

# -A FLASH IN THE PAN OR A NEW DAWN- WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & THE 2022 BUDGET



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## Introduction

In contrast to the previous federal budget, year 2022, is a landmark departure from the limited number of WEE projects and the quantum of funds allocated to WEE. The 2021 WEE projects of 645 projects increased to 938 in 2022, indicating 45 per cent increase. The funding also increased from N51 billion in 2021 to N103 billion in 2022 indicating a 101 per cent increase. Consequently, analysts, activists, advocates and WEE enthusiasts have received the approved 2022 budget with great excitement. Therefore, it is important to ask, is this a flash in the pan? Or is it a sign of durable systemic shift towards gender responsive budgeting that will produce equitable space for participation in the economy by women? In order to get a good response, we took a closer look deeper interrogation of the content, focus, and the trajectory of WEE in the budget.

## Methodology

The analysis of the 2022 FGN budget followed a multi-stage design beginning with desk review of key policy documents of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). This enabled us to categorize the MDAs according to the degree of relationship between their mandate and WEE. This led us to come up with 17 ministries<sup>1</sup> whose mandates are core to women's economic empowerment. However, if the criterion is extended to ministries with women-specific (and women+) interventions and projects, the number increases to 24<sup>2</sup>.

The analysis is guided by codes that were used to identify and track projects. These are classified into two categories. (a) Women-core WEE projects with the keywords: female, girl, widow, ladies, and wives. (b) women+others with the keywords: men and women, female and male, women and youth, women and people with disability, women and children, women and graduates, women and farmers, women and artisans, women and elderly, etc.

The identified WEE projects were further classified according to their impact and value. These include projects providing (a) skill acquisition/training and grants; (a) grant only; (b) equipment and empowerment materials; (d) skill Acquisition, training, and capacity building, (e) programme design and development, collaboration, support and implementation of new initiative and hosting of event and others. The data were analyzed using a quantitative method including comparative and trend analysis.

## Highlight of the Findings

The Federal Government of Nigeria allocated the sum of N103 billion to 938 women's economic empowerment projects in 2022. The funding commitment represent a significant shift from the 2021 WEE budgetary provision amounting to N51 billion with 645 WEE projects. The new funding commitment represents 101 per cent increase. There is a huge difference of 293 WEE projects amounting to N52 billion. The question that comes to mind remains that are these projects of high value to women? Would they have significant impact on the life of Nigerian women? Against this background, they were classified according to their value under two basic subheadings women-core and women-plus-others.

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- (1) Agriculture and Rural Development; (2) Women Affairs; (3) Education; (4) Labour and Employment; (5) Industry, Trade and Investment; (6) Secretary to the Government of the Federation; (7) Science, Technology and Innovation; (8) Information & Culture; (9) Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Investment, (10) Finance, Budget & National Planning, (11) Environment, (12) Special Duties & Inter Governmental Affairs, (13) Communications and Digital Economy, (15) Foreign Affairs, (16) Works and Housing, (17) Niger Delta.
  - (18) Presidency; (19) Transport; (20) Water Resources; (21) Justice; (22) Youth and Sport Development; (23) Health; and (24) Mines and Steel Development

CATEGORIES		POTENTIAL VALUES	PROJECTS	TOTAL FUND	PERCENTAGE
Women-Core	Skill and Grants	High ↑ ↓ Low	9	25,176,287,262	24.33%
	Grant Alone		7	502,080,800	0.49%
	Provision/Supply of Equipment and Empowerment Materials		67	4,976,406,954	4.81%
	Skill Acquisition/ Training, Capacity Building		63	5,034,655,828	4.86%
	Uncategorized Projects		18	843,954,414	0.82%
Women-Plus-Others	Skill acquisition and training, grants, equipment and empowerment materials, Others		774	66,960,648,829	64.69%

### Women-Core Projects:

These projects are more deliberate, significant and primarily focused on women. They are classified into five according to their value.

1. The first category is 'Skill and Grants'. This seeks to provide skill/training and grants to women alone. They include vocational training/financial grant, training and provision of grant, etc. There are nine (9) of these projects with N25.1 billion funding commitment. This funding represents 24.33 per cent of the total WEE projects for the year. These types of projects are high value. They not only provide necessary skill but also provides financial support.
2. The second category is 'grant without training and tool'. This project provides only funding to women. Seven (7) of these projects were identified with N502 million. They constitute 0.49 per cent of the total WEE projects.
3. The third category supplying equipment and empowerment materials to women alone. These include agricultural inputs, machines, start up kits and empowerment materials such as sewing machines, freezer, grinding machine, generators among others. There are 67 of these projects with N4.9 billion funding. This is 4.81 per cent of the total WEE projects.
4. The fourth category is designated as provision of skill acquisition, training, and capacity building. Some of these training and skill acquisition includes home management & cosmetology, ICT, fashion designers, fish farming, cookery and hospitality, craft, business set-up among others. 63 of the related projects were identified with N5 billion. This constitutes 4.86 per cent of the WEE budget provision for the year.
5. The fifth category are those projects program design and development, collaboration, and implementation of new initiatives and hosting of an event among others. 18 of these projects were identified with N843 million. This is 0.82 per cent of the total WEE budget.

### Women-plus-other Projects:

These projects comprise of all the above categories namely training, skill acquisition, grants/fund, supply of equipment and empowerment materials, and others but are not specific to women. The targets are women combined with others. 774 of these projects exist with N66.9 billion in 2022. It is easier for women to access funding that is particularly targeted at them than those combining them with others. This makes tracking and impacts analysis complicated. There is also the risk of other formidable social groups to crowding out women in the competition for opportunities.

## Key Findings

### Significant Improvement on Skill and Grants for Women

There is one thing to give funds to women, there is another that they have the prerequisite skill or training that would help them in the management of the fund. In 2021, there were 6 women-core WEE projects combined skill/training with grants for women with about N422 million while the number of the projects was increased to 9 in 2022 with N25 billion budgetary provision. This is 5,861 per cent increase. This huge increase despite the small number of the projects is connected to the N12 billion Nigeria for Women Project under the Ministry of Women Affairs and the N12 billion Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) Project under the Federal Ministry of Education.

The funding commitment for the women-core WEE project providing only grants also increased by 9 per cent in 2022. The provision for the equipment and empowerment materials were reduced by 23 per cent, the skill, training and capacity building was increased by 33 per cent. For those projects focusing on development, collaboration, and implementation of new initiatives and hosting of an event among others. The funding for these projects was by 282 per cent. Therefore, last category are women-plus-others WEE projects comprised of skill acquisition/training, grants, equipment and empowerment materials, and others. This increased by 60 per cent in 2022.

Despite the above positive increase, the following challenges were observed.

### Unspecified Training, Capacity Building, and Empowerment Projects

It is very difficult to establish the nature of some training, skill acquisition, capacity building, and empowerment projects in the national budget. Several training and empowerment projects exist without specification. E.g. "Training and empowerment of women in Plateau Central Senatorial District, Plateau State' with a code and ERGP202202308 and N30,000,000 funding commitment. The nature of the training could not be established compared to a similar project titled "Training and empowerment of widows in farms inputs in selected LGAs of Enugu State" with a code ERGP202200877 and N200,000,000 funding. Another example is the capacity building and skill acquisition for women in Mani Local Government Area, Katsina State with a code ERGP202202850 and N20,000,000 fund compared to Capacity Building And Empowerment of Women on Agric/Food Production and Processing in Kumbotso Federal Constituency Of Kano State with a code ERGP202204027 and N50,000,000; provision of empowerment equipment for rural women in Ohafia LGA, Abia North Senatorial District, Abia State with a code ERGP202203816 and N50,000,000 compared to Provision of Sewing Machines for Women and Widows at Amuke (Okporoahaba) Ntighauzo, Isiala South LGA, Abia State with a code ERGP202203212 and N25,000,000; Empowerment for Onutu-Ozia Indigent Women in Okehi Kogi State with a code ERGP202200670 and N50,000,000 compared to Empowerment for Women (1) Sewing Machines, Grinding Machines, Small Generator Sets, Deep Freezers - 70 Women with a code ERGP202200152 and N100,000,000. It could be deduced that while the latter clearly state what the training and empowerment are all about, the former shows otherwise. The implementation of some of these projects with no specification could be very difficult to track and monitor, fund releases may be used for non-valuable and impactful events.

# What Needs to Change and Improve

## Bureaucrats

- Sustain the momentum for increased budgetary provisions to women-core projects.
- Specify type of the training, skill acquisition, capacity building, and empowerment for easy tracking and monitoring.
- Create institutional coordinating mechanism/framework for tracking gender impact of budget implementation
- Conduct and publicize quarterly reports on gender impact analysis of programs and projects.
- Ensure timely releases and cash backing for WEE budget lines.
- Bridge institutional capacity gap in GRB across the fiscal governance chain
- Increased gender disaggregation of budget data

## Law Makers

- Sustain the momentum on continuous budgetary allocation to women-core allocation.
- Ensure proper scrutinization of the budget to ensure that it is gender sensitive and clearer.
- Timely oversight on WEE-implementing MDAs to ensure effective implementation.

## Development Partners/Donors

- Support the executive and legislative for capacity building gender responsive budgeting.
- Support the gender desk officers of the MDAs on WEE impact assessment reporting.
- Sustain the existing momentum in WEE-related supportive program and projects.
- Carry out an independent quarterly, half-year or annual WEE-impact assessment report.

## Women Economic Collectives (WECs)

- Improve budget literacy among the Women Economic Collectives (WECs)
- Effective scrutinization and analysis of WEE budget.
- Ensure quarterly, half-year and annual tracking and monitoring of WEE budget releases.
- Ensure timely monitoring of WEE-projects implementation and report compliance.
- Sensitization on the need for investing on WEE.

## Activists/Media/Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

- Improve budget literacy among the activist/media/Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).
- Track the project implementation process (fund releases, procurement, execution and monitoring) and report performance.
- Continue to track the WEE budget to ascertain the government commitment towards women empowerment issue.
- Publish knowledge productions in advancing the salience of WEE across Nigeria.
- Intensify research efforts on WEE to identify areas of improvement and gaps.

## Religious and Traditional Rulers

- Amplify the need for more funding commitment on impactful WEE projects.
- Address the cultural and religious barriers in the implementation of WEE projects at some grassroots community where women empowerment is seen as an abomination.

# References

Federal Government of Nigeria 2021 Appropriation Act  
Federal Government of Nigeria 2022 Appropriation Act



## PAWED Profile

Partnership for Advancing women Empowerment in Development (PAWED) is two years project with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation (BMGF). It aims at building a Nigerian CSO advocacy and communications coalition to advance evidence, policies and programs that further women's economic empowerment vanguard organizations such as Women's Empowerment Collectives. The project is being implemented by development Research and Project Centre (dRPC).

The three primary objectives for the PAWED project are:

- Increase the salience of women's economic empowerment with national and state government ministries, writ large
- Increase the salience of effective policies and programs to advance women's economic empowerment with donors and national and state government ministries, with a primary focus on women's empowerment collectives
- Increase the salience of women's economic empowerment amongst civil society and influential leaders and their appetite to support change that might be in opposition to cultural and social norms

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## Women's Economic Empowerment is National Economic Empowerment



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