



Office of the Executive Governor
PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

Government House, Jos-Plateau State.

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29th September, 2020

Santiago Cafiero

Chief of Cabinet

Government of Argentina

Young Chin

Minister of the Interior and Safety

Government of South Korea

Robin Hodess

The B Team

Maria Baron

Directorio Legislativo

Dear Co-Chairs,

APPLICATION TO JOIN THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP LOCAL PROGRAM

I am honoured to write this letter expressing my complete and unwavering support for Plateau State's application to join the Open Government Partnership (OGP). Plateau State is a sub-national government in North Central Nigeria with an estimated population of over four million people based on an annual growth rate estimation of 2.74% from the last conducted Census. It is home to over fifty ethnic nationalities and with historic ties to every part of the country; making it the most hospitable and cosmopolitan state in Nigeria. It is, therefore, quite reassuring to note, from your assessment of our Expression of Interest, that Plateau State meets the eligibility criteria set for joining the OGP.

2. As State Governor, my personal commitment to the rules and values of transparency, accountability and collaboration is unwavering. The Government I lead is a product of collective citizens' action. My firm belief in an inclusive approach to governance led to the decision of designing and implementing an all-inclusive stakeholders' forum which provided a platform for robust exchanges, conceptualisation and adoption of a Citizens priority roadmap for my administration. To date, we have maintained this engagement forum at various levels; leading to the birth of the Plateau State Development Strategy 2019-2023, a publicly acclaimed policy roadmap that details initiatives and programmes of government anchored on three policy thrusts of Economic Rebirth, Physical Infrastructure Development and Peace, Security and Good Governance. The Strategy, an aggregation of citizens' feedback vis-a-vis our social contract with Plateau State, is being implemented through various Sectoral Medium Term Strategies. We believe that our membership of the OGP will



further enhance transparency in governance while facilitating constructive citizens' engagement that will in turn transform our public service and accelerate economic development.

3. To further its ambition of open governance, the Plateau State strategic development plan aligns with the OGP thematic areas. The State's OGP Action plan will be developed to give priority focus on Citizens Engagement, Fiscal Transparency, Peace and Security, Gender and Anti-corruption (Open Contracting). Towards this end, the Plateau State Government has nominated a Point of Contact (PoC) who will serve as liaison between the State and the OGP National Secretariat. Furthermore, an OGP Multi Stakeholder Forum, made up of fourteen persons, comprising seven Government officials and six members of the Plateau State Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Forum, with the Focal Person serving as the Secretary has been constituted. This Committee is co-chaired by a senior Government official and a member of the CSO forum while each of the five commitment areas have a Technical Working Group (TWG) co-chaired by the remaining members, to ensure full implementation of the Plateau State OGP Action Plan.

4. The State has the capacity and resources to co-create and implement its OGP Action Plan with highly skilled staff in various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), such as: the Projects Management and Results Delivery Office (PMRDO); Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning; Ministry of Special Duties, Inter-Governmental Affairs and Non-Governmental Organisations; Plateau State Microfinance Development Agency (PLASMIDA); Plateau State Information and Communication Technology Development Agency (PICTDA); Plateau State Peace Building Agency (PPBA); and the State Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP); all of which are integral to the success of OGP in Plateau State. This is in addition to a vibrant forum of CSOs in the State with which we have been working over the years, leading to significant strides in the development of policies, legislations and regulations that foster good governance. Some of these include: Child Rights Law; Procurement Law; Citizens Engagement in Budgeting; Peace Building Law; Water Sector Law; Open Data Initiative; amongst others.

5. As the current Chairman of the Northern States Governors Forum (NSGF), an economic and peer-learning block of the nineteen (19) States of Northern Nigeria, I am better positioned to encourage other members of the NSGF to imbibe and implement open governance frameworks that will translate to democratic advancement. In addition, my membership of two other forums, viz: Nigerian Governors Forum, an executive platform for all 36 Governors of Nigeria, and the Progressive Governors Forum, the think-tank assembly for nineteen Governors elected under the All Progressive Congress (APC) political party, affords me the opportunity to further promote the ideals of the OGP.

6. The Plateau State Government subscribed to join OGP by submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI) with the following thematic policy areas:

- i. **Fiscal Transparency:** - to enhance open data on budgeting and financial reporting;



- ii. **Peace and Security:** - to create and maintain a peaceful environment for development;
 - iii. **Gender:** - to enhance participation of women in governance and decision-making processes;
 - iv. **Citizens Participation:** - to create the space for citizens, citizen organisations and the media to thrive, express themselves and participate in the different stages of the policy making process without fear or intimidation; and
 - v. **Anti-Corruption (Open Contracting):** - to ensure open contracting in public procurement in order to optimise financial efficiency and minimise/prevent financial recklessness/leakages.
7. I reiterate our willingness to participate in peer learning and experience sharing by opening up our activities, processes and procedures to potential partner groups and the public; We stand ready to adopt good practices and lessons from other members of the cohort in order to better serve our people. We are also open to receiving direct institutional support from OGP to co-create commitments and advance our open government reform efforts.
8. As I look forward to your response, I assure you of my interest and full commitment to the OGP and its processes. Please accept my highest regards.

Rt. Hon. (Dr.) SIMON BAKO LALONG, KSGG
Executive Governor