



**HOPE FOR
THE MASSES**
FOUNDATION

20
24

NIGERIA GRASSROOTS GOVERNANCE SUMMIT & AWARD (NIGGSA) EVALUATION REPORT



THE GLOBAL GOALS

OUR FOCUS- SDG GOALS 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10



THE GLOBAL GOALS

NIGGSA 2024: THE PROCESS, INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Journey Of NIGGSA: From Vision To Reality

The Nigeria Grassroots Governance Summit and Awards (NIGGSA) was born out of a profound need to address the plight of underserved communities while educating local government leaders on the ideals of grassroots development. This initiative aimed to highlight the transformative impact of effective governance in building resilient democracies. The journey from conception to execution was a nine-month endeavor that tested our resolve, highlighted the importance of accountability, and underscored the power of collaboration.

The Conception and Planning Phase

At its core, **NIGGSA** was conceived as a platform to shed light on the challenges faced by grassroots communities while recognizing and promoting exemplary leadership among local government chairmen. Beyond highlighting some of their initiatives that best served the people, it sought to inspire local leaders to prioritize development initiatives that directly impact their constituents. The project commenced with a rigorous six-month survey across Lagos State's 20 local government areas (LGAs) and 37 local council development areas (LCDAs). This survey involved engaging with communities, assessing the conditions on the ground, and documenting performance through comprehensive data, pictures, and videos. To ensure the integrity of the results, the team conducted multiple reviews, revisiting areas where additional validation was needed.

Navigating Challenges and Risks

The journey was not without its challenges. The process of evaluating local government chairmen exposed the team to significant risks. Some local officials, apprehensive about being scrutinized, resorted to intimidation and threats in an attempt to hinder our work. These moments tested our commitment to the vision of **NIGGSA**, but the resolve of the team remained unshaken. Logistically, the project was equally demanding. Traversing challenging terrains, coordinating a statewide operation, and managing extensive data collection required meticulous planning and execution. Despite these obstacles, the team ensured that the survey process adhered to the highest standards of transparency and fairness.



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Voting Process For NIGGSA 2024

For the Nigeria Grassroots Governance Summit and Awards (NIGGSA) 2024, we prioritized a transparent, inclusive, and accessible voting process to ensure the credibility of the awards and foster active community participation. We took significant steps to engage all relevant stakeholders in the voting process, emphasizing the importance of fairness and equal opportunity for all.

Notification and Engagement

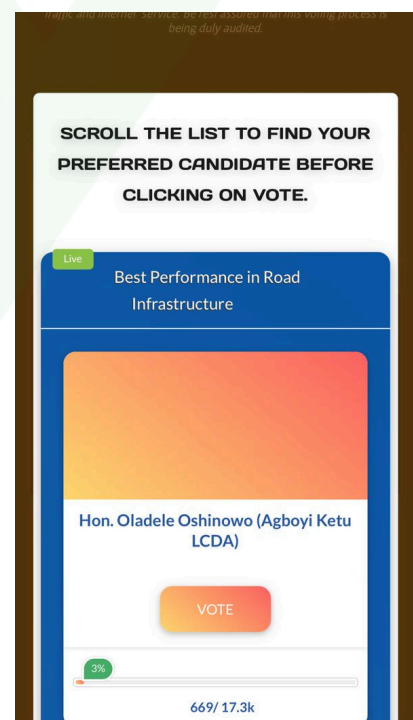
To ensure every local government area in Lagos had the opportunity to participate, we hand-delivered notification letters to all 20 Local Governments and 37 Local Council Development Areas (LCDAs) of Lagos. These letters outlined the summit's purpose, the awards process, and detailed instructions on how to participate. This engagement was concluded 36 hours before voting commenced to ensure ample time for the local governments to prepare and participate effectively.

Voting

Voting officially opened at midnight on September 25, 2024, and closed at midnight on October 15, 2024. We provided multiple voting channels to cater to diverse preferences and ensure accessibility for all residents. Voting was conducted through the official NIGGSA website (www.niggsawards.com) and via SMS, both of which were designed for simplicity and ease of use.

SMS Voting Engagement

While SMS voting was initially highlighted as the most accessible method during the notification process, the uptake was limited. Despite the emphasis placed on this mode of voting, only 9 Local Governments and LCDAs opted to participate through SMS. This insight highlights the need for further education and awareness in future voting processes.



Publicity and Awareness Campaign

To drive awareness and participation, we employed a combination of traditional and social media platforms. A press release was published in two national newspapers and aired on two state radio stations to ensure maximum visibility. Social media ads, including professional video promotions, played a pivotal role in extending our reach. Three different video promos were produced, capturing the essence of the summit and showcasing its significance. These videos were distributed across Facebook and Instagram, reaching nearly 100,000 views cumulatively.

Additionally, we partnered with Paperless Env to deploy WhatsApp bulk messages to 57,000 Lagos residents, further amplifying our outreach. The messages included key information on the awards, the voting process, and how to participate. Despite this targeted effort, only about 8% of the recipients actively engaged with the content.

In addition to these efforts, we directly engaged the Chief Press Secretaries of most local governments through WhatsApp. This outreach included text messages, documents, and promotional materials to further encourage participation. However, despite this engagement, only about 8% of the recipients actively interacted with the content.

Voter Participation

We encouraged the public to engage in the voting process and share their opinions on how they felt their local government chairmen had performed. The response was overwhelming, with a total of 96,838 votes cast across 12 award categories. This level of participation underscores the strong interest in grassroots governance and the desire of citizens to have a voice in how local leaders are recognized for their efforts.

	Live	4530 Votes	57
	Live	6310 Votes	57
	Live	6651 Votes	57
	Live	4470 Votes	57
	Live	1257 Votes	57
	Live	4915 Votes	57
	Live	6852 Votes	9
	Live	1651 Votes	57
	Live	5647 Votes	57
	Live	2869 Votes	57
	Live	3267 Votes	57
	Live	5364 Votes	57

Collegiate Evaluation & Scoring Process

The NIGGSA 2024 Awards was built on the foundation of a transparent, accountable, and rigorous collegiate scoring process to ensure that the evaluation of each local government and local council development area (LCDA) was fair, thorough, and reflective of their grassroots governance contributions. The process was a collaborative effort, with key organizations forming the collegiate team to provide diverse perspectives, professional expertise, and in-depth analysis.

The Collegiate Team

The collegiate for the NIGGSA 2024 Awards was made up of the following esteemed organizations:

1. Hope for the Masses Foundation (www.hftmf.org)
2. BudgIT through its subsidiary TRACKAng (www.budgit.org)
3. Electoral College Nigeria (www.electoralcollng.org)
4. Paperless Env Ltd (www.paperlessenv.app)
5. YALI Network Lagos

These organizations brought a wealth of experience in governance, civic engagement, data analysis, media reporting, and technology integration, all of which played a crucial role in the accuracy and transparency of the evaluation process.

The Intensive 48-Hour Camp

The collegiate team was camped for a rigorous 48-hour session. This was a period of intense, high-stakes work, with team members having minimal personal breaks and no access to personal phone calls during the process. The focus was on ensuring that every aspect of the scoring was handled with the utmost attention to detail, ensuring impartiality and fairness throughout.

Oversight and Monitoring

To ensure the integrity and transparency of the scoring process, Midas and Partners, our auditors, closely monitored every stage of the evaluation. Additionally, our media partner, News Central TV, played a key role in observing the process, further enhancing the credibility of the entire awards mechanism.

The meticulous nature of the process guarantees that the winners of the NIGGSA represent the highest standards of leadership, transparency, and progress at the local government level in Lagos.

Collegiate Evaluation & Scoring Process

The Scoring Process

The scoring process was comprehensive and multifaceted, considering multiple data points to determine the final scores for each local government and LCDA.

- 1. Independent Reports and Media Analysis:** The scores were derived after considering the independent reports generated by Hope for the Masses Foundation (HFTMF) field staff. The team also reviewed the social media and web posts of all the LGAs/LCDAs across Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and their official websites. These platforms provided valuable insights into the communication efforts of each local government and their transparency in service delivery.
- 2. Media Reports and Eye-Witness Accounts:** Media reports from trusted outlets were also incorporated into the scoring. These reports, along with eye-witness accounts gathered from various platforms, offered a real-world view of how governance was being executed at the grassroots level. Additionally, random phone calls to contacts provided by Glyphix Studios, our technology partner, were used to verify reports and gather further insights.
- 3. Survey Data and Independent Evaluation:** The independent eye of Electoral College Nigeria, with its deep expertise in electoral systems, played a pivotal role in evaluating the local governments. The scoring process was also enriched by the survey prowess of BudgIT, which brought a data-driven approach to assessing the performance and resource allocation of each LG and LCDA.
- 4. Financial Allocations:** In evaluating each local government's performance, the collegiate team also considered the allocations received from the FAAC (Federation Accounts Allocation Committee) account. This financial data provided insights into the resources available to each local government, and helped ensure that performance was assessed in a context that took into account both financial capacity and governance outcomes

Priority SDGs With Least Impact From Survey



PRIORITY SDG



PRIORITY SDG



PRIORITY SDG



PRIORITY SDG

Award Categories with Least Impact & Findings from Pre-Summit Evaluation

- 1. The Most Disability Compliant and Inclusive LG**
- 2. Environmental & Social Impact**
- 3. Agriculture-Focused LG in the State**
- 4. Innovation and Creativity Award**
- 5. Excellence in Citizen-Focused Delivery**
- 6. Employment Well-being**

While these areas are crucial for holistic local government development and citizen oriented governance, they have remained neglected in many local governments, as indicated by our findings.



PRIORITY SDG



Impact on Citizens

This lack of digital transparency and media engagement negatively impacts the ability of local governments to reach their citizens and effectively communicate their programs and policies. As the local government is the first point of contact between the citizens and the government, this disconnect often leads to a perception that local governance is secretive, self-serving, and limited to benefiting a small group of cronies and political associates. Consequently, citizens tend to feel less engaged and disempowered, further eroding trust in their local leaders.

The findings underline the need for local governments to invest in more transparent, inclusive, and public-facing communication strategies. By enhancing their digital presence and prioritizing citizen-focused communication, local governments can bridge the gap between their leadership and the people they serve, ultimately improving governance and service delivery.

Key Indicator	Activity / Project	Data / Outcome
Lack of Online Presence	Pre-summit evaluation of official social media channels for local governments.	70% of publicity is conducted through Chairperson's personal social media handles, overshadowing institutional representation.
Outdated or Inconsistent Media Engagement	Audit and review of existing local government social media pages and digital platforms.	Many local governments lack social media presence, or have outdated and disconnected pages from current administrations.
Focus on Personal Branding	Analysis of local government publicity materials and media strategies.	Publicity emphasizes Chairpersons' achievements rather than collective government efforts, weakening institutional identity.
Lack of Transparency in Local Government Activities	Pre-summit evaluation of official social media channels for local governments.	Local government activities lack visibility, leaving citizens uninformed about ongoing initiatives and interventions.
Disconnection from the Community	Community perception survey on engagement with local government initiatives versus state-level governance.	Residents feel more connected to state governments due to their stronger and more consistent media presence. interventions.

The Summit

The Nigeria Grassroots Governance Summit and Awards (NIGGSA) 2024, held on October 30th at Providence Hotel, Ikeja, focused on the pivotal role of grassroots governance in advancing Nigeria's democratic and economic growth. Endorsed by the Lagos State Government, the summit gathered monarchs, public officials, nonprofit leaders, corporate organizations, and international partners to deliberate on strengthening grassroots governance.

Key Recommendations from Speakers:

1. Local Government Accountability and Capacity Building

Otunba Gbenga Daniel former Ogun State Governor and Senator Representing Ogun East Senatorial District in the 10th National Assembly called for accountability mechanisms alongside local government autonomy, recommending robust citizen oversight to ensure community leaders deliver on their mandates. He also emphasized the need to build an enduring legacy by exploring and developing local talents. "If we are to develop our nation, then we must develop the people and give them opportunities to enhance their capacity to deliver what we need," he stated, highlighting the importance of capacity building as a cornerstone for sustainable development.

2. Stronger Institutions and Legislative Collaboration

Hon. Adedamola Richard Kasunmu, Deputy Majority Leader of the Lagos State House of Assembly, advocated for strengthening institutions and providing better education for local government leaders. He stressed the importance of a symbiotic relationship between grassroots governance and legislative representatives, affirming that legislators are the voices of the people and essential to effective grassroots governance.

3. The Role of Autonomy in Grassroots Governance

Dr. Tajudeen Afolabi, Special Adviser to the Lagos State Governor on Legislative, Political, and Civic Engagement, highlighted the necessity of financial and administrative autonomy for local governments. He emphasized that autonomy must be paired with accountability, urging grassroots leaders to prioritize community-centric initiatives.



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4. Food Security and Agricultural Investment

Mr. Emmanuel Audu, representing Lagos State Commissioner for Agriculture, Ms. Ruth Abisola Olusanya, underscored the role of local governments in driving agricultural initiatives tailored to community needs, asserting that robust agricultural systems are essential for food security and national resilience.

5. Traditional Institutions as Catalysts for Measurable Progress

HRM Oba Saka Adelola Matemilola, Oluyalo Otileta VII, highlighted the critical role of traditional rulers in grassroots governance. He emphasized the importance of measurable progress in sectors that directly impact citizens, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Oba Matemilola stressed that traditional institutions are invaluable partners to local governments, as kings are closer to the people and uniquely positioned to identify the most urgent community needs. "There is no community without a king," he remarked, emphasizing the necessity of synergy between traditional rulers and local governments to achieve meaningful development at the grassroots level.

6. Enhancing Transparency through Media Collaboration

Ify Onyegbule, Director General of the Imo State Broadcasting Corporation, advocated for strategic partnerships between local governments and the media. She underscored the importance of leveraging media platforms to enhance transparency, communicate government policies effectively, and foster trust between citizens and their leaders. By involving the media in governance processes, local governments can create an informed citizenry and promote accountability in service delivery.

7. Youth Engagement and Economic Growth

Tope Bukola Ojo, CEO of AUTOGIG International Resource Limited, advocated leveraging the creativity and innovation of the youth to drive local economic transformation. He stressed that empowering youth at the grassroots level unlocks significant opportunities for societal advancement.

8. The First Handshake of Democracy

Kunle Lawal, Executive Director of Electoral College Nigeria, emphasized the foundational role of local governments, describing them as "the first handshake of democracy to the people." He warned that without functional local governments, citizens would continue to face neglect and inadequate representation.

9. Lessons from Global Democracies

German Consul General, Weert Börner, reflected on Germany's 75-year democratic experience, highlighting its remarkable progress despite the country's challenging history. He noted that Nigeria, as a younger democracy, has much to gain from studying and adapting lessons from Germany's journey. Börner emphasized that effective citizenship in Nigeria requires active contributions to society through education, economic participation, entrepreneurship, and engagement with local institutions such as schools, universities, political bodies, legal frameworks, and media organizations. He also praised Nigeria's notable advancements under democratic governance, recognizing the vital role its youth play in driving progress. According to Börner, the youth's energy and innovative spirit are essential for strengthening local institutions and fostering participatory governance. He urged Nigeria to further empower its young population, as well as grassroots institutions, to unlock the full potential of its democracy and ensure sustainable national growth.

The Convener's Call to Action

In her address, Oluwatomisin Adebukola Badewole, Executive Director of Hope for the Masses Foundation and convener of NIGGSA, emphasized the critical role of local governments in touching citizens' lives directly. She noted that empowering local governments with autonomy and resources is essential for addressing pressing challenges such as poverty, inadequate healthcare, and poor infrastructure.

Badewole celebrated the progress made under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration in advancing financial autonomy for local governments, affirming that these reforms must be sustained and complemented with transparency and efficiency.

Key Recommendations For Local Governments

- 01 Road & Drainage Maintenance
- 02 Upgrade healthcare facilities
- 03 Create inclusive welfare programs
- 04 Enforce environmental sustainability
- 05 Invest in agricultural productivity
- 06 Invest in agricultural productivity
- 07 Increase transparency
- 08 Foster public-private partnerships
- 09 Establish a centralized and consistent digital presence



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The Path Forward

The Nigeria Grassroot Governance Summit & Award (NIGGSA) 2024 was fully funded by the directors of the organization, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to grassroots development and their belief in the power of inclusive governance as a catalyst for national progress.

The voting process for the NIGGSA 2024 Awards was a testament of our commitment to transparency and inclusivity. By employing a variety of channels and reaching out through multiple platforms, we ensured that a diverse group of people had the opportunity to participate. While there are areas for improvement, especially in terms of engagement with SMS voting, collaboration with network providers and bigger technological input, the overall process was successful in garnering significant participation and feedback. Moving forward, we plan to refine and enhance the voting system to make it even more accessible and user-friendly for all citizens, ensuring that the NIGGSA Awards continue to reflect the true voice of the people.

The summit concluded with a unified call for action to prioritize grassroots governance as a foundation for national progress. Stakeholders were urged to work collaboratively to empower local governments, foster partnerships across sectors, and ensure accountability. Strengthening grassroots governance is key to unlocking Nigeria's economic potential, enhancing service delivery, and building a resilient democracy.

"If we are to truly transform Nigeria, if we are to lift the masses out of poverty, improve education, and provide healthcare, then the local government must be empowered to perform its role with efficiency, transparency, and compassion"

**Oluwatomisin A. Badewole
Executive Director
Hope for the Masses Foundation**



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www.hftmf.org

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4. Hon. Ruth Abisola Olusanya,
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5. Hon. Akinyemi Ajigbotafe,
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8. Mr Weert Börner, German
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9. Ms. Ify Onyegbule, Director,
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10. Mr Tope Bukola Ojo, CEO,
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**We thank you for your
continued support in our efforts
to contribute to the Grassroots
Development in Nigeria.**

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