



**KIMPACT
DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE**

ADVANCE:
Women's Political
Participation in
Nigeria



Advance Fact sheet
Volume 1

Women's Political Participation: Looking at the Past & Working for the Future

Longstanding Issues

Democracy is about representation of all interest groups and low women's political representation does not align with the principle of democracy. 23 years of unbroken democracy, Nigeria is yet to meet any of the international or regional thresholds for women's political representation - Nigeria is yet to produce a female president, Vice-president and even governor.

The National and State Houses of Assembly are dominated by males. The national average of women's political participation in Nigeria since the re-introduction of democracy in 1999 re-

mained 6.7 percent in elective and appointive position, which is far below the Global average of 22.5 percent, Africa Regional average of 23.4 percent and West African sub regional average of 15 percent¹.

Ahead of the 2023 general election, percentage of female candidacy stood at 10.2%. Efforts need to be made to garner support for this female candidates by amplifying the overall benefits of female political leadership, re-orientating the citizen on major misconception of the same and ensuring positive media portrayal leading to the 2023 general elections.

What the Data says since the reintroduction of Democracy in 1999

No female has been elected as President and Governor since 1999

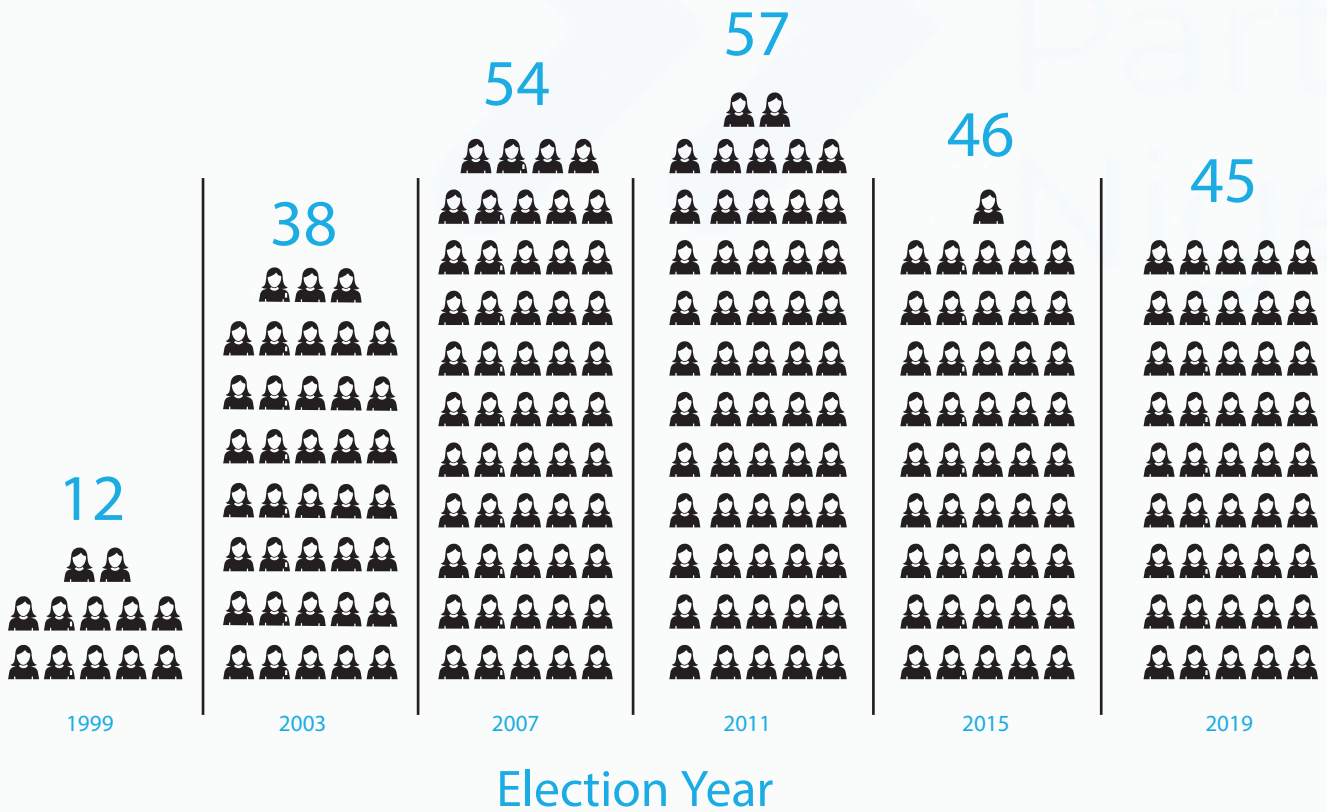


Number of Women Elected in to State Houses of Assembly



990

Available Seats





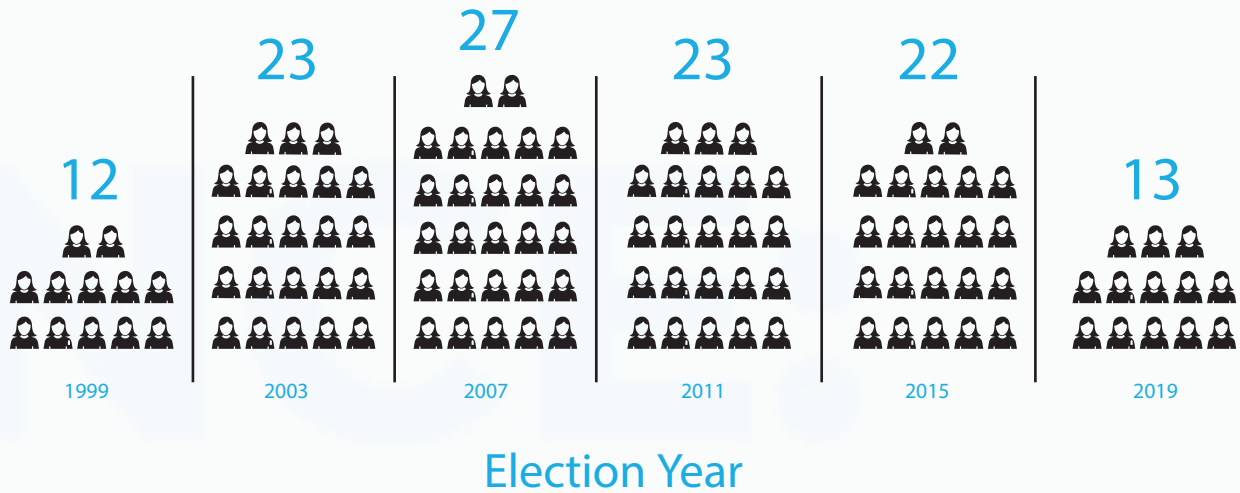
Number of Women Elected in

House of Representatives

360



Available Seats

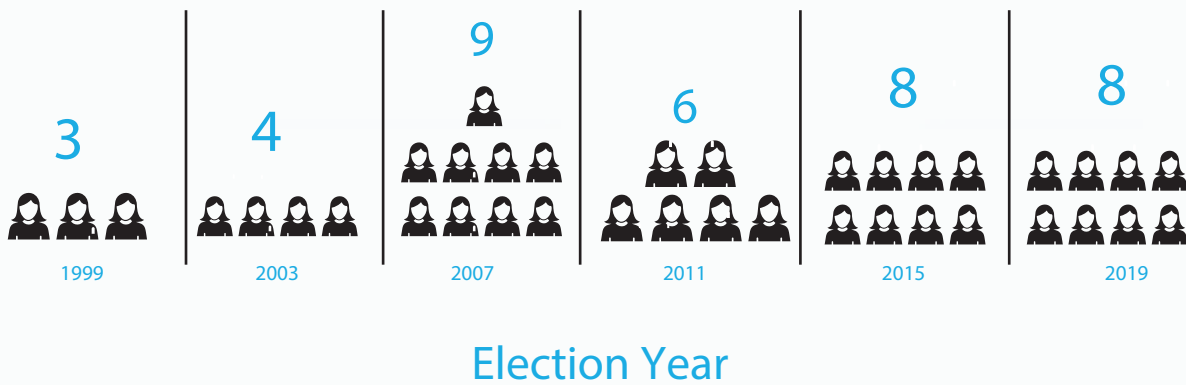


Number of Women Elected into
the Senate

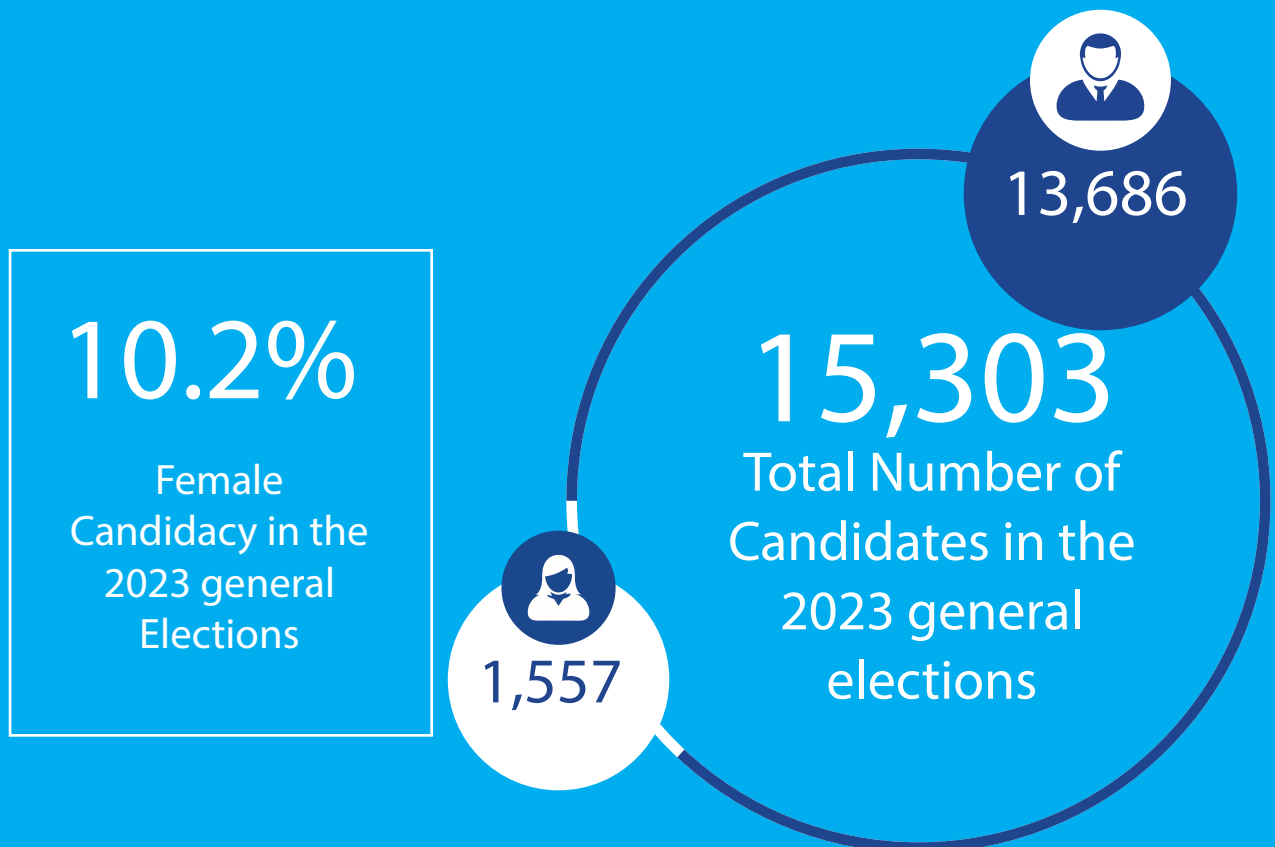
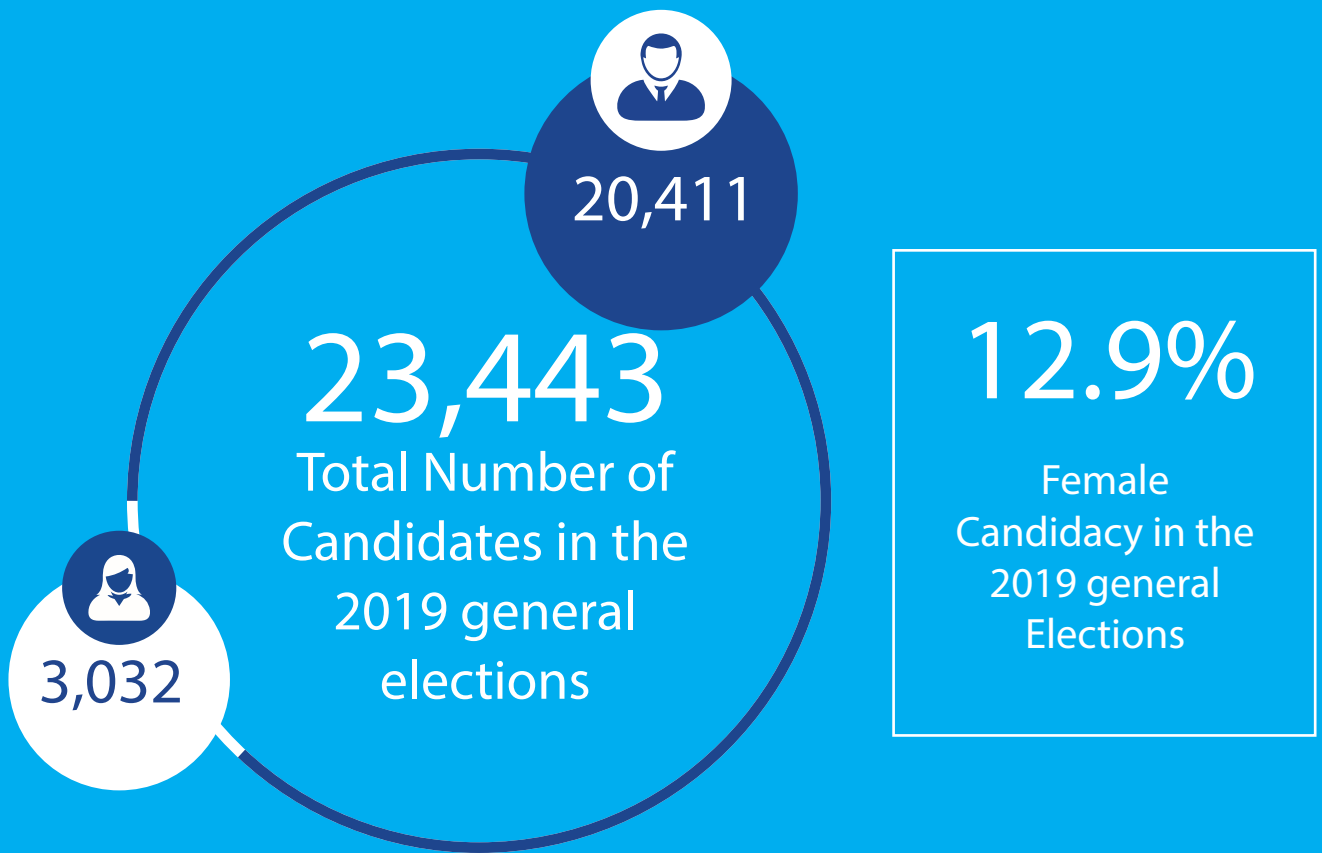
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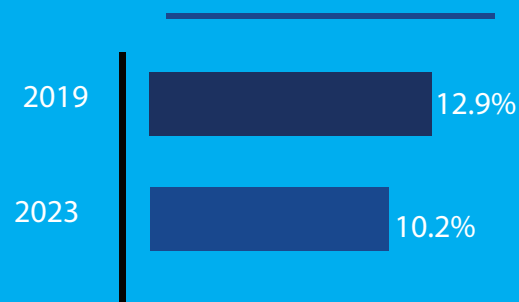
Available Seats



Percentage of Female Candidacy - Comparing 2015 and 2023



Comparison of female candidacy in 2019 with 2023

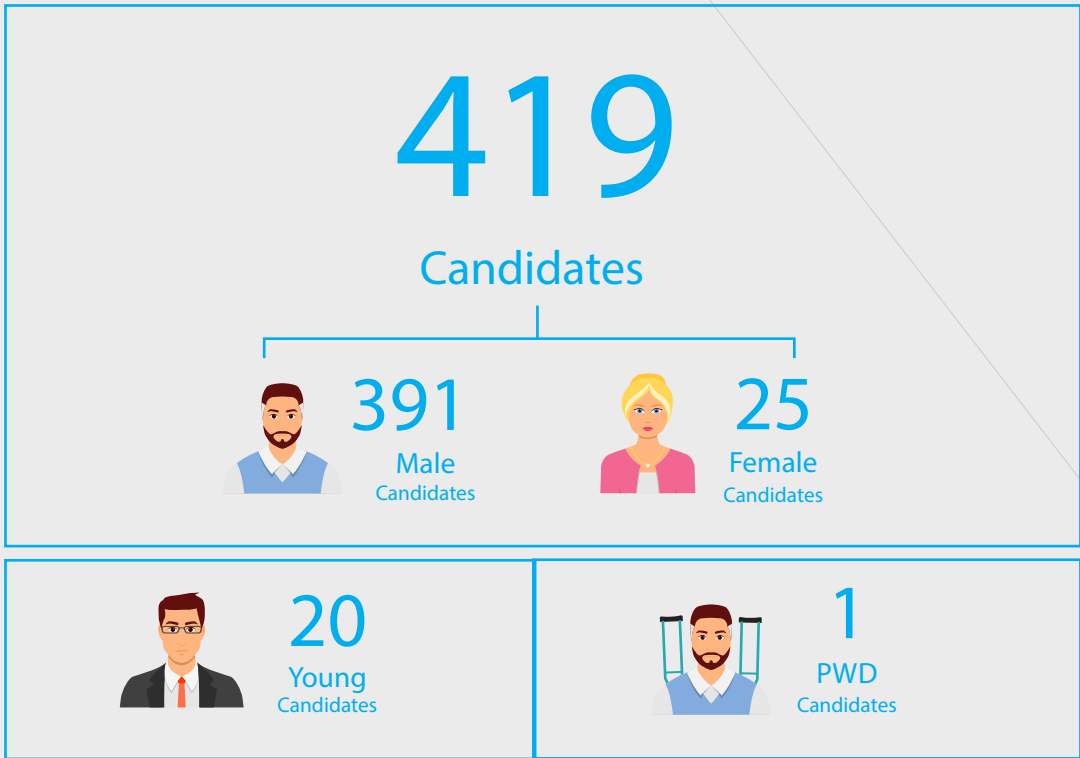


In comparing the two election year, it shows there is a reduction in the percentage of female candidacy

	2019	2023	% Decrease or Increase
Total Number of Candidates	23,442	15,303	-35%
Female Candidates	3,032	1,557	-49%
Male Candidates	20,410	13,686	-33%

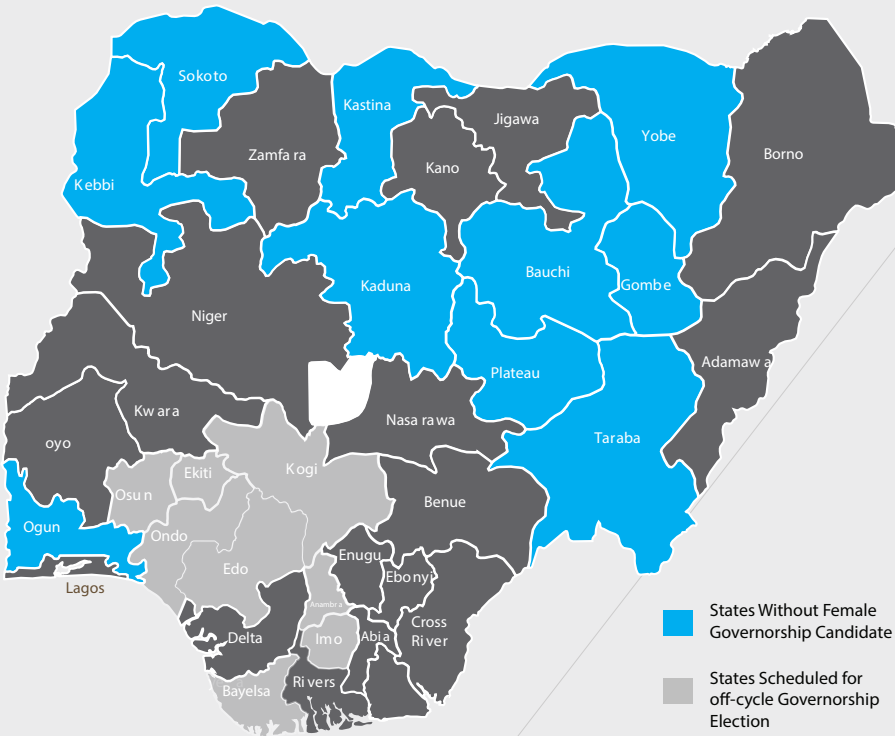
Percentage decrease of female candidacy is higher than other variables. These shows that deregistering of political parties after the 2019 general elections has an adverse effect on female candidacy more than other groups. This is not disconnected from the fact the smaller political parties fields more female candidates than most of the prominent political parties.

Total Number of Governorship Candidates

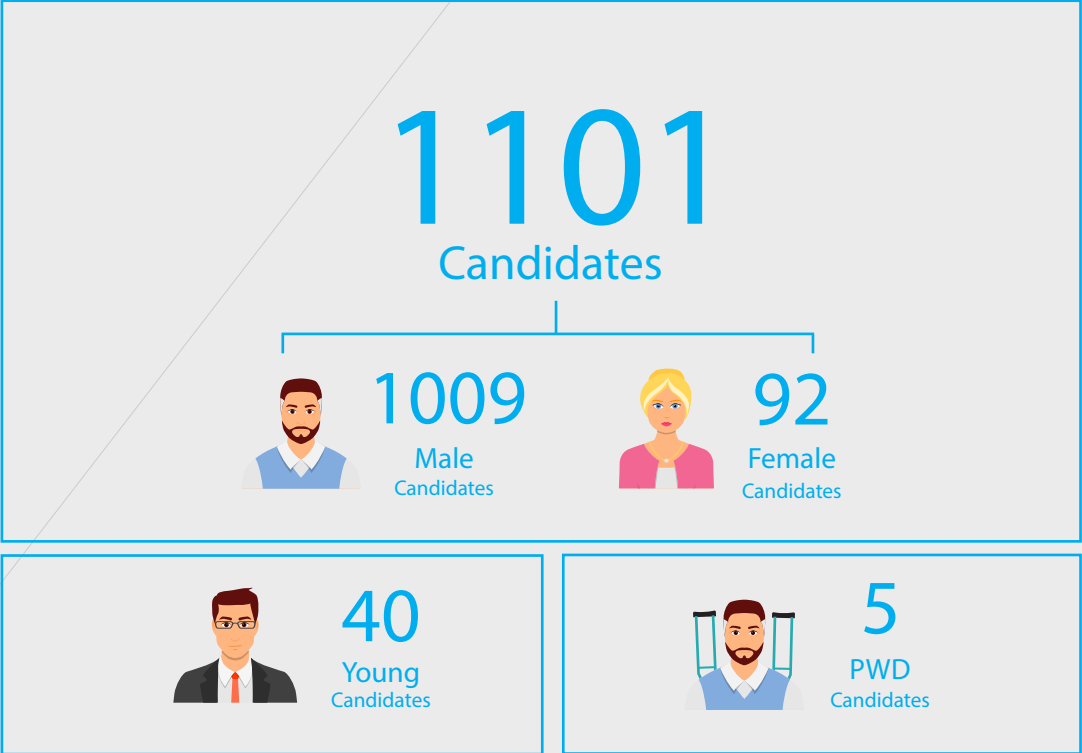


Note: Young Candidates are those aged 35 years.
 The names, age, gender and disability status of the APC & PDP candidates and their running mates are missing in Akwa Ibom and Ogun States respectively.
 The disability status, age and gender of the LP governorship candidate in Taraba State is missing.

State without Female Governorship Candidates in the 2023 General Elections



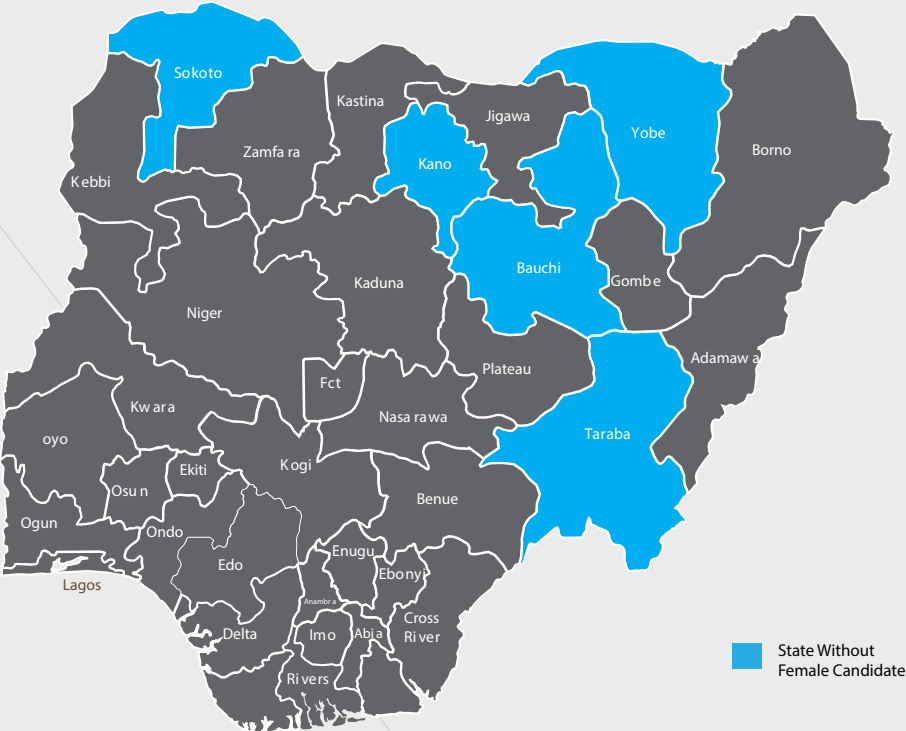
Total Number of Senatorial Candidates



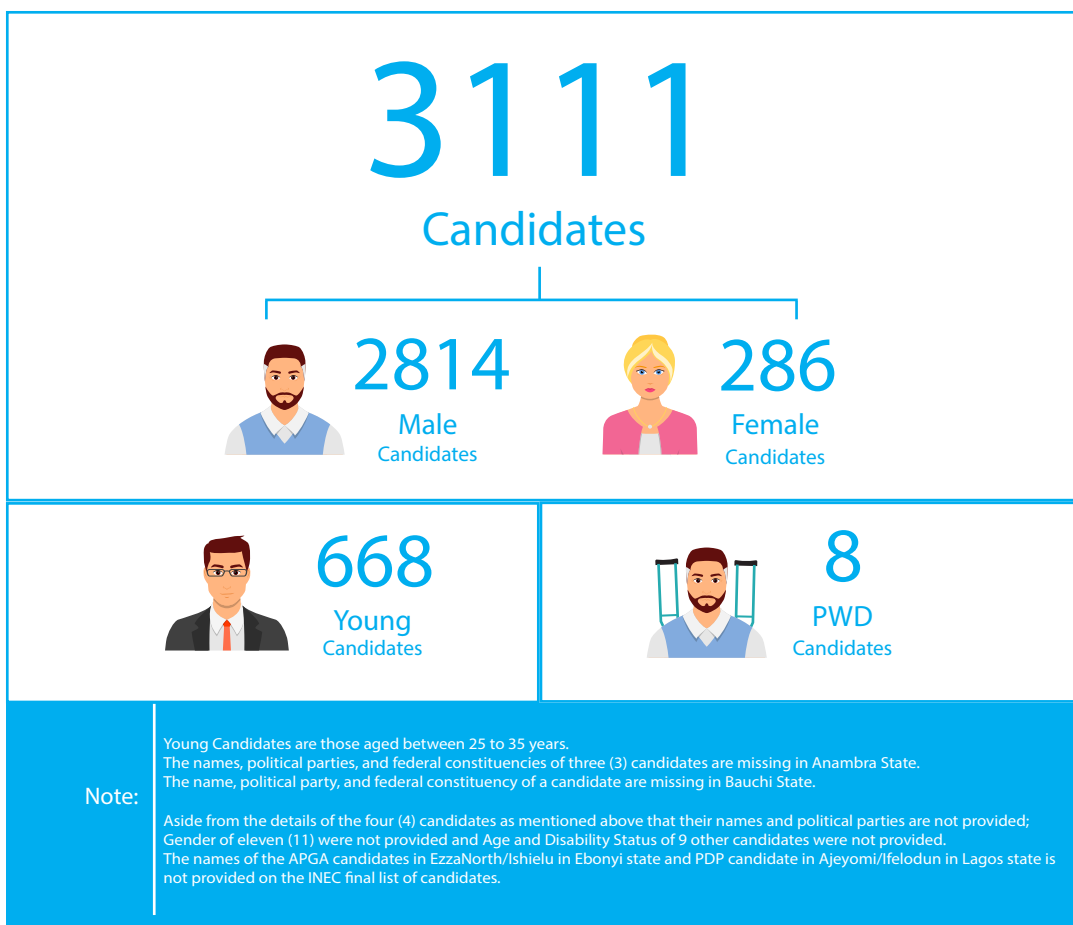
Source: INEC Final List of candidates

Note: Young Candidates are those aged 35 years.
The name, age, disability status and gender of the senatorial candidate for Yobe North was not provided.

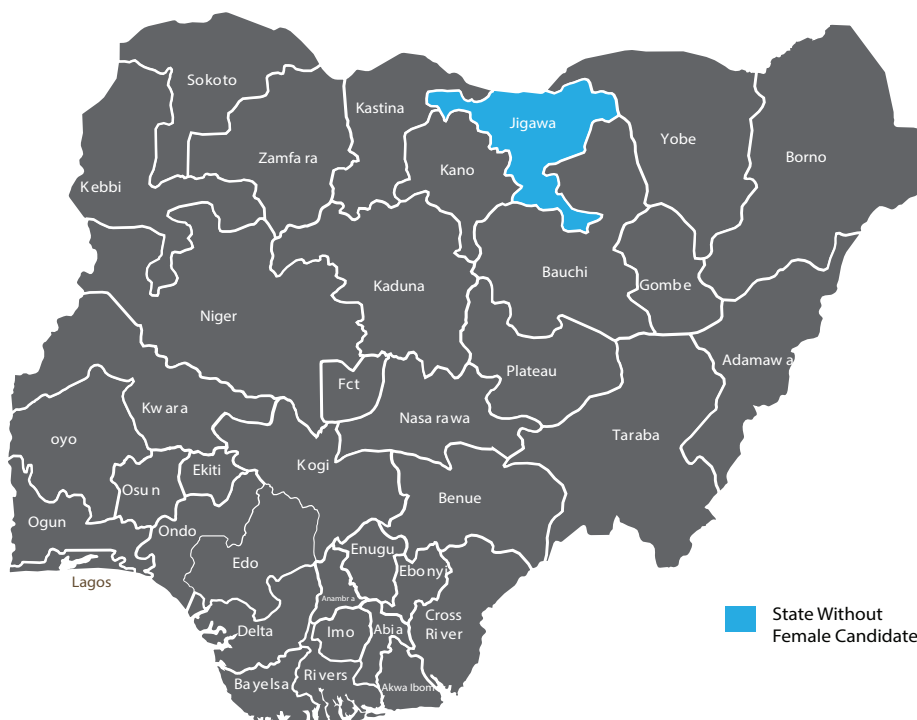
State without Female Senatorial Candidates in the 2023 General Elections



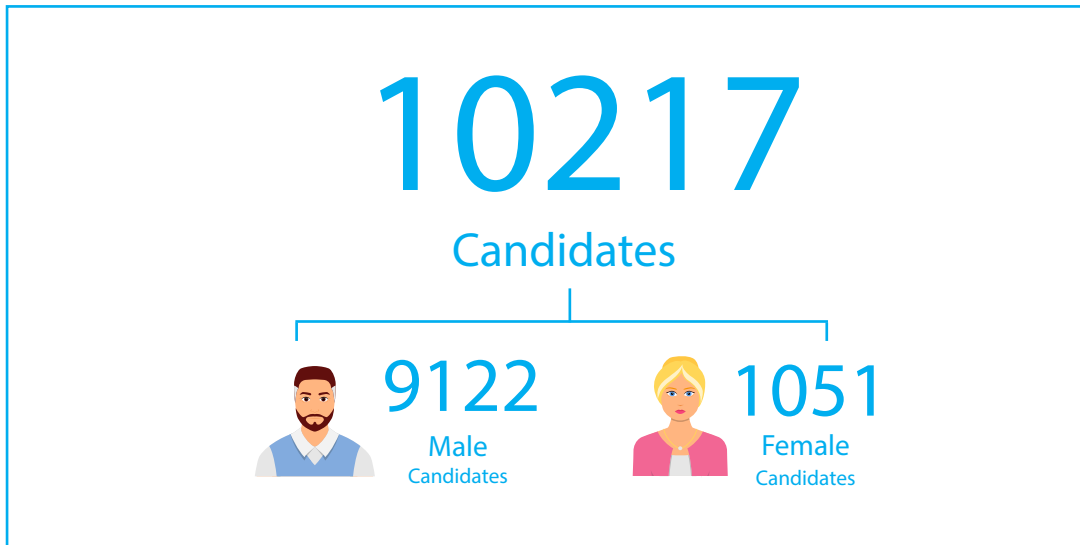
Total Number of House of Representatives Candidates



State without Female HORs Candidates in the 2023 General Elections

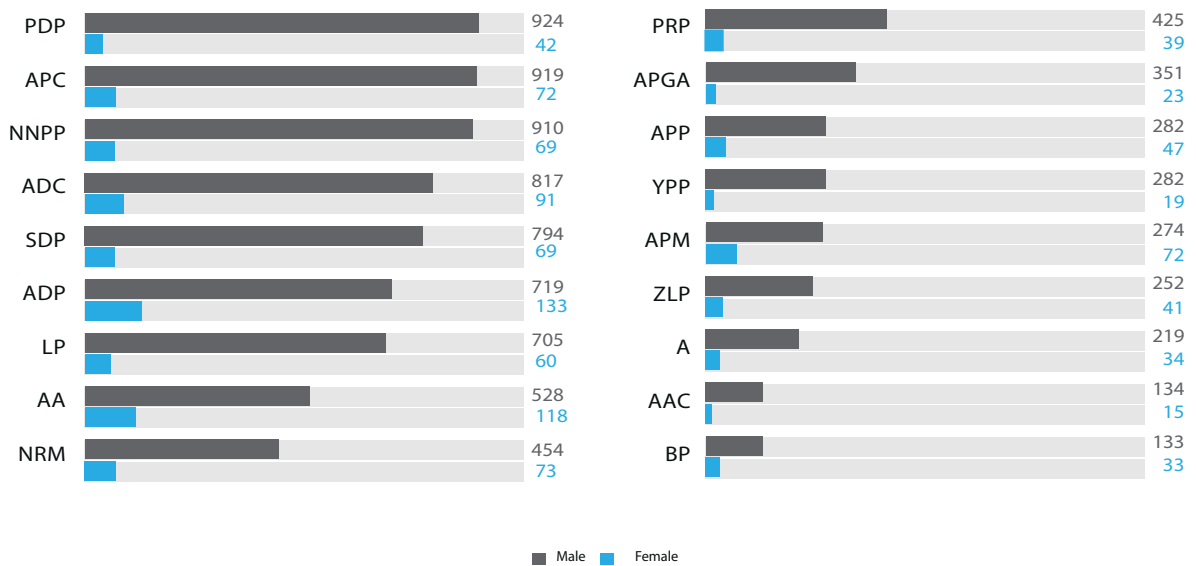


Total Number of State Houses of Assembly Candidates



Note: Young Candidates are those aged between 25 to 35 years.
The name, age, disability status and gender of all the PDP State Houses of Assembly candidates in Ogun State were not provided.
Disability status of 46 candidates were not provided.
Age and Gender of 44 candidates were not provided.

Gender Distribution of SHOA Candidates per Party



Benefits of Increased Women's Political Participation

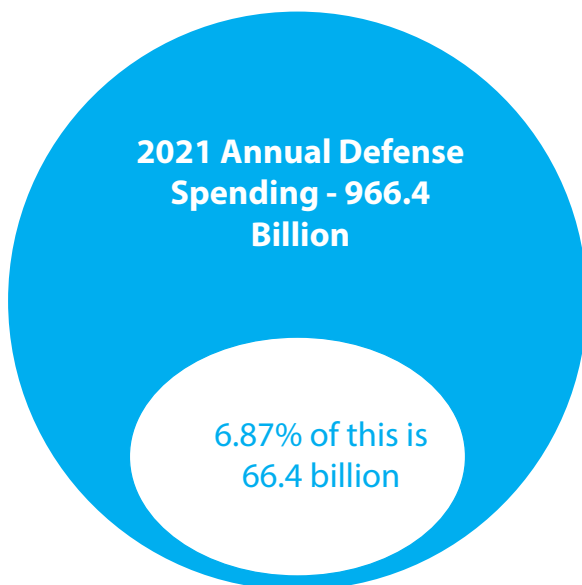
Lower Levels of Insecurity

Research has shown across the globe that countries with increased women in legislative and executive positions manage crisis and security issues better. In Nigeria, insecurity has remained unabated, and over the years, Nigeria's security budget has been on the increase annually. Despite all of this spending, the general situation is dire as ethnic and religious militias, Boko Haram, Farmer/Herdsman Clashes, Kid-

napping, and Banditry are all features of Nigeria's current increasingly high-risk environment.

Many studies have tied some forms of insecurity in Nigeria to a lack of social justice. Achieving equality would mean rectifying a grave social injustice that will reduce most defence and military spending. A study in 2005 revealed that when 90% of the criteria for measuring gender equality improves and the same is used for predicting intrastate conflict - the chances of mitigating the conflict increases by 6.87%².

If we achieve gender equality, especially in the political space, Nigeria may likely spend 6.87% less of its current security spending.

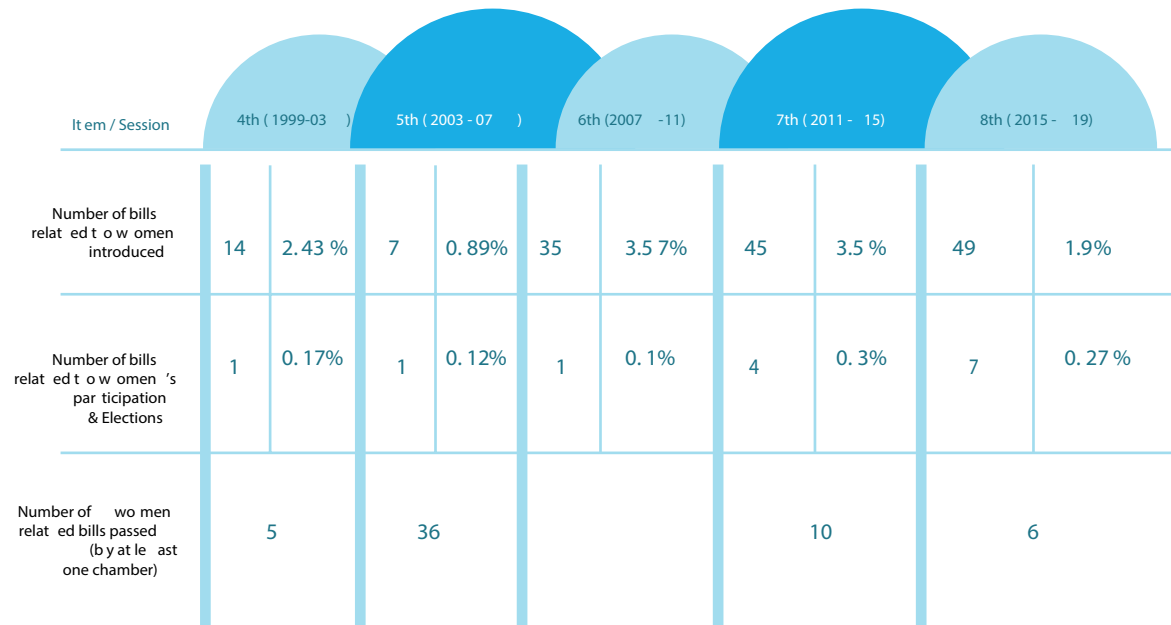


Nigeria could save 66.4 billion annually from her defence spending and 265.6 billion in 4 years if women are represented at the helms of affairs.

More pro-citizen policy and legal Framework

Over the years, women’s political and legislative underrepresentation has impacted other aspects of society; these include Health and Education, especially in policies and laws. A cursory look at how

gender-focused bills have performed at the National Assembly since 1999 shows that the number and percentage of women and girls related bills passed (by at least one chamber) compared to the number of bills introduced are low.



Source: PLAC’s compilation of the total number of bills on women is based on information available

Some of these bills include

- HB. 124 National Council for Widows, Dependent Children and Orphans (Establishment, Special Provisions, etc.) Bill, 2017
- HB. 717 National Hospital for Women and Children Act (Amendment) Bill, 2014
- Property Right of Spouses Bill, 2013
- Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill, 2016
- Sexual Harassment in Tertiary Educational Institution Bill, 2016
- HB. 455 Nigerian Children Trust Fund Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016
- HB. 1297 National Centre for Child Development (Establishment) Bill, 2018

These bills are not solely gender-targeted. They also aimed to impact the health systems, reducing the child mortality rate, Reproductive Health Services, Female Genital Mutilation, Adolescent Health, Food and Nutrition, Child Health, Drug & Food hygiene, and safety. Unfortunately, they neither progressed nor were adopted by the two chambers as required for a bill to become law.

Recommendations

- There should be massive awareness creation by CSO groups on the benefits of women's political leadership towards the 2023 general elections. Such awareness can leverage traditional and religious institutions for public enlightenment. Also, creating awareness should also be done in local languages to aid grassroots penetration of the messages.
- CSOs group into advancing women's political participation should ensure more Male Allies for Leadership Equality is gotten and their capacity should be developed to be able to amplify the benefits of women's political leadership.
- Female candidates in the 2023 elections should be trained on some vital component of electioneering. These could include Campaign Communications fundraising and how to manage their media portrayals.
- Leading to the 2023 general elections, the capacity of the media personnel should be increased on gender sensitive reporting to portray the image of women candidates in these positively. This will reduce unbalanced gender portrayal and increase gender equality content in the media.
- Political Party and their candidates should openly speak against Violence against Woman in elections (VAWIE) and shun their support to shun any form of intimidation and harrasment.

References

1. https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/Finland_Oct2016/Documents/Nigeria_paper.pdf Accessed on the 27th December, 2022.
2. Erik Melander, Gender Equality and Intrastate Armed Conflict, International Studies Quarterly, Volume 49, Issue 4, December 2005, Pages 695–714, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2005.00384.x8>.



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