer software for population estimation were used for data capture. Presently, the Commission has demarcated 772 out of the 774 Local Government Areas in the country leaving as outstanding Birni Gwari LGA in Kaduna State and Abadam in Borno State which could not be demarcated yet due to security concerns. Consultation is ongoing with the affected state governments and Security Agencies to ensure that work is completed in these pockets of un-demarcated areas.

When completed, the EAD will prepare the basis for the next census and establish the National Frame for the conduct of future censuses, specialised Surveys & Continuous Compulsory Civil Registration & Vital Statistics for the country. Other benefits to be derived from the EAD are:

- a. Providing maps for future censuses and surveys to statistical agencies such as the National Bureau of Statistics, State Statistical Agencies, other national and international agencies undertaking research activities etc
- b. Helps to adequately identify the country's internal and external boundaries
- c. Providing information on locations that will assist security agencies track insecurity;
- d. Providing information on the number of buildings and households in Nigeria.
- e. The delineation of the ward boundaries for electoral and national development programmes and;
- f. Providing a reliable platform for building geo-coding system by Nigeria Postal Agency

2. Development of Census Questionnaire: To generate broad based consensus and support on the relevance of the next census, the Commission conducted the Census Data Users Workshops to generate inputs into the design of census questions. Stakeholders across wide spectrum of the society including government officials, policy makers, traditional institutions, Civil Society Organizations, private sector etc were invited to series of workshops on the questionnaire and their inputs incorporated. Optimum data to support the implementation of national development agenda as well as the continental (Agenda



2063) and international (SDGs and ICPD) development goals will be generated. Questions to be canvassed in the next census will include the following:

- Demographic and Social Characteristics
- Birth registration
- Orphanhood
- Literacy
- Educational Characteristics
- Marital Status
- Nationality (including place of birth and state of origin)
- Migration
- Difficulty in Performing Activities
- Economic Characteristics
- Information Communication Technology
- Fertility and Child Survival
- Mortality
- Household Characteristics including sanitation

The Commission has presented this questionnaire to data users and policy makers across the thirty-six states and the Federal Capital Territory as part of the sustained stakeholder engagement in the census process. In addition, the questionnaire has been translated into the major Nigerian languages and pidgin English for better understanding and administration.

3. Conduct of Pretests: Conducting a successful census requires a continuous review of processes and tools at both planning and implementation levels to enable adjustments

where necessary. Towards this end, the Commission has conducted two Census pretest activities whose objectives were to evaluate the census instruments, particularly the quality of enumeration area (EAs) delineation and Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) application.

The first pretest was conducted between 31st May, 2021 and 13th June, 2021 in the thirty-six states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory. From the first pretest, it was established that among others, the enumeration areas (EAs) demarcated for the next Population and Housing Census are of high quality.

The second Pretest was conducted from November 24th to December 10th, 2021, in randomly sampled 444 EAS in the 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The aim was to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the census instruments and applications and to specifically, assess the functionality of all instruments for the census, the functionality of the transmission channels of data at all levels, assess the workload on a set of Enumerators and the duration of enumeration among others. Following the outcome of the second pretest, a hybrid software that integrates a home-grown application and the Census and Survey Processing System (CSPRO) software has been developed for digital data collection in the next Population and Housing Census.

4. Conduct of Pilot Census: In furtherance of the

preparation for the next census, the Pilot Census, which is a dress rehearsal of the main Population and Housing Census will be conducted in June 2022 to assess the overall preparedness to undertake the conduct of the next PHC successfully in terms of the quality of data collection, quality assurance, measures and strategies, field procedures, analysis and dissemination. The exercise is intended to evaluate every aspect of the census methodology starting with an e-recruitment system, to e-learning programmes, virtual training, physical training, data capturing, data streaming, data quality evaluation, data analysis and dissemination. It will also assess the effectiveness of logistics management system for the census.

5. Census Methodology: Nigeria's next Population and Housing Census will be fully digital and will be conducted in accordance with the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for 2020 Programme on Population and Housing Censuses. The Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD) has been accomplished using GPS-enabled PDAs Big Data and other geospatial resources such as high-resolution satellite imageries that facilitated the collection of fully geo-referenced data on all buildings and households in the country. Data on households and persons will be captured by more than one million trained functionaries using GPS-enabled handheld devices (tablets). A five-tier data quality assurance process will be implemented, including use of near-real-time enumeration tracking dashboard and online data quality monitoring to ensure collection of accurate data. Finally, modelling and mapping of

hard-to-count and hard-to-reach areas in conjunction with workload management strategies will be instituted alongside use of hybrid census methodologies as part and parcel of strategies for achieving complete coverage. Data capture, processing and database management will be undertaken using CSPPro, an open-source software developed by the US Census Bureau and widely used across countries to great effect. Indeed, for Nigeria Census, a bespoke hybrid census App which combines CensusPad and CSPPro has been developed to facilitate collection and integration of rich geospatial and population data — an innovation of sorts that will certainly be replicated or adapted by other countries. Cloud computing systems will be used to handle data transfer during collection and data management and storage, another innovation which will improve efficiency and enhance the safety and security of the data. Finally, the results will be released and disseminated via both static and digital media or platforms to enable distilling of policy relevant and animated presentations (data visualization) of user-friendly reports.

6. **Compilation of Historical Events:** Age is one of the most important variables usually canvassed during censuses. However, many populations in developing countries, including Nigeria, have poor knowledge of their ages. In accordance with best practices, a comprehensive list of historical events will be provided to enumerators to aid in the estimation of respondent's ages during census to ensure the collection of accurate age data. The Commission will complete compilation of the historical events for the 774 LGAs in the country by the end of April ahead

of the pilot census in June.

7. Identification and Mapping of Special Population: To ensure that everyone is counted during the Population and Housing Census, it is usually important to identify special populations that are hard to reach or hard to count because of their profession, location or other characteristics. They are usually identified and highlighted on a map for plans to be made for the enumerators to reach them during the census period. There are plans to identify and map special populations in all the LGAs of the country before the census. The identification exercise will begin with a pilot planned for 12 LGAs with the support of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

8. Advocacy and Publicity/Stakeholders Engagement: Conscious of the need to mobilize the public and create a broad-based consensus for the conduct of the next census, the Commission has embarked on a nationwide advocacy and publicity drive. The objectives are to create awareness and educate the public on the next census and more importantly geared towards addressing some concerns that have been raised on the desirability for the conduct of the next census. The approach is to engage the stakeholders with a view to explaining possible misperception of the census process.

The Commission has commenced advocacy visits to stakeholders across the country. States already visited are Enugu, Nasarawa, Ekiti, Kaduna and Borno during which the State Governors,

traditional institutions, local government Chairmen, security agencies and the media were engaged. The Federal Commissioners are also undertaking similar engagements in their respective states. The Commission intends to visit all states of the federation and the 774 Local Government Areas before the conduct of the next census. In addition, engagements with national level actors such as the National Assembly members, development partners, Civil Society Organizations, relevant government agencies and professional associations are being undertaken.

Partnership with the print and electronic media is being strengthened through participation in programmes, interviews, production and broadcast of jingles, advertorials, and coverage of events. Series of capacity training programmes are being put in place for journalists at national and state levels. In recognition of the increasing role of social media, especially among the youthful population, various social media platforms have been activated and being operated for the next Census.

# BEYOND THE MYTH: WILL THE 2023 CENSUS COMPLICATE THE 2023 GENERAL ELECTION?

BY ISIAKA YAHAYA, Ph.D

Apart from perceived huge burden on the national economy and escalating insecurity situation, another reason that has been flaunted against the conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census is its proximity to the 2023 General Election, slated for February and March 2023. The secondary use of census figures for political representation and distribution of revenues, as against its primary purpose for national planning, is considered to have elevated census to a contentious national event that cannot share the same national space with election. According to this school of thought, a good census is only fit to be conducted in a context that is totally devoid of electoral activities. Census is a landmine that should be avoided not only on one or two days slated for voting but also during other electoral activities such as registration of political parties, party conventions, nomination of candidates, election campaign and announcement of result.

Yes, census is politically relevant because of its use for delineation of constituencies and revenue allocation and election is also about struggle for power but this linkage does not necessarily make census and election strange bedfellows. It is indeed an exaggeration to place census on the same level of sensitivity with elections or to assume that census will complicate elections. This line of reasoning betrays a limited understanding of the complex



factors that drive the level of sensitivity of census and election, which are different and definitely not mutually reinforcing as to make their conduct within a shared time frame a no-go area.

In examining the potential impact of census taking on the electoral process and outcome, the right questions have to be posed and addressed realistically. Concerns on the need to divorce census from election have largely been raised in relation to security as it is believed that a joint or close implementation of the two activities might further compromise the fragile peace in the country. But the questions that need to be addressed are what will make individuals or groups take up arm against themselves within the context of census enumeration? What are the interests at stake in census and are these interests so contradictory as to provoke violence within the community? Conversely, how do these questions play out within the context of the electoral process?



For a community, local government area, state or any other administrative unit, what is at stake in the census is the desire to be adequately counted during the census. This collective desire is a unifying factor that cuts across party divides, religious or ethnic affiliation and socio-economic conditions. There is a popular understanding that the whole community stands to gain from a proper and accurate census either in terms of availability of data for planning purposes, political representation or allocation of economic resources. Judging from experiences of previous censuses, communities are more eager to play supporting roles in facilitating the enumeration process through mobilization of additional resources, public enlightenment and provision of security not only for the census but also preparatory activities. Over the years, census has always provided a platform for common and active participation in community development as it constantly reminds members of their collective interests and shared destiny. There is therefore no practical need for communities to be at war with each other the census.

Can similar responses be affirmed to these overarching questions in relation to elections? The answer is definitely no. Election is about competition for political offices, not between communities or administrative units but among members of the same constituency. What is at stake in the electoral process is not really the collective interest of the community but often irreconcilable partisan interests of individual members of the constituency working at cross purposes to ensure victory at the poll. Given the huge investment in elections and the corresponding rewards of

victory, elections provoke differences within the community. The win-at-all cost mindset of electoral competition beclouds the collective interest of the community, and more often lead to violence. A lingering feature of electoral competition in Nigeria is the mobilization of citizens against each other not only during voting days but also intra party disputes, campaign and post-election period.

Specifically in relation to the 2023 General elections, those who have argued that the census is too close to the election have not been able to establish the political stakes in the next census that will make it complicate the next election. Critical issues that will define the outcome of the election have been determined and will not in any way be influenced by the 2023 Census that will be conducted after the election result has been released. The voter register of over 85 million has been finalized and can only be increased through the on-going Continuous Voter Registration (CVR), and not the census figures. There is no way the 2023 Census will serve any purpose in voter registration for the 2023 election. Similarly, political representation for the 2023 election has been established by the provisions of the 1999 Constitution as amended, which will not change before the next election. With the exception of seats at the House of Representatives of the National Assembly and State Houses of Assembly which are determined by population, every state has equal number of constituencies at the Senatorial and governorship elections. This will definitely not be affected by the 2023 Census.

Judging by the schedule of activities for the 2023 General Election as released by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), it is even more difficult to sustain the argument that 2023 Census will complicate the next election. The census is proposed to be conducted in April 2023 for a maximum period of one week with restrictions likely in the first three days.

Curiously, the contention that census and elections are strange bedfellow is not supported by historical facts. The 1991 Census was conducted on the eve of the gubernatorial election, which produced governors for the then 30 States in the aborted Third Republic. The census was conducted from 20th to 28th November 1991 followed by the governorship election in December 1991. There was no evidence to suggest that the 1991 Census and its results negatively affected the 1991 governorship election as the elected governors were sworn-in in January 1992.

Rather than postponement, the 2023 Census should indeed be conducted after the 2023 election to serve as a moderating influence on the highly envisaged competitive environment of the 2023 election. A census conducted in April 2023 will help to heal the wound of bitter antagonism of the election period. The 2023 Census will nurture unity, commitment towards common goals and belief in the supremacy of collective interests over individual ambitions among the political class, thereby promoting peace in the immediate post-election period. Due to the exigencies of communal participation in the census process, political actors of various divides are likely to work together to ensure that their

respective communities are counted. They will contribute resources for the welfare of enumerators, sensitize their people and provide security for the functionaries. This spirit of togetherness and cooperation will linger for long and will definitely moderate possible antagonism and violence among contestants during the general election.

Conducting the next census in April 2023 after the general election in February/March 2023 will be a most auspicious and strategic decision for the nation not only for the successful conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census but also for a peaceful post-election environment. The fear of the 2023 Census complicating the 2023 election is a myth that is not sustained by historical fact, the interplay of factors driving the sensitivity of the two events and the spacious timelines between the 2023 core electoral activities 2023 Census as released by INEC.

# 2023 POPULATION CENSUS AS AN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

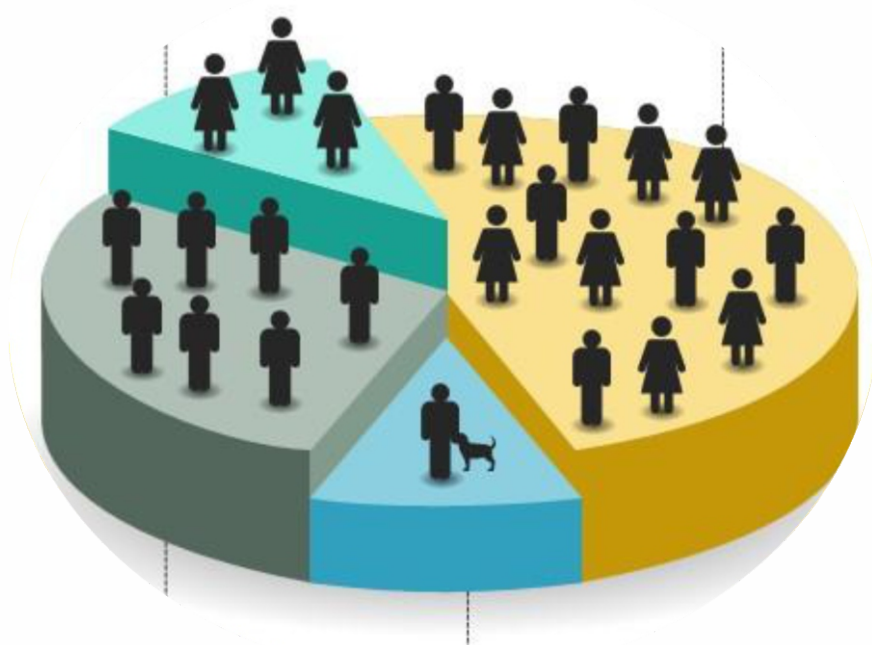
BY CHIOMA MEZUE



The question of whether the Nigerian economy is in a current position to bear the cost of a national census has been a recurring topic in debate on the 2023 Population and Housing Census. Some analysts have argued that the census in this period of economic recession is an avoidable burden on the national economy positing that the fund earmarked for the census be diverted to provision of employment, education and infrastructure for the Nigerian citizens. The Federal

Government had proposed the sum of N178 billion for the national census in the 2022 budget while the National Assembly slightly jerked the budget to N182 billion in the Appropriation bill signed by President Muhammadu Buhari on 31st December 2021. This is the opening of the article on 2023 Census as an Economic Empowerment Programme

However, the limitation of the current national discourse on the cost of the 2023 Census is the excessive and narrow focus on the economic costs without a corresponding appreciation of its far reaching economic and social gains. Apart from the primary aim of providing demographic data for national planning and development, census is also an economic



empowerment tool that will directly transfer resources to millions of Nigerians and indirectly to hundreds of thousands of local service providers across the length and breadth of the country. This empowerment potential of the census, which is often overlooked, will reflate the economy, thereby reducing poverty. Indeed, the increased level of unemployment and poverty rather than being a disincentive for the conduct of the next census should in fact be the *raison d'etre* for its conduct in 2023. It provides the very productive platform for the injection of billions of Naira into the economy.

Unlike most national projects of this magnitude, census is a substantially national affair. Personnel and infrastructures to be deployed for the census and for which resources are to be expended are to be locally sourced with only a fraction of foreign input. The type of mass participation provided by a census is second to none such that it is hard to imagine that there will be any community no matter how remote that will not contribute personnel to the conduct of the census or provide one service or the other.

For the conduct of the 2023 census, the Commission plans to recruit, train and deploy over 1.2 million personnel consisting of supervisors and enumerators to be drawn from outside the Commission. These personnel are to be engaged for about three weeks and paid the sum of monies ranging from N 100,000 to N 150,000 per person for the exercise. This average stipend is more than two months salaries of a fresh graduate in most states of the federation. For the payment of functionaries for the main enumeration, the Commission plans to expend

about 145 billion on Enumerators and about N 16.5 billion for Supervisors. Similarly, local monitors and guides will receive over N2 billion Naira.

To be engaged for the exercise are low income working class such as teachers and members of the National Youth Corps as well as unemployed Nigerians. It is noteworthy that these personnel will be drawn from every part of the country and evenly spread. The enumerators will be recruited from the local communities. The total emolument the Commission will transfer in form of allowances to field workers for the pilot census, the main census and the post enumeration survey is in excess of 250 billion Naira which constitutes over 50% of the entire census budget.

The economic empowerment gains of the census are not limited to the census period. As part of preparatory activities, the Commission carried out the Enumeration Area Demarcation which is the division of the entire land area of Nigeria into small unit areas that can be covered by a pair of enumerators during the census period. Given the scope of manpower required, the Commission had to source personnel from outside the Commission bringing on board thousands of young Nigerians who consistently earned about N 150,000 throughout the duration of the EAD exercise. To majority of these appreciative Nigerians, the allowance they were paid during the EAD was the only steady income they ever earned in their lives.



Being the biggest peacetime activity and next to war in terms of mobilization of men and resources, huge logistics will be required for the deployment of personnel and materials during the census. Due to the high cost of vehicles, the Commission will be compelled to rely on the services of local transporters and Okada Riders during the census. For the 2023 Census, the Commission plans to hire about 56,000 vehicles for movement of personnel and materials, translating into billions Naira of income for the transport operators across the country.

Similarly, as part of preparatory activities for the census, meetings, workshops and trainings will be organized across the nation. This will be a boost for hotel owners who will in turn provide venues and accommodation for these activities. For food vendors and petty traders in communities where the enumerators will work, there will also be a boost in sales and profit.

Beyond these economic gains, the nation stands to derive enduring capacity building benefits from the next census. The Commission plans to conduct a digital census involving the use of Personal Data Assistants (PDAs) for capturing data during the census. About 800,000 Electronic PDAs will be procured for use during the census period. The long-term benefit of this census methodology are two folds. Firstly, the training of over a million people on basic computer skills and application, majority of whom are young persons, will lead to a transformation of the National IT sector and increase in

computer literacy. This will save the nation billions of Naira to be expended on similar trainings for surveys and future censuses. Secondly, the number of devices to be procured is quite huge in meeting the needs of the nation for the conduct of surveys by other agencies thereby reducing the cost of carrying out such activities at the national and state levels. The items could also be donated to schools and universities for learning purposes. Even with our huge population, the availability of over 800,000 devices will transform national familiarity with IT devices and revolutionize the national IT sector.

For an economy in which a lot of persons feel marginalized, the focus of discourse on the budget of the 2023 Census should shift from economic costs to its economic and social gains which are quite significant in ensuring that the people are empowered and given the resources to lead a fulfilled life. The main feature of the economic hardship being experienced by Nigerians is the shortage of cash which has virtually put productive activities into comatose. Any project that will transfer resources directly to the grassroots no matter the cost is a wise economic decision that will yield dividends to the people. The times are hard and government needs all the resources to carry out programmes that will improve the living standard of the people. The conduct of the 2023 Census even with its perceived huge cost does not fall into the category of avoidable burden and there is no better time to conduct the next census than now.

Indeed, the direction of the economic debate should be whether enough resources have been allocated to the census and if additional resources should not be channelled to multiply its economic empowerment potential to the nation. Compared to the total national budget of N 17 trillion as contained in the 2022 Appropriation Act, the N 182 billion allocated to the census is a meagre 1.07% of the total expenditure. This proportion can definitely not be too exorbitant for Nigeria to count its citizens after 17 years since the last census. The request of the Commission to have the budget for the 2023 Census revised to about N420 billion, which will still be about 2% of the national budget could not have been more justified.

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## 2023 CENSUS AND THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS: WHY AND HOW THEY WILL BE COUNTED

BY STANLEY NWOSU

The large number of displaced Nigerians, in addition to proximity to the 2023 General Elections, formed the crux of the call for the postponement of the 2023 Population Census by the Northern Elders Forum (NEF) in a communique issued at the end of a meeting in Kaduna. Within the context of relatively high prevalence of IDPs in Nigeria, the concerns expressed by this highly respected group on possible exclusion of the IDPs in the



2023 Census cannot be brushed aside. Data from the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) indicate that over 3.2 million people are displaced, including over 2.9 million internally displaced persons in North Eastern Nigeria, over 684,000 in Cameroon, Chad and Niger as at 31st December 2020.

However, rather than being the basis for calling for postponement of the census, the IDPs issue deserves proper elucidation and clarification with a view to ascertain how and why the IDPs will be counted in the next census. This piece therefore seeks to examine the veracity or otherwise of the concerns raised by the NEF against the background of scientific understanding of the census, the methodology to be adopted and equally important need for a data driven comprehensive rehabilitation of the displaced population.

According to the United Nations, a population census is the total process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analysing and publishing or otherwise disseminating demographic, economic and social data pertaining, at a specified time, to all persons in a country or in a well-delimited part of a country. This all-inclusive definition of census does not allow for the exclusion of any group of persons from census enumeration. Indeed, no scientifically conducted census will exclude persons from enumeration based on a temporary loss of residence. Counting the displaced persons in Nigeria in the 2023 Census irrespective of their numbers and conditions is an absolute responsibility of the National Population Commission.

Happily, 2023 Census methodology has a robust and tested procedure for the enumeration of the IDPs in Nigeria, which is also in line with international best practice. The methodology devised is not just for counting of persons in regular households but also those who stay in irregular households such as people in transit, homeless persons and temporary living camps. During the Enumeration Area Demarcation, the entire land area of Nigeria was demarcated into enumeration areas that can be covered by a pair of enumerators during the census process. Every land area of the country including the IDPs camps were



demarcated. The mandate of the enumerators during the census period is to count every person in the assigned Enumeration Areas and the aggregation of all the persons counted during the census will constitute the population of Nigeria.

Like in regular households, all the demographic characteristics of the IDPs such as age, sex, literacy level, marital status and relationship to Heads of Household will be collected, processed and analysed in order to provide deeper insight into the living conditions of the IDPs. Interestingly, from the census preparatory activities carried out so far, it is clear that IDPs rather than being disorganized assemblage of persons actually live in social units and are organized into households which make the collection and processing of their demographic characteristics an easy task. Investigations revealed that the IDPs largely maintain household composition and patterns before displacement from their normal places of residence.

On how the data obtained from the IDP enumeration will be credited, the census questionnaire elicit information on the usual places of residence, that is where they stayed before the displacement. This data will be added to the population of their usual residence in case of possible change in status to aid the planning process of their respective usual places of residence.

The incidence of IDPs is a global phenomenon that has come to stay. According to the 2021 Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID), there were 55 million internally displaced people across the world at the end of 2020, 48 million as a result of conflict and violence, and 7 million as a result of disasters. A record 48 million people were living in internal displacement as a result of conflict and violence in 59 countries and territories as of 31 December 2020. The prevalence of IDPs has never been a reason for indefinite postponement of the census as many

countries confronted with this challenge have devised a framework to ensure their active participation in the development exercises such as elections and censuses. It will be recalled that ahead of the 2019 General Elections, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) elaborated a policy on IDP voting thereby ensuring that internally displaced persons registered and voted during the election. This is a best practice that the NPC can emulate in enumerating IDPs in the 2023 Census.

More importantly, prevalence of the IDPs rather than being a ground for postponement should actually be the reason for census taking. The living conditions in the IDPs camps are deplorable and in urgent and constant need of humanitarian assistance. Alleviating the living conditions of the IDPs through provision of food items, empowerment and social facilities have been on the rehabilitation agenda of national and sub national governments as well as international development partners and relief agencies. The implementation of comprehensive rehabilitation programmes must be data driven on the size, composition and demographic characteristics of the Internally Displaced Persons and only the 2023 Population and Housing Census can offer this possibility.

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# 2023 CENSUS AND THE SECURITY QUESTION

BY ADAMU SINBAD SALEH

The desirability or otherwise of the conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census took the centre stage at the 2022 budget defense session of the Upper Legislative Chamber of the National Assembly. Media report indicated rigorous legislative interrogation and expression of divergent views emanating from



the Senate. While some Senators were of the view that coming 16 years after the last census, the conduct of another census was

long overdue. Others, however, kicked against the conduct of the census at this moment citing among other reasons the tense security situation across the country and positing that conducting the census will further complicate the already tense situation. Concerns over the security implications of the next census as expressed on the floor of the Senate was not a lone voice as similar views have been expressed by other commentators. It will be recalled that a member of the House of Representatives from Niger State had earlier called for the postponement of the census as far back as 2020.

Against the background of multiple security threats confronting the nation as expressed in banditry in the North West, insurgency in the North East, herders/farmers clashes in the North Central and other parts of the country as well as secessionist agitations in the South East, the case for an indefinite postponement of the census sounds plausible when considered on its face value. Census is basically a field-based operation involving massive deployment of personnel and materials across every length and breadth of the country and therefore requires relative peace for this activity to be implemented smoothly.

However, there are more compelling reasons for the nation to conduct the census now even within the context of escalating security challenges. First, the significance of population data to national development and improvement in the living of the people remains critically constant at all times. Yes, Nigeria is confronted with myriads of problems but this has not diminished

but rather reinforced the importance of population data in development process. From 2006 when the last census was conducted, governments at all levels had expended trillions of Naira on building and maintaining social infrastructure and investment in human capital. Security challenges have not put a stop to all these development efforts. Conducting a census 17 years after is a mandatory governance exercise to assess among others how well the development efforts of the last 16 years are yielding results and chart the best way to go to address among other things the root causes of insecurity.

Secondly, there is a general consensus that combating Nigeria's security challenges require a delicate mix of kinetic and non kinetic approaches with the latter emphasizing the significance of improving the living conditions of the people as a necessary step towards sustainable peace. Given the potential of census to contribute to the formulation of evidence based socio-economic interventions, the census should be part of the non kinetic approach to the solution of security challenges.

Thirdly, the bulk of the foot soldiers in the perpetration of insecurity across the country are persons within the age bracket of 15-24 years who were either not yet born or were toddlers when the last census was conducted. Demographically speaking, this age cohort is 'unknown' especially in terms of their size, distribution and socio-economic characteristics that will deepen understanding of the predisposing socio-economic conditions that make them susceptible for recruitment as tools of insecurity. A new census that will capture this age bracket in terms of their

level of education, living conditions and other characteristic is long overdue.

In the current discourse on the security dimension of the next census, there seems to be an under estimation and indeed lesser recognition of the capacity of the Nigerian security agencies to appropriately handle security challenges in relation to sensitive national assignments through coordinated operational responses as demonstrated in previous general elections and the census. At the height of the Boko Haram insurgency in the North East when the sect was reported to be in control of about 20 Local Government Areas in Borno state, the Nigerian security forces gallantly secured the conduct of the 2015 general elections. This feat was repeated in the 2019 even though Boko Haram had been 'technically defeated but was still potent enough to constitute a threat and in the midst of other emergent security challenges such as the armed banditry and the herders/farmers clashes. The Security forces ensured that the election took place in every part of the country. The peaceful conduct of the 6th November 2021 Anambra Governorship election, against all predictions and amidst the disruptive tendencies of secessionist agitations and violence and killings by 'unknown gunmen' is another case in point that reinforces the confidence that the Nigerian security will be able to provide the much- needed peaceful atmosphere for the conduct of the 2023 Census.

The point needs to be stressed that If the nation has been able to conduct successively and without any postponement, at least three general elections and several off cycle and bye elections

since 2009 when the security situation nosedived, there is no reason why conducting the census should be an impossibility from the security perspective. While elections and censuses are generally regarded as volatile and sensitive. However, the census is lighter in terms of sensitivity and therefore less prone to violence than the elections. Unlike in the census, election in Nigeria thrives on the cut throat competition among contestants to various political offices resulting in the building and operation of a violence architecture that promotes disruption of voting process, thuggery, assassination and arson. These are not security breaches expected in a census because no direct competition for political power is involved. Indeed, there is an expressed commonality of interests and consensus among stakeholders on the need for their respective constituencies to be counted.

In all the preparations for the census so far, the experience of the Commission is that of enthusiasm and robust cooperation and support of the general populace and communities covered who took extra measures not only to ensure the welfare of the people but also their security. It is therefore not surprising that the Commission conducted the Enumeration Area Demarcation in the 772 Local Government Areas so far with extensive field operations across the country and with no single loss of lives and property or any reported security breach.

From the experience of the level of community ownership witnessed in the just concluded demarcation of the country and conduct of two pretests, it is to be expected that responsibility for

securing the census process will not only be covered by the police or other security forces but also more strategically and effectively by the communities. This is not unexpected because while election promotes competition and sometimes violence among the people, census unites the people because of the commonality and convergence of interests among all stakeholders on the need to be counted. It is in this regard that the Commission has devised and implementing a comprehensive advocacy workplan that will strengthen the community ownership and acceptance of the 2023 Census.

Another issue that has not received adequate attention in the current discourse of the security implications of the census is the nature of methodology to be adopted for the exercise and its capacity to ameliorate the security challenges usually experienced in large scale statistical operations. The next Census will be a digital census and paper less in which the data will be captured through electronic devices and transmitted real time. The challenge of forward and reverse logistics involving movement of millions of tons of papers across the length and breadth of the country and the attendant security risks will be eliminated thereby simplifying what would otherwise be complex security operations.

Coming 17 years after the last census, the case for the conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census is a compelling one that should not be derailed. It is a duty the Federal Government owes the present and future generations of Nigerians. While security of lives and properties is paramount but evidence

suggests that conducting the census at this moment will not complicate the security situation but rather offers the chance of evidence-based data for sustainable peace building and development. Nigeria cannot run away from counting Nigerians. Census is an essential governance activity and no nation can afford to delete this important exercise from its development process because of the immense potential to facilitate the solution of present security situation and improve the living standard of our people.

Adamu Sinbad Saleh is an Assistant Chief Public Affairs Officers at the headquarters of the National Population Commission, Abuja

# 2023 CENSUS: OUR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES WITH TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS

BY HON. NASIR ISA KWARRA

TEXT OF REMARKS AT THE 2022 ANNUAL SIR AHMADU BELLO MEMORIAL LECTURE AND MERIT AWARDS, TUESDAY, 18TH JANUARY 2022, CORONATION HALL, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, KANO

On behalf of the National Population Commission, I am pleased to have the rare privilege of delivering a remark on this auspicious occasion of the 2022 Annual Sir Ahmadu Bello Memorial Lecture and Merit Awards taking place in the ancient city of Kano. Within the context of the current security challenges confronting the Nigerian nation and the spirited efforts of the present Administration to address them on a sustainable basis, the theme of this annual lecture is timely and inspiring. Economic and social development can only take place and thrive in an atmosphere of relative peace and in which the lives and properties of citizens can be guaranteed. Insecurity as we have witnessed in the last few years not only stifles economic growth and human development but also leads to diversion of scarce resources that would have otherwise been invested in education, health and infrastructure into needless allocation of resources into security matters.

While the escalating nature of the security challenges calls for



drastic and military solution, there is however a general consensus that the war against insecurity will not only be fought and won on the battlefields and trenches but rather through innovative socio-economic interventions that will address the root causes of insecurity on a permanent and sustainable basis. It is also a war that requires non-military solution through the use of time tested and respective institutions with immense capacity,



goodwill and respect to foster enduring peace. It is in this regard that the focus of the 2022 Annual Sir Ahmadu Bello Memorial lecture is very apt.

The traditional institutions especially in the Northern Nigeria has century long reputation of promoting peace among the people and dousing tensions at the grassroots.

Indeed the degeneration is a direct product of systematic alienation of the traditional institution from the governance process. The traditional institutions are connected to the people and have structures that sustained peace, equity and strong moral values. With the array of relevant stakeholders that have been slated to speak at this lecture, I am confident that this forum will come out with feasible strategies that will restore the relevance of the traditional institution in national affairs and constitute them into veritable agents of combating insecurity in Northern Nigeria.

Permit me to seize this opportunity to harp on the significance of the 2023 Census and its relevance to the theme of the today's lecture. As you are aware, the Federal Government has given the National Population Commission the approval to conduct a national population and housing census. Preparations are in top gear to deliver accurate, reliable and acceptable census.

The Enumeration Area Demarcation which is the division of the country into small enumeration areas that a pair of enumerators can cover during the census period is 99.5 completed with the demarcation of 772 out of 774 LGAs in the country. The first and second pretests have been concluded to among other things finetune the methodology for the census. The Commission is planning to conduct a digital census in which the particulars of respondents will be captured through the use of Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) and the data transmitted real time. The Commission plans to recruit about 1.2 million field functionaries for the census.

Conducting the census is a complex process that requires the support of multiplicity of stakeholders in order to ensure the smoothness of the process and the acceptability of its outcomes. Among the stakeholders, the traditional institution occupies a very strategic position. Census is a grassroots oriented activity and the traditional institution as the custodian of the people's culture and beliefs, are better placed to mobilize the people for the census. Firstly, the traditional institution has well tested channels to convey credible information to the people, which is required convince the people to cooperate and actively participate in the census process.

Secondly, the traditional institution has important role to facilitate the logistics process of the census. Being the biggest peacetime activity, census requires extensive deployment of personnel and materials to every nook and cranny of the country. While the Commission will bear the costs of putting in place the required logistics support, the contributions of the traditional institution in the provision of accommodation, transport and welfare of field functionaries will be very critical particularly in the rural areas and hard to reach areas of the country.

The question of whether a census can be conducted in a context of escalating security situation has been raised. While the Commission recognizes that the security situation remains a potent threat to the census that must be addressed, we are however convinced that the security situation does not provide sufficient ground for the postponement of the 2023 Census. With proper planning and operational deployment as done in

successive elections, the census can be conducted in Nigeria. Our optimism in this regard is reinforced by the patriotic roles of the traditional institution who provided adequate security cover for the Enumeration Area Demarcation in their various communities during the exercise. Relying on their moral authority, goodwill and contact, the traditional institutions, collaborated with the security agencies to ensure that the Commission's functionaries were well protected on the field.

As the nation takes the march towards the 2023 Census, the Commission will continue to count on the support of the traditional institutions across the country to ensure that the census is conducted in an atmosphere of relative peace and security. Towards this end, the Commission has embarked on nationwide advocacy visits to traditional rulers in all the 36 states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory. The aim of the advocacy visits is to solicit the support of the traditional institutions for the security of the census process, welfare of functionaries and acceptability of its outcomes for planning purposes.

To further deepen the partnership with the traditional institution, the Commission is working out a formal arrangement in which the traditional rulers will serve as members of relevant census committees such as publicity, logistics and security. It is our expectation that such institutional engagement will provide the platform for a more robust engagement of the traditional institution in the successful conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census.

I wish to assure Nigerians of the commitment and capacity of the National Population Commission to deliver to this great nation accurate, reliable and acceptable census. Coming 17 years after the last census and at a time when the nation is in dire need of demographic data to facilitate the transformation agenda of the present Administration, the present Commission has an historical mission to ensure the successful conduct of the 2023 Census. The expectation is high and we cannot afford to fail President Muhammadu Buhari and indeed all Nigerians. I therefore call on all Nigerians to extend maximum hand of collaboration, partnership and support to the Commission in this bold endeavor to lay a solid foundation for evidence based and sustainable development of Nigeria.

I wish to end this address on a note of appreciation to the Sir Ahmadu Bello Foundation for extending to the Commission the opportunity to present a remark on the occasion of the 2022 Annual lecture and Merit Award. We are indeed very grateful for this kind gesture and look forward to a more continuous and stronger partnership with your highly revered organization before, during and after the 2023 Census. I thank you for your kind attention.

Hon. Nasir Isa Kwarra  
Executive Chairman  
National Population Commission  
18th January, 2022

## ENHANCING THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE 2023 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS THROUGH PUBLICITY AND ADVOCACY

BY STANLEY O. NWOSU

***“Next to doing the right thing, the most important thing is to let the people know you are doing the right thing” John D. Rockefeller (1839-1937).***

This statement by American business magnate and philanthropist aptly captures the significant role of communication not only in public service but in every aspect of human endeavor. Human relation is a very complex phenomenon in which even the simplest of action is subject to several and sometimes negative interpretations due to inadequate or lack of information or distortion of the essence and rationale for such action. Most often, the ways a particular action is perceived, is coloured by prejudices, level of comprehension and self-interest of affected persons.

The role of communication therefore is to set the records straight, tell the true story and bridge the gap between the facts and perception. Indeed, a seemingly bad decision may be better tolerated if it is properly communicated and its essence explained than supposedly good decision that is shrouded in secrecy. Therefore, publicity and advocacy are veritable tools to educate and sensitize the public about the

conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census as well as cultivate public ownership of the exercise which enhances the acceptability of the census data. The significance of publicity and advocacy in the successful implementation of census activities cannot be over



emphasized. There is the compelling need to create a conducive atmosphere, dissolve apathy, remove bias, cultivate public ownership and secure the cooperation of stakeholders and development partners for the next census.

Census is a people-oriented exercise that requires popular participation to enhance its credibility, reliability and acceptability by all. For the people to participate, they must be properly informed about the essence, rationale,

methodology and outcomes of census data. It is in this regard that effective publicity and advocacy campaign becomes important to achieving a credible and reliable 2023 census. This even becomes more important in view of the misconception and misrepresentation surrounding past censuses leading to mutual acrimony and tension over the processes and outcomes of the exercises. Unfortunately, every population census conducted both before and after independence has ended in some controversies bordering on allegation of population falsification leading to lack of general consensus among the populace on the size of the total population of Nigeria. While Nigerian government accepted the results of most of the past censuses conducted since independence, some Nigerians have not totally accepted some of the past censuses.

The 1962 census results were rejected by some regional authorities leading to recount in 1963 which figures were similarly contested up to the Supreme Court that later ruled that it lacked jurisdiction to jettison the figures and so it remained the official figure thereon. In 1973 another census was conducted but the results were so controversial that they were not published at all on the grounds of allegation of deliberate falsification of the census figures for political and ethnic advantages. The 1991 and 2006 censuses generated misgivings in certain quarters though the results were accepted by the Federal Government.

A census exercise can be accurate but unacceptable. So, the acceptability of a census result is very important. How to



make the 2023 Population and Housing Census credible, reliable and acceptable by Nigerian government, Nigerians and international development partners is of major concern to the National Population Commission and strategic publicity and advocacy implementation plan is being deployed to make this possible. Winning back the confidence of Nigerians in the census process is one major task before the Commission. This will involve advocacy visits to the strategic stakeholders to galvanize support for grassroot mobilization and massive public enlightenment on the primary and fundamental purpose of census taking. It is gratifying to note that the Commission has started cultivating public ownership of this forthcoming census at every stage of the exercise to make Nigerians to understand that it is a Nigerian project that will provide demographic data for development planning.

The Commission has set out publicity and advocacy tools to correct misconceptions some Nigerians have about census. Some Nigerians still view census as a mere head count of the country's population to determine figures for political representation and revenue sharing formula leaving out the basic essence of census data which is for development planning hence why past censuses ended in controversy. Lack of public awareness, apathy, public resistance and misrepresentation of facts encountered in the conduct of the Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD), 1st and 2nd Census pre-test exercises across the States of the Federation and FCT which are the preparatory activities for the main census alluded to the fact that aggressive publicity

and advocacy campaign should be done to make the next census acceptable and reliable.

Some Nigerians were not aware of these preparatory activities and refused to cooperate with the field functionaries, others erroneously assumed these preparatory exercises to be the main census. These challenges affected smooth conduct of the exercises in some places. Regrettably, some stakeholders have also called for postponement of the next census on the basis of insecurity that has displaced many people from their homes and for paucity of funds. The misconception, negative reception and scathing criticism that greeted the census preparatory activities are being countered proper sensitization and education on the essence, process and methodology of a census exercise. These criticisms, if not countered are capable of neutralizing the goodwill and support the Commission hopes to drive from the Government, Nigerians and Global world in preparation for the next census.

The Commission has put in place a sound publicity and advocacy strategy that will counter potential negative comments on the next census and reinforce its desirability as a tool for national development. The Commission is currently sensitizing and educating the populace on why the 2023 Population and Housing Census must hold and its essence, benefits, process and methodology.

Truly, the public needs to be educated that census are conducted, not necessarily to know the aggregate

population figure, important as it is, but, primarily, to lay bare the demographic composition of the data so as to equip governments with relevant tools and data for planning and policy formulation for sustainable development. They should know that population census has the housing component which provides crucial information on the living standard of the country's inhabitants. They should be made to understand that census data provides raw information on how many people are educated, hence the literacy level, how many are unemployed, how many have roof over their heads and the dependency ratio, among other information. They should know the importance of census data in planning for infrastructural development, anti-corruption, economic reforms and social welfare programmes. Knowledge of the essence and importance of census will make them support and accept census outcome.

The Commission is emphasizing on the desirability of the next census to address security challenges in the country so that some concerned stakeholders will stop the excuse of insecurity as a reason to call for postponement of the next census. The Commission is making every effort to educate the public that solution to the security challenges bedeviling the country is not to call for census postponement but rather to support the conduct of the next census to get accurate and reliable data to tackle insecurity in the country. Chairman of the National Population Commission, Hon. Nasir Isa Kwarra stressed on this during his recent advocacy visit to Borno State. Understanding of this will make the public support and accept 2023 census to

be able to get evidence-based information to solve the security challenges.

The Commission is making it known to the public the quantity and quality of arrangements it has put in place to ensure the accuracy, reliability and acceptability of the next census. The Commission has made concerted efforts to let Nigerians understand the 2023 census process and procedure. In fact, the Commission has assured Nigerians that no resident in the country will be left out in the 2023 Population and Housing Census including those in the IDP camps. People are being sensitized on the 2023 census methodology, so that they will know that the 2023 census questionnaire has provision for follow up questions that will link information on Internally Displaced Persons to their usual place of residence. The knowledge of this will allay the fears of some stakeholders that are worried about their people being undercounted in the next census due to insurgency that has displaced majority of them. This will reinforce the national acceptance of the next census figures.

The Commission is enlightening the people on the institutional structure of the National Population Commission in terms of representation of every state and FCT on the board of the Commission that makes sectional manipulation of the census outcomes unlikely. Also, the understanding of the broad base international support and involvement of development partners in the design, preparations and conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census will inspire public confidence in the census

process and outcomes.

The general public and stakeholders are being educated on the meticulous, professional and scientifically methods and technologies being deployed for the census activities – the use of very high-resolution satellite imageries to capture all the building structures in the country, the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) for geo-referencing, the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) for data management, the use of Personal Data Assistants (handheld devices/tablets) that include computer software for data capture. The Commission has successfully completed Enumeration Area Demarcation in the 772 LGAs with only 2 LGAs remaining and has carried out 1st and 2nd Census Pre-test in the selected Enumeration Areas in the 36 States of the Federation and FCT. The Commission has also conducted Census Data Users Workshops to generate broad-based inputs into the design of census questionnaire. These activities are being implemented along with extensive stakeholders' engagement and consultations as well as media campaign in order to forge broad national acceptance and consensus for the next census. The outcomes of these preparatory activities are re-assuring that the Commission is on course in its mission of delivering accurate census that will meet global acceptance standard.

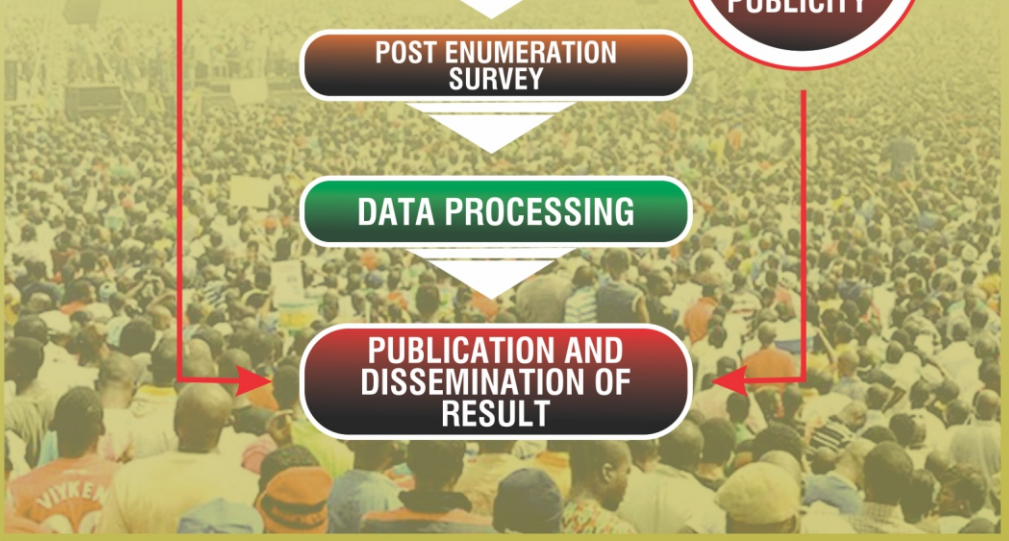
However, Census taking is a huge investment and a national project that requires understanding, cooperation, and support of all Nigerians and beyond. The task of mobilizing Nigerians on this sensitive and important national

assignment cannot be left to the National Population Commission alone. The support and cooperation of the State and Local Government especially traditional rulers who are the closest to the people at the grassroot to use their good offices to mobilize and sensitize their subjects on the need to support the next census is highly needed.

It is good to note that the Chairman of the National Population Commission, Hon. Nasir Isa Kwarra has started advocacy tours to State Governors and other stakeholders to galvanize support and mobilize the masses for the next census but more publicity and advocacy still need to be done to enhance the acceptability of the 2023 Census. The Commission must convince the populace to have confidence in the next census and accept the census data. Definitely, this is not an easy task, but one task that must be done for the Commission to deliver a credible and reliable census that will be globally acceptable.

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# CENSUS PROCESS





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