



MANIFESTO BY

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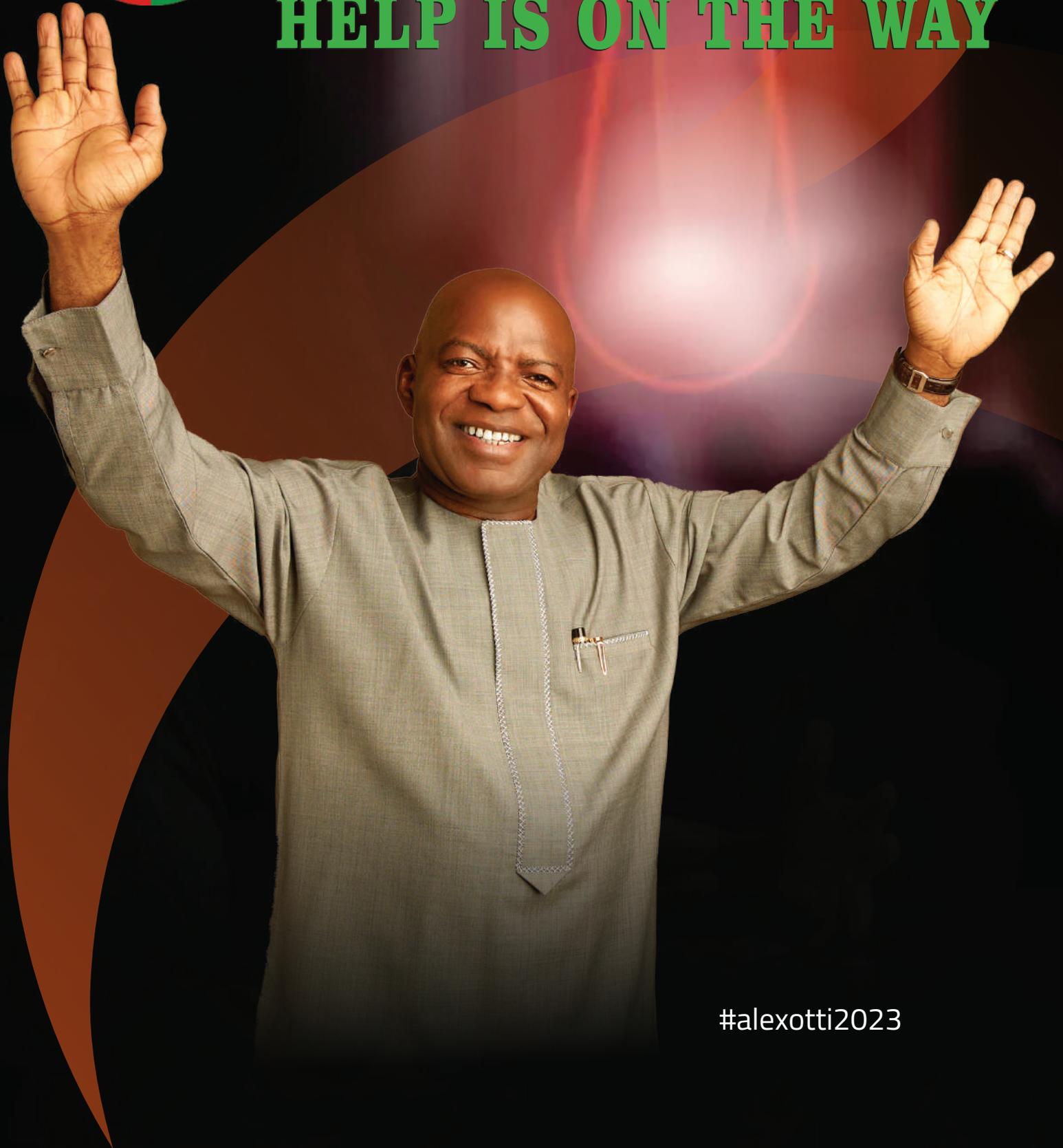
2023 LABOUR PARTY GOVERNORSHIP CANDIDATE,

ABIA STATE



ABIANS, WEEP NO MORE

HELP IS ON THE WAY



#alexotti2023



VISION

To restore the glory of Abia State and make her truly Number One state in Nigeria, as really God's own State.

OUR MISSION

To establish a responsive, efficient and accountable government that will sustainably develop Abia State for the welfare, security, and progress of all Abians.



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1. Overview



INTRODUCTION

It is my earnest commitment to see that in our lifetime, the full glory of Abia will be restored, from the ruins and ashes wreaked on her by over two decades of mindless looting and clueless governance.

It is this deep desire that prompted me to present myself as a vessel to lead the long overdue quest for the restoration and rebuilding of our dear state. I am convinced that talents and resources abound in and around our state, to enable us build a homeland that will guarantee security, comfort and prosperity for one and all who reside in or visit the state.

I envision Abia as a destination of choice for people from all walks of life to reside, relax and earn a decent living. With the right leadership, I see Abia as a state with the capacity to aspire to be the best in the committee of states, and to compare favourably in development and innovation, with her peers all over Africa and indeed the world. Yes, it is possible.

It is on this note that, I humbly announce that with your support and goodwill, I am offering myself, once again, to lead the charge to liberate our dear state from the shackles of misrule, restore what many insist had been lost, and place Abia on the map of greatness. These, I intend to achieve as your governor through the 2023 general election.

I am glad to note that our resolve remains unshaken, and our belief stronger than ever.





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As you may have realised, the darkest hour is just before the dawn. For our new beginning is just around the corner, and our only duty this time around is to make sure we participate in the electoral process. Also, to encourage others who have almost given up hope to fight to victory, and most importantly, fight to take back and rebuild our state.

I am indeed grateful to the millions of Abians in our various communities, thousands who live in various cities in Nigeria and overseas, who have remained steadfast, insisting that our vision and agenda represent the most practical pathway to transform our state from its present dysfunctional outlook to one that we all can be proud of. I am humbled by the fact that majority of those who started this journey with us in 2014 are still standing firm and believing that we shall get it right this time.

Many more have also joined us in recent times, in our fight to liberate Abia. I cannot thank all of you





enough for your optimism, commitment to our course, and most importantly, believing that Abia is worth fighting for.



Osusu Primary school, Aba North LGA

We have remained in the political space to disrupt the status quo that has reduced our pensioners, civil servants and teachers to beggars - a system that has made hunger, insecurity, infrastructural decay and other ills key stake holders in the state. Our goal is to provide an alternative governance model that works for one and all, not one that only works for those with close proximity to those in power.



Flooded classroom, World bank model primary school Abayi Osioma LGA

If you hire me, I will devote everything in me to work with and rally all stakeholders and citizens to restore the pride and glory of Abia state. I have the experience to commence implementation of our program from my first day in office. The programs we plan to pursue are derived from extensive studies on the challenges facing the state and the unsettling

“Abia’s resources must serve the economic and social interests of all who live within its borders. Gainful employment, quality infrastructure, clean and decent environment, access to quality public education and healthcare, including other countless economic opportunities that come with living in the 21st century should be our right”

changes required to reverse the rot and reposition Abia as the economic bride of South East, Nigeria.



Classroom block in Community secondary school, Ihie Ukwu Ogwe Ugwunabo LGA

We will ensure that civil servants can earn their legitimate entitlements on time and pensioners can spend their retirement years in joy and fulfilment. Abia’s resources must serve the economic and social interests of all who live within its borders. Gainful employment, quality infrastructure, clean and decent environment, access to quality public education and healthcare, including other countless economic opportunities that come with living in the 21st century, should be our right; not privileges to be begged for or auxiliary benefits to be negotiated.





THE ABIA ECONOMY

Abia State has an estimated population of 5million people. The state is noted for its prowess in leather and garment manufacturing. It is also an agricultural hub and has solid mineral deposits in commercial quantities.

The state has one of the lowest IGR per capita of N3,462 which is below the national average of N4,616 per person, making the state susceptible to the risk of incurring more debt. Its net debt per capita stands at N30,324, higher than the national average of N27,316 per person.

An estimated 51% or 818,926 of the state's 1.63m labour force cannot contribute to the revenue pool of the state government through income taxes as they are unemployed.

Furthermore, nearly 31% of the state's residents live in poverty meaning they have very constraining purchasing power.

This is partly why its IGR per capita is lower than the national average. From the foregoing, it seems that the only path to economic recovery for the state depends on job creation, poverty reduction, industrialisation and fiscal restructuring.

Its internally generated revenue averages N15b annually while federal allocation has hovered around N60b annually. Total debt profile, though a subject of debate is about N140b. GDP is around N3.5t. As a result of infrastructural decay and other inefficiencies, the state is rated 32nd out of the 36 States in the "Ease of Doing Business Index". For context, Anambra State is rated 7th and Imo is at the 11th position. Sokoto and Jigawa placed 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Health and Education spending per Capita are at about N1,000.00 and N1,400.00 respectively. Again, Jigawa's numbers are N2,700.00 and N7,000.00 respectively.

As would be deduced from this document, we must harness the enormous potential in the state and improve the IGR in geometric progression as we expect decline in Federal Allocations. We intend to double GDP in the next few years. We must also aim to be around where Sokoto is in the "Ease of doing business" and significantly do better than Jigawa in Education and Health Spending.



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▲ Ariaria International Market Aba, Abia State

ABIA SHOULD BE FIRST BUT....

Across the South-East and South-South geopolitical zones of Nigeria, we have seen tremendous improvements in states with less revenues and potentials. Good quality roads across urban and rural areas, roads that can last for decades, built by quality and reputable engineering firms, have replaced bush paths and pothole ridden motorways. Our neighbours have long outlived most of the mundane issues that dominate our politics in Abia. They no longer celebrate routine activities such as paying salaries and commissioning one, two, three kilometres of poorly constructed roads. They are now implementing development master plans that will transit their states into mega smart cities and technology hubs. In some of the places that were metaphors of underdevelopment before now, serious attention is now being paid to education whereby their pupils and students are leading nations in critical areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

The fact, my dear brothers and sisters, is that our neighbours have all left us behind. They have set off on a journey of actualising their potentials, maximising their resources to serve their present and future generations.



Abakaliki, capital of Ebonyi state at night

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FOR HOW MUCH LONGER?

It is strange and sad that our memories of developmental and pragmatic governance date back to the glorious days of our progenitors. Many of us still remember when Aba used to be a model city, the glory and testament to the Igbo man's resilience, ingenuity and phoenix-like personality.



Current state of Umuhia-Ikot Ekpen Road in Ekebedi Oboro-Ikwuano Local-Government Area, Abia-State

How did we become a land that abandoned its history? How did we toss aside the economic and development blueprint of our father, Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara, the very model of leadership that made the Eastern Region of old the fastest growing economy in the world at a time? What happened to those glorious secondary schools that produced global thought leaders like Chinua Achebe, Elechi Amadi, Christopher Okigbo, Ken Saro-Wiwa, Clement Isong, Justice Udo Udoma, and several others?

It would not be difficult to admit that we have failed to live up to the footprints of our foresighted and visionary fathers. The leadership we have been burdened with in the last two decades has done nothing but superintend over a wasteful system of rent seekers. Governance has been made a private enterprise for the leaders and their cronies. The consequence is that all the enabling institutions that epitomised hard work, creativity, integrity, and service have been completely degraded. It is a tragedy of immense proportion, with an outcome

of travesty, which is the mess we see all over the state today - the collapse of governance, our children being out of school due to the government not paying salaries; regulatory bodies withdrawing accreditations from higher institutions; doctors in public hospitals being perennially on strike; and most of our link roads now death traps.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, unemployment in Abia is presently at 51%. This is higher than the national average of 33%. About 31% of Abia people live in poverty. Our debt profile has grown in geometric progression from about N35b in 2015 to over N140b by 2021, and continues to grow.

My manifesto stems from a conviction that despite the economic challenges in the country, not peculiar to Abia state, there is yet ample headroom to fully exploit synergies with the federal government, other progressive states, Development Financial Institutions (DFIs), and private investors to build a prosperous and secure state.



Current state of Aba Road, Abia-State





A Village In Abia State Called Abiriba "Small London"

We believe that our people are blessed with the innate dexterity and drive to achieve whatever we desire to achieve, if only the government can provide the enabling environment, and then nudge them in the right direction. We see huge opportunities for our state even beyond the confines of the state and country. We are a global people. A strong, innovative and productive Abia homeland can leverage on the economic window that the new African Continental Free Trade Agreement Area (AfCFTA), with a market size of over US\$2.6 trillion, to grow.

Our key objective will be to provide an enabling environment that will ensure equal opportunity for wealth creation, the establishment of micro, small and medium scale industries and businesses. We plan to situate Abia as a centre of excellence for 21st century compliant human capital development, and actively equip youths with the requisite skill sets to enable them gainfully partake in the global digital tribe.

"The yard stick to measure our success will be when our homeland transits from a location where the citizens are actively looking for alternative residences, for better economic opportunities, to a destination that offers economic prospects and social security for her existing population and prospects."

We will rollout fit for purpose smart cities, towns and markets in a sustainable green and habitable environment. We will restore and normalise the fundamental Igbo principal values of hard work, ethics, compassion, and competition.

Our aim is to achieve fiscal independence from the federal government of Nigeria, by creating wealth and to significantly grow internal revenue to the extent that Abia will not require allocations from the federal government to meet her recurrent expenditure, in the first three years after we are sworn into office.

Our vision is to install a public service that is well trained, highly motivated and responsive to deliver the agenda we have promised the people, in a seamless professional manner. The yard stick to measure our success will be when our homeland transits from a location where the citizens are actively looking for alternative residences, for better economic opportunities, to a destination that





offers economic prospects and social security for her existing population and prospects.

We are committed to an open and transparent leadership, and shall dedicate the people's money to work for them. They will reserve the unhindered right to ask questions, and demand answers from the leadership they have elected. Due process shall be the active mantra of our administration, no citizen, no matter how highly placed, shall have undue access to our collective patrimony, under our watch.

I do not pretend to have the answers to all the challenges that we face as a state. I will therefore set up avenues through which citizens can offer their ideas, and can even complain as feedback to enable us improve. To achieve this, there will be dedicated hotlines, email addresses and other media channels through which we can be accessed. These channels will be manned by well trained and highly motivated people to make sure that complaints and suggestions received are escalated to the point where they will receive the necessary attention. Periodic town hall meetings shall be organised to hear directly from the people. We will actively seek collaboration with town unions, the church, and other religious bodies, other states, regional blocks, traditional rulers, international financial institutions, and donor agencies in our quest for a better Abia.

We will ensure that 'made in Aba' regains its lost glory, and that any product with Aba as its originating location has the stamp of quality, we will achieve this by establishing quality assurance agencies that will enforce compliance. We will empower SMEs and artisans in the state by patronizing them. Government will not pay for the purchase of services or goods that can be made in Abia.

I am a firm believer in the oneness of our state. To manifest this, under my leadership, government infrastructure and political appointments will be fairly distributed across the state and interest groups. We will also accommodate non-indigenes

and are desirous of contributing to the realisation of our agenda.

We will work with other government arms to ensure that we are all pulling in the same direction, while ensuring their independence, which is necessary for checks and balance.

"SECURING" THE VOTES & THE NEW



"Our key objective will be to provide an enabling environment that will ensure equal opportunity for wealth creation, the establishment of micro, small and medium scale industries and businesses."





ELECTORAL ACT

Permit me to address one concern I know must have been agitating your minds: What many of you call “securing” of votes. I would like to acknowledge those fears because they are legitimate in view of our past experiences.

In the past, this could have been a very major concern. I am glad to announce that with the signing of the amended Electoral Act, many of these imperfections have been eliminated and much of the anomalies that result in fictitious figures coming from certain locations shall no longer obtain.

My message for you all is clear: Things would be different this time, as several key provisions of the 2022 Electoral Act have greatly empowered the voters. Some of these changes include the use of Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BIVAS) and non-use of manual interventions in polling units and collation centres, which are subject to abuse. My charge to you is to do your

“My charge to you is to do your bit, go out in your numbers to elect those who will change the narrative of the state for the better. We will do everything within the ambience of the law to make sure that your votes count.”

bit, go out in your numbers to elect those who will change the narrative of the state for the better. We will do everything within the ambience of the law to make sure that your votes count. The play book has been proven at recent elections in Ekiti and Osun states. The same is possible in Abia. We will make it so.

In summary, I pledge to flawlessly execute the plans we have enumerated in this manifesto. My records in the organisations that I have led attest to my capacity and inherent drive to challenge the status quo in order to change things for the better.

I am itching to drive the changes that will make Abia a safe and prosperous destination for her citizens, and will work every day to restore the pride of our homeland. What you are reading here is a sneak preview of our agenda; a detailed blueprint, with timelines and costing will be rolled out and made public within the first sixty days after we have been sworn-in.





Who is Dr. Alex Otti and how are we sure he can deliver?

To conclude this part of my presentation, permit me to let you know a few things about myself, and why I believe I am the best candidate for the governorship seat of our state come 2023. I consider this segment very important, because as one who conducted several interviews as a senior management staff in major financial institutions in the country for many years, the first question we ask those who appear before us for a job is, why should we hire you? I believe that now I have presented myself before you for consideration for the job in 2023, it would also be fitting that I tell you why I should be hired.

Permit me to start by telling you that before I voluntarily left Diamond Bank as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in 2014, to present myself for service to this state, I served in very senior positions at two of Nigeria's most respected banks - the United Bank for Africa PLC and First Bank PLC, with responsibilities for several critical markets, sectors, and departments. My time as the CEO of Diamond Bank PLC was described by the revered Igwe Nnaemeka Achebe, the Obi of Onitsha, as the "brightest years of Diamond Bank's 24-year history."

We broke new grounds, created immense value for various stakeholders, and established a model that became the paradigm for operational excellence in the industry.

I have been blessed immensely by God. I have the ability and hunger to bring positive change, and appetite for improvements, which are undying desires to leave a footprint in the sands of time in whatever undertaking I get into. These are some of the greatest gifts I have been endowed with.



"We broke new grounds, created immense value for various stakeholders, and established a model that became the paradigm for operational excellence..."



I am coming from a background where you need to demonstrate capacity for creating value before you can be considered for promotion or higher assignments. With all sense of modesty, I can state that to the glory of God, I have always delivered beyond expectation.

I have been able to build an enduring relationship with former colleagues who have since gone on to create new paths for themselves in various fields. My friendship with these outstanding individuals has remained strong because of my commitment to the values of excellence and diligence. I also have the privilege of being a friend to some of the best minds in business, academia, and the arts because they find in me, a trustworthy friend and partner. One who can be counted on to bring something strategic to the table.

My love for, and long history of excellence in several endeavours, for which I remain

immensely grateful to God, shall serve the state well, when I win the confidence of the majority of the electorate in 2023. We shall work with the best minds across different fields to bring rapid development to our dear state.

I have been a leading opposition figure in the state since 2015, speaking out against the obnoxious schemes and failings of the government. I have made countless interventions by requesting that the government should pay workers and pensioners their entitlements, and to use our resources for the development of the state among others. Beyond just speaking out against injustice by those ruling the state, I have also deployed my personal resources to ease the burden of many through my modest philanthropic efforts.

My foundation is also funding the university education of hundreds of Abia youths through fully paid scholarship programme that is modelled after the Chevening Scholarship in the UK, where candidates are carefully selected on merit and would be required to maintain a





certain Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) all through their programme in order to remain in the scheme. The scholarship programme, for me, is special because I see it as my way of motivating our young ones to reach for the top.

As a columnist and commentator on key national and international economic and political issues, I have proffered original and practical insights that could enable the country overcome its many challenges by a deft combination of smart economic policies and development-oriented politics. I have also shared ideas with leading names in government and businesses who love to leverage my experience and practical understanding of key business and policy issues, to solve real problems or plan their success strategies.

Importantly, I would like to also inform you that I have been involved in several community development efforts, attracting projects, and investments to several communities within this state and beyond. God has given me the grace to always think home and understand how I can leverage the privileges that I have to be a source of blessing to others, especially in our communities. With my modest support, town halls, schools, water projects and other project initiatives have been completed across the state.

So, why do I still want to be governor if I am already doing so much as a private citizen? It is because I want to deploy my immense wealth of experience in the private sector, verifiable record of excellence, and passion for the development of Abia, to possibly serve the greatest number of people across all parts of the state. I have an overwhelming desire to

“My biggest motivation, the very thing that has sustained me on this journey through the years is nothing short of a passionate desire to serve our people, reclaim our state from the grip of those who see politics as a money-making venture, and return ultimate power to the people by making you masters of your individual and collective destinies. That is what this is all about.”

return the lost glory of our state by harnessing the tremendous human and material resources in our land to build a prosperous, peaceful and decent society, and a place we can all be proud to call home.

It is my conviction that if our fathers built the economy of our region in the middle of the 20th century, to become the fastest growing in the entire world, with resources from palm oil and tax revenue from everyday people, we can do even better today by leveraging on the endless possibilities of the 21st century.

I believe that we have it in us to renew the face of our earth, and hand over a better society to our children. I have what it takes to mobilise and inspire our people to overcome the man-made obstacles to our greatness.

My covenant with you, as I round off this phase, is that I will never fail you. Alex Otti is a name many within and outside our shores associates with remarkable achievements, excellence and diligent commitment in pursuit of the common good. Far be it from me that I should tarnish my reputation by refusing to live up to our promise.

My biggest motivation, the very thing that has sustained me on this journey through the years is nothing short of a passionate desire to serve our people, reclaim our state from the grip of those who see politics as a money-making venture, and return ultimate power to the people by making you masters of your individual and collective destinies. That is what this is all about.

KEY STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS





Our journey towards restoring and rebuilding Abia started with painstaking research into the fundamental issues that have limited our growth and development as a people. We therefore have a crystal-clear understanding of the challenges we must overcome, and the opportunities at our disposal. We have put together a detailed work plan of what we need to do to make Abia work. We will highlight some of the levers in this manifesto, just to give perspective to our vision. A detailed work plan will be unveiled within 60 days after we have been sworn-in.

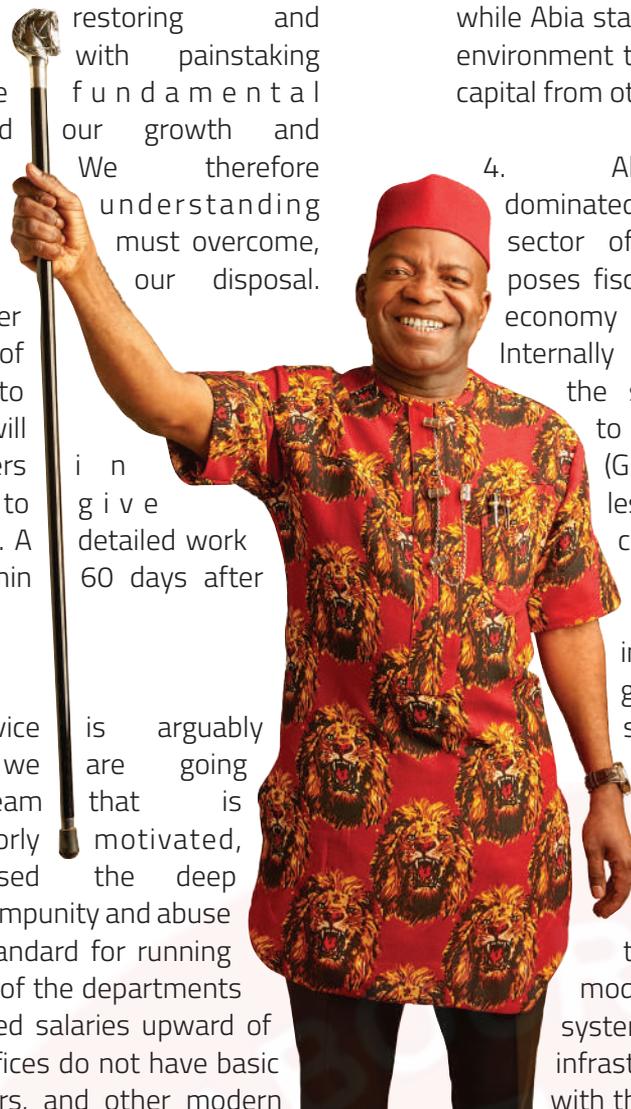
Key Challenges

1. Our public service is arguably our weakest link, we are going to inherit a team that is poorly trained, poorly motivated, who have normalised the deep endemic culture of impunity and abuse of office as the standard for running public office. Many of the departments and MDAs are owed salaries upward of 24 months. The offices do not have basic furniture, computers, and other modern tools are completely non-existent. Career paths are not streamlined, so productivity is at the lowest imaginable level.
2. Our roads and other key social infrastructure are in terrible states of disrepair. Many communities are now not accessible during rainy seasons, many more are without tarred roads. The economic cost of the bad road networks in Aba, Umuahia, and other cities, in terms of lost man hour in traffic and lost business, is better imagined.
3. Many Abia productive human capital and businesses have migrated to other states and countries, in search of opportunities

while Abia state has since lost the conducive environment to attract human or production capital from other places.

4. Abia economy is presently dominated by activities in the informal sector of the economy. This reality poses fiscal capacity challenges for the economy of the state. Therefore, the Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) of the state is insignificant relative to her Gross Domestic Product (GDP.) This is not helped by the less than transparent revenue collection process encouraged by government. It is a fiscal limitation that must be rectified in order to leapfrog economic growth and development in the state.

5. Less than 1% of the population has access to medical insurance, more than 35% do not have access to clean water sources and modern sewage management system. Education programs and infrastructure are not yet in synch with the needs of the people. We still



“Our public service is arguably our weakest link. We are going to inherit a team that is poorly trained, poorly motivated and who have normalised the deep endemic culture of impunity and abuse of office as the standard for running public office.”



have many children of school age who are not in school.



6. Security incidents of various kinds are rampant in the state. Although some of these activities are perpetuated by criminal elements from outside the state. When such acts are carried out by Abia residents, they are performed by youths who have been driven to crime and criminality due to lack of opportunities for them to earn decent livelihood.
7. Many parts of Abia state are under severe attack by active erosion, flood, land pollution and other manners of environmental degradation.
8. The people have become numb to injustice and abuse. Many Abians now accept mediocrity as the standard. They are no longer able to hold their leaders to account or demand for the best. This menace will be reversed through public enlightenment and restoration of confidence.
9. The nonexistence of transparent and effective process of tax collection, levies and other revenues is responsible for leakages and under reporting, which is the reason why the state IGR is among the lowest in the country, regardless of the presence of enormous natural and human assets.

Strengths and Opportunities



Regardless of all the challenges enumerated above, Abia state is one of the states in the country that has been blessed with the critical levers and opportunities that if properly harnessed, will significantly trigger rapid development around the state.

We have some of the most creative, industrious and resilient individuals anywhere in the world. Our people are our greatest assets. We have the power to build, create, innovate, and dream. We will fully harness and unleash this strength to drive the greatest economic and social transformation any region in Africa has ever seen since the post-colonial era.

We will position Abia state to benefit from the federal government development initiatives. We will also establish structures and processes to enable us access opportunities from Direct Foreign Investments (DFI.)

Abia state is only second to Anambra state in terms of diaspora remittances. If we get Abia right, like we plan to do, this number will potentially double in the first four years. We will specifically provide investment opportunities that will target Abia 'Diasporas' who are actively looking for homeland investment windows.

Nigeria's membership of AfCFTA offers opportunities for "Made in Abia" goods, to be exported and sold in over 43 African countries. This is a market that

houses 1.3 billion people with a combined GDP of over \$2.6trillion.

We have the capacity to attract funding from multilateral agencies for developmental projects to the state.



- The transfer of the Aba ring-fenced electric infrastructure to Geometric Power Limited will open up a fresh vista of opportunities for the commercial and industrial hub. With the assurance of steady power supply in Aba, a new world of industrial and investment opportunities will be launched. We shall work to ensure that this model of energy generation and distribution is explored in other places to enable us achieve state-wide industrialisation.
- Abia is an oil producing state. Aside the statutory derivation which puts extra money into the state coffers, it also provides the potential for us to be energy independent and establish industries that will feed from oil derivatives.
- Several national agencies and institutions are working to make access to business finance very easy. Institutions like the Nigerian Incentive-based Risk Sharing for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL), Bank of Industry (BOI), Bank of Agriculture (BOA) and several others have simplified and digitalised the mechanism for accessing credit facilities. As governor, I would work with trade unions, corporative societies and professional bodies in the state to ensure that our people, as many as possible, do not miss out on these opportunities.



- Our government shall seek to leverage on the interests of the multinationals to create a partnership framework that would serve the interests of Abians in urban and rural areas.
- The rising interest of wealthy Ndigbo or Igbos to invest at home would be served by our administration. We shall position Abia as a premium destination where investments are secure, with quality infrastructure, clean and conducive environment for work and play.



- The opportunities in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector are enormous, and we shall leverage on it to unleash the creative talents of our youths, create jobs and establish a support system for our industrial sector.



2. MY SOCIAL COVENANT WITH ABIANS: THE ANCHORS



Our plan for Abia is informed by a thorough need-assessment that fully considered global and national economic realities, the challenges we have outlined above, and the opportunities we can leverage upon. These are not paper plans or the typical political promises that have no basis. We covenant to deliver on everything we promise, for there lies our honour.

Our plan is anchored on five main pillars:

- Governance, rule of law, and strategic partnership across frontiers.
- Economic transformation for job creation and poverty reduction.
- Social Transformation: Education, health, youth development and better life for women and vulnerable citizens and residents.
- Internal Security.
- The Environment: Green, purpose built modern markets, smart cities and industrial pivots.

GOVERNANCE, RULE OF LAW AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

As your governor, I will strive to be an exemplary leader to a carefully select team of men and women who will see themselves as servants of the people, and custodians of public trust. We will typify a government that is a clear departure from the inefficiency and blatant abuse of office that have been the signpost of previous administrations in the state.



Every government official will sign a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that clearly outlines his stewardship to the citizens. A periodic performance review will be carried out to ensure that optimum service levels are consistently delivered to the public. We will use appropriate technology to measure compliance.

My team will:

- Transform the process of governance by reforming the public service structure. Our aim will be to help public servants acquire relevant technology-based skills that will make them more productive and efficient. We will access existing processes to see possible areas where we can eliminate waste and corruption. Our purpose will be to eradicate the use of manual processes and migrate to the use of technology. Our administration will be fully e-compliant in the first three years.
- Transit land administration from the current inefficient manual processes to a digital process that will ensure completion of land title transfer within five working days. This will unlock the value that resides in the land asset to enable





business owners access funding through the banks, using land as collateral.

- Work with the legislature to amend the fiscal responsibility act to make it more responsive, more transparent, and easier to administer.
- Partner with local trade unions, chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture, community development associations and town unions to create a suitable framework to drive Abia's integrated economic development framework. Complete works at the permanent site of the Abia State Government House, to make for the effective execution of our policies and programmes, in order to put an end to the shameful record of being one of the few states in all of Southern Nigeria that still operates from rented structures since creation.
- Re-engineer all MDAs and institutions connected with the economic and infrastructural development of Abia, to become fit-for-purpose and more responsive to emerging needs.
- Partnership with neighbouring states in areas of mutual economic interests, such as agriculture, infrastructural development, and security.
- Eliminate all forms of illegal taxation and levies. Introduce e-based process of tax and levy administrations that will ensure that tax proceeds are domiciled in the state treasury in full, and on time.
- Reinforce and strengthen accountability. The audited account of the state will be published periodically as a public document.
- Run a transparent and open government.
- Build need-oriented infrastructure development in the communities.
- Build economic projects with multiplier effects on employment generation, wealth creation and the utilisation of local raw materials
- Create enlightenment programmes on government policies and programmes.



Rule of Law



We will transform Abia state to a destination where rule of law, and independence of the arms of government, will be intentionally nurtured to ensure effective checks and balances.

To achieve this, we will:

- Provide the necessary physical and soft infrastructure that will enable the judiciary to leverage technology in dispensing timely justice to the people.
- Decongest the courts by supporting the judiciary in harnessing the opportunities for alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms for commercial and other minor cases.
- Work with other arms of government to introduce enabling laws that will enhance efficiency and speedy dispensation of justice.

Local Government Administration

The LGA system is designed to be the closest arm of government to the people, for the purpose of service delivery. Again, this vision has not been fully realised owing to serial distortion and abuses in the system. Our policies towards reviving the LGA system shall be anchored on the following:

- Restructure the operational framework at the Abia State Independent Electoral Commission to transform into a truly independent organisation capable of conducting free, fair, credible, and transparent elections at the LGAs.

- Ensure that LGA elections are conducted as and when due, offering the people an opportunity to elect those they wish to lead them.
- Ensure that the LGAs are autonomous in accordance with the provisions of the law.
- Create a robust partnership framework that would enable the LGAs and the state to work together in the areas of community development, women and youth empowerment, health and education projects, for rural communities and in other areas of critical importance.
- Work with the LGAs to access opportunities and grants from multilateral agencies concerned with development, to support projects across communities.
- Partner with the LGAs to increase internet penetration in the communities, set up broadband infrastructure in communities, to enable young men and women, within the area, take advantage of the opportunities that abound in the digital economy from their communities.

Land Administration



Difficulties associated with the existing system of land administration, acquisition and transfer of ownership count as some of the factors that discourage investments in the state. The difficulties



have made it easy for fraudulent individuals, even some of our communities, to defraud unsuspecting investors. To curb this problem, the concerned government agencies shall be required to digitalise their operations, along the line of global best practices. In seeking to move away from the archaic, dysfunctional system of land ownership currently prevalent in parts of the state, the government shall:

- Streamline the process of land acquisition for every purpose, to enable investors get every information including size and location of land, original development plan for the area, all other information that would guide them, and limit incidence of fraud in all matters of land transactions.
- Make it possible for authentic property documents to be transferred to new owners within 72 hours
- Guarantee that all accruals due to the government from transactions related to land are fully remitted
- Enable real time update of all land administration data-base matters
- Facilitate effective enactment and implementation of all legislations, policies related to land administration.
- Create a model of land administration that would open up the state for rapid investments across several areas, including real estate development.



Abia Tower Umuahia

- Enable property owners to use their documents to unlock funding from financial institutions.

Community Town Unions

Town unions and community development associations will serve as strategic partners whose structures and frameworks in the communities would be critical for the effective implementation of our programmes. In achieving this, we shall work with the leadership of town unions and community development associations to:

- Build needs-oriented infrastructure development in the communities.
- Build economic projects, with multiplier effects on employment generation, wealth creation and utilisation of local raw materials.
- Establish welfare programmes for the elderly and the extremely poor.

“Use counterpart funding to encourage Community participation in development projects”.





- Create enlightenment programmes on government policies and programmes.
- Introduce community sports and cultural festivals as a way of reinventing our culture and boosting tourism.
- Use counterpart funding to encourage community participation in development projects.
- Partner with Internet Service Providers (ISPs), telecommunication companies and others to expand their facilities to our communities, so that our youths can leverage on the power of high-speed internet, and robust telephone services to drive their businesses right from their communities.

ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION FOR JOB CREATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION



We plan to achieve an integrated economic development that leverage on our extensive human and material resources to build a robust, resilient, and transformational economy.

Our administration shall adopt programmes and policies intentioned to reward partnerships that would enable the rapid and integrated development of our economy, to create wealth for entrepreneurs and businesses, generate employment and make the state a leading investment destination across all major business interests. It is our target to see

development across multiple sectors so as to create new opportunities for various demographic groups in all economic segments.

We will anchor our economic plan on the enduring Specific action, Measurable impacts, Attainable goals, Relevant outcomes and Time- specific results (SMART) principle. We will use the following as the foundation of our drive towards economic development program for maximum impact - Industrialisation, Aba, Transportation, Power, Agriculture, Solid Minerals, Technology, Entertainment, Tourism and Hospitality.

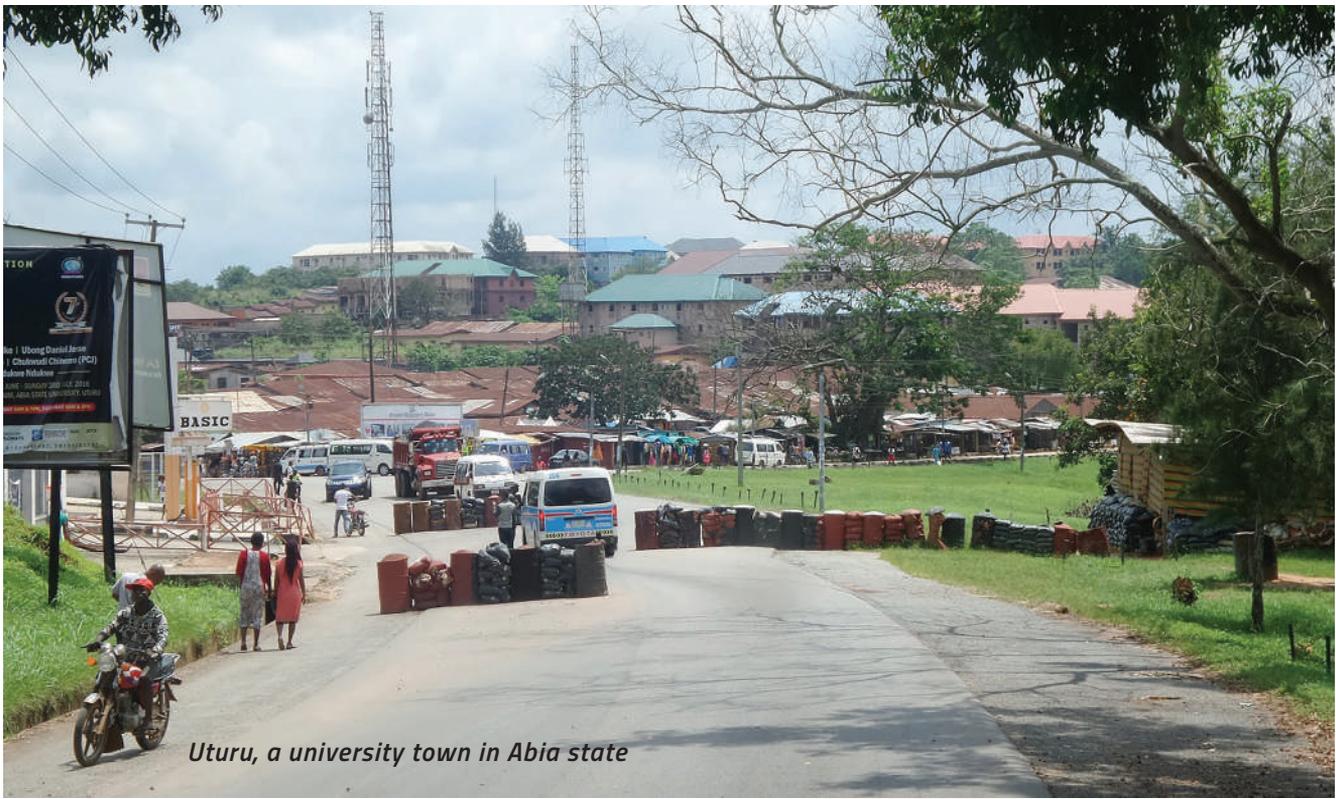
INDUSTRIALISATION

Not too long ago, Abia State was littered with industries, that not only provided jobs for the youths, but made handsome contributions to the IGR of the state and other



social responsibilities. There was the A b a Textile Mills, PZ, Lever Brothers, Nigerian Breweries, International Equitable Association of Nigeria, International Glass Industry, The Metallurgical Plant, Modern Ceramics Industry, Golden Chicken and the Abia Palm, to mention but a few. Our checks show that all these industries have either folded up or voted with their feet. Our plan is to bring back those that can be brought back and set up new ones, with the private sector management.





Uturu, a university town in Abia state

ABA

- Set up a full-fledge ministry to take charge of Aba, with the responsibility to design, implement and provide key enablement for the economic rejuvenation of Aba as an industrial and commercial hub, with the capacity to feed the Nigerian and African market.
- Provide holistic infrastructural development in Aba, to create a model city that supports contemporary and traditional businesses, family life, and leisure activities.
- Mobilise private, DFIs and public funding to create industrial clusters that will provide for various industrial segments. These clusters will serve as destinations for crossing ideas, syncing opportunities, and significantly lowering production costs.
- Incubate 1000 new SMEs within the Aba industrial corridor annually.

- Facilitate Public-Private Partnership (PPP) initiatives for large and strategic industries (textiles, leather, iron and steel, etc).
- Support the establishment of state-of-the-art factories for each of the industrial clusters and expand the capacity of the players, to tap into

“Set up a full-fledge ministry to take charge of Aba, with the responsibility to design, implement and provide key enablement for the economic rejuvenation of Aba as an industrial and commercial hub, with the capacity to feed the Nigerian and African market”





opportunities within the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). For instance, we intend to bring back a new Aba Textile Mill, with capacity to employ thousands of our young people.

- Establish technical skills development programs, to further empower entrepreneurs in Aba, especially in the areas of automation, use of technology to improve quality and productivity.
- Actively seek out and encourage innovative investors, to make our industrial clusters their home. We will ensure this by significantly improving the ease of doing business in the state.
- Upgrade existing markets and their support infrastructure. Our model of markets is different from the medieval structures that litter our spaces today. We shall gradually replace them with modern markets, supported by facilities like fire service, waste disposal systems, security cameras, rest rooms, medical centres, etc.
- Create integrated tax system and seek tax free zone status, for industries that are located within the industrial clusters.
- Partner with business schools to develop a formal mentoring program for Aba traders, to enable them transit into the new ways of doing business (e-commerce). This is imperative because trade and commerce are fast pacing into aggregated warehousing, which will eventually make the old way of trading obsolete and largely unprofitable. We must therefore proactively prepare our people for the new era.
- Set up a new department in the ministry of trade and commerce, which will have the primary role of facilitating trade between Abia businessmen and overseas partners. This department will be charged with driving compliance to standard, trade documentation and legal support.

“Introduce strict measures for contractors’ pre-qualification, to ensure that only the best contractors work for the state.”

TRANSPORTATION: ROADS AND RAIL



Abia state has one of the most dilapidated road networks in the country. From Aba to Umuahia, to Ukwa, to Arochukwu, road transport infrastructure is either non-existent or has completely collapsed. When you elect me into office, I will lead a team that will:

- Review and redesign the road network master plans for Aba and Umuahia, in line with present day realities and needs.
- Partner with the private sector to deploy modern technology in the design and construction of new roads. We shall also undertake aggressive rehabilitation and upgrading of existing road networks, especially in Aba and Umuahia.
- Introduce strict measures for contractors’ pre-qualification, to ensure that only the best contractors work for the state. Also, overhaul the public offices that are responsible for supervision, training and equipping officers with the right modern tools that will enable them deliver world class services.





“Also, overhaul the public offices that are responsible for supervision, train and equip responsible officers with the right modern tools that will enable them deliver world class services.”

- Actively improve inter and intra community road links in phases.
- Ensure that road users comply with traffic rules, to make our roads safer.
- Collaborate with researchers and engineers, to determine and design the right technical frameworks for building durable roads - depending on use, resources and location.
- Ensure that all road construction proposals and designs must have provisions for, at least, five-year maintenance clause.
- Create a framework that enables communities to take ownership, watch over the roads and other public assets in their neighbourhood or communities.

Safe movement of people and goods across the state is a key enabler to our achieving the economic growth and prosperity that our government is determined to deliver. In order to make this process seamless, in addition to our plans for road infrastructure that are catalogued above, we shall also:

- Remodel all government approved motor parks in our urban centres, and equip them with modern facilities for the convenience of drivers, motor park workers and commuters.
- Ensure that all the businesses of loading and transferring passengers are carried out in the

designated motor parks. This will enhance the safety of commuters, and ease traffic on our roads.

- Provide ambulances and emergency assistance at strategic locations on major highways, offer first aid and timely evacuation support to accident victims.
- It is our plan to connect major communities by light rail to support access. This would be a PPP project. The line will start from Ukwu, going through Aba and Umuahia, through Bende, Ohafia, terminating in Arochuku. A spur from Bende will link Isuikwuato and Umunneochi to the network.

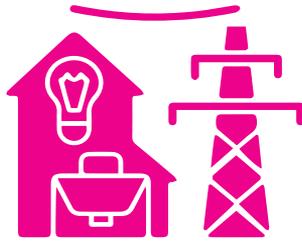
POWER



Our economic programmes are geared towards promoting enterprises, supporting production and creating a robust industrial ecosystem in the state. None of these would be possible unless we work to ensure that entrepreneurs and business owners get the electricity they need to power their machines and drive their operations. Having made my modest contributions to the realisation of the Geometric Power Project, in my previous life in the banking industry, which saw to the creation of Aba as an island, we shall replicate or ensure the expansion of the island to cover the whole state to support other designated industrial and agro-production centres in Umuahia, Ohafia and other communities in the state.

We shall, therefore -

- Collaborate with the Enugu Electricity Distribution Company to improve power supply in our cities, towns, and the remaining parts of the state.
- Collaborate with the Federal Government (FG) to leverage on the gas programme for the production and supply of electricity for our industrial machines and homes.
- Explore investment opportunities in renewable energy where appropriate, for domestic and industrial applications. Support investments opportunities in renewable energy, given that renewables comprise the power source of the future, as the world gradually pushes for net zero emissions and clean energy.
- Work with the private sector to support gas processing in the Ukwu oil and gas belt. Gas has been designated as the transition energy source worldwide. We must take advantage of this and enjoy the party while it lasts.



- Create a framework that would enable effective processing, storage and packaging of agro-produce across the state, to enhance their value.
- Establish cluster farming activities across the three senatorial zones. These cooperatives will be programmed to grow crops on a comparative advantage basis. A credit scheme will be introduced to facilitate and provide funding for these cooperatives on a sustainable basis.
- Marketing boards would be established to off-take primary products from farmers, and guarantee minimum returns from their products.
- Robust local and international marketing frontiers will be activated to enable qualified farmers push their products beyond the boundaries of the state in processed forms.
- Create an industrial base in the state to feed from the raw produce of agriculture, to help preserve farm produce and avoid waste.
- Collaborate with institutions that are focused on agricultural development (NIRSAL, CBN, ADB, EU, World Bank) to expand opportunities for upscale financing.
- For enhanced productivity, we shall seek the best seedlings of various crop varieties, fertilisers and other inputs from across the world to guarantee that our farmers get the best yield per hectare.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture, as practiced today is unable to create jobs or take people out of poverty. This is because most of our farmers are involved in subsistence farming. Mechanised farming is the way to go, but this will also not create jobs. It will however, support economic growth and guarantee food security. We will therefore, support it.

To create jobs, we will support the value chain in terms of processing, packaging, and exporting final products.

We shall pursue the following programmes and policies to expand the frontiers of agriculture in the state:





SOLID MINERALS

Abia state is gifted with the presence of solid minerals in commercial quantity. We have ceramic-quality clay, kaolin, bentonite, limestone, phosphate, copper, lead, zinc, gypsum, and other solid minerals that can yield revenue in local and foreign currencies to the state. The present situation is that these minerals are being mined without control and care for the environment, resulting in erosion and other negative impacts on the environment.

We will -

- Structure mining activities in the state to enable us extract full value; create jobs, collect revenues and ensure that the environment is not permanently harmed.
- Introduce use of technology to regulate and monitor the activities of miners, to ensure that they are operating strictly according to the terms of their respective permits.
- Support the setting up of industries that will add value to the raw materials through processing. A new, technologically driven Modern Ceramics Industry would receive support as we intend to relaunch it in Ohiya, Umuahia South, where kaolin is found in commercial quantity. Umunneochi LG houses a lot of the minerals mentioned above, and would benefit from industries that would use them as raw materials.
- Besides the above, Lignite, Phosphate and Limestone are available in commercial quantities in Ikwuano, Bende and Arochukwu according to scientific studies carried out by experts. Lignite also called brown coal is used to fire steam electric power generation plants. It is reported to be environmentally friendly. It is also used to produce fertilizer as well as oil well drilling mud. It has the lowest carbon concentration and is the cheapest source of generating electricity, unlike other types of coal and natural gas.



- Phosphate on the other hand is a major component of fertilizer. The term NPK stands for Nitrogen, Phosphorus, made from phosphate rocks, and Potassium (K). Phosphate is reported to be found in commercial quantities in Bende, and this could be mined to feed a fertilizer company to be established there.
- Limestone presence in the Arochukwu belt is well documented from studies carried out in the past. A cement factory would do well in this axis and we shall ensure that this is set up either by the private sector or PPP.



TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL ECONOMY



Our aim is to transform Abia state into the technology and digital centre of Africa. We will make this happen by investing in the enabling infrastructure, and providing the ambience for digital skill development geared towards job provision, enterprise and social development. We will give empowerment a new meaning by retooling youths with in-demand skills that will make them productive beyond immediate consumption, to earn sustainable and impactful livelihood. The new economy will focus on innovative wealth creative ideas, and tech driven entrepreneurship.

We will therefore -

- Establish a technology institute with world class equipment, resources and ambience with the capacity to train about 10,000 youths annually. These youths will acquire soft skills that will enable them earn income even from other countries while living in Nigeria. Already in discussions with tech giants of Abia extraction, most of whom are in different parts of the world. They would support the institute with funds and resources, to make it a success.
- Establish special department in the government to ensure that youths who are trained under this scheme receive adequate support and mentoring, to enable them start-up on their own or gain rewarding placements in industries and parastatals where they can add value.

- Establish funding through venture capital programs that will provide initial capital for digital biased start-ups. This can be in the form of grants or partnership.
- Build robust partnership with ISPs and Telcos for the expansion of 4G+ broadband infrastructure, to support start-ups and ICT-driven enterprise ecosystem across the state.
- Establish strategic programmes with international academies to equip youths with core skills in ICT engineering and emerging technologies, to prepare them for the opportunities of the future..



“We will give empowerment a new meaning by retooling youths with in-demand skills that will make them productive beyond immediate consumption, to earn sustainable and impactful livelihood”



ENTERTAINMENT, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY



Recall that what we have today as Nollywood started in Aba. We lost the glory to Lagos and to a little extent, Asaba, because of our carelessness. We will strive to position Abia as a safe destination of choice for quality entertainment, leisure and tourism.

We will build a world class entertainment village as location for movie makers next to the state of the art, Nsulu Games Village in Isiala Ngwa North. This site will be fitted with all the bells and whistles that can be found in any modern-day movie making location. These will include modern hotel facilities, schools, shopping malls, hospitals and worship centres. Of course, Geometric will provide 24 hours of uninterrupted power supply.

The entertainment village will also provide the space to be used by creative artists to showcase the rich cultural heritage of Abia state to the world. It will in addition, act as a holiday resort for tourists who would want to watch movies in the several theatres that the village will host.

Furthermore:

- We will identify, reactivate and refurbish key heritage and memorial sites, to make them attractive for visitors as leisure and entertainment destinations.

- Organise annual home coming cultural festivals to showcase Abia rich heritage to the world. This will be done in partnership with reputable international and national tour agencies.
- Hotels, conference centres, public parks are all part of the general ecosystem that indicates a community's readiness for business. The less than standard hotels springing up in different nooks and crannies of the state are far from our idea of hotels. To this end, our administration shall.
- Partner with members of the organised private sector, entrepreneurs in the hospitality industry and property owners, to build standard hotel facilities in major cities in the state to create a system that will support the economic boom we aspire to create. The key success factor here is location. We must make our location attractive.
- Again, conferences, general meetings and trainings respond to conducive environments. After creating the environment we shall collaborate with private investors to build first class conference centres in Aba and Umuahia to accommodate varieties of events and programmes.

“The entertainment village will also provide the space to be used by creative artists, to showcase the rich cultural heritage of Abia state to the world. It will, in addition, act as a holiday resort for tourists who would want to watch movies in the several theatres that the village will host”





3. MY SOCIAL CONTRACT WITH ABIANS: THE DRIVERS



As a labour party government, we are pro people by default, we shall dedicate the crux of our programs to building a healthy, productive and safe society for all through partnerships and people participation. Our social agenda will be anchored on the following: **Education, Health, Women and Youth Development, Empowerment, Special status for the Retirees, the Elderly and the Vulnerable, Environmental Sustainability, Security, Ethical Reorientation, and Social Harmony.**

EDUCATION

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world” Nelson Mandela

a. The present and future of Abia depend on the quality and scope of education we provide for our population. We will intentionally prepare our citizens to be skilled participants in the global village, where science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are used as productive tools for work and play.

We will:

- Restore the past glory of the teaching profession by recruiting qualified teachers for rural and urban primary and secondary schools. Special attention would be paid to teachers with certificates in education who have competencies in sciences, technology, and mathematics.
- Constitute a team of experts to review and restructure the state’s education.



curricula to make them fit for the purpose of driving the knowledge economy of the 21st century.

- Set up a quality assurance agency in the ministry of education, which will be responsible for monitoring, evaluating and harmonising the quality of education inputs in both private and public schools, to ensure conformity to set standards.
- Motivate teachers by providing relevant training support, prompt and competitive reward systems.
- Improve school enrolment through working with the churches and community leaders, to reduce the number of out- of -school children in Abia state. The target is to make Abia, the state with the lowest number of out- of -school children in the country.





“We will intentionally prepare our citizens to be skilled participants in the global village, where science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are used as productive tools for work and play.”

- Provide free education for Abia residents, to ensure that every child obtains basic education from primary school to junior secondary school.
- Mainstream the ‘adopt a school’ program across Abia, to involve our people who have capacity to assist.
- Rebuild dilapidated school infrastructure in primary and post primary institutions across the state. We will seek collaboration with old student bodies, to drive this.
- Install broadband internet facilities in all schools in the state.
- Partner with local and international ICT institutes to set up coding and programming centres for secondary school leavers specifically.
- Recruit special instructors for ICT classes in all the model and special schools in the state.
- Revive and set up new and robust technical and craft schools in all the LGAs in the state, to train students in craft and technical areas in line with their core skills and interests.
- Explore avenues of further partnerships with faith-based organisations, to improve quality of education.
- Adequately fund our state tertiary and special institutions, to increase their capacities and meet their obligations to staff and students.
- Provide support for students from vulnerable backgrounds.
- Provide financial support for need-based research initiatives in the tertiary institutions.
- Revive and fund adult literacy programmes, starting with the urban centres.
- Revive and adequately fund special education centres, like schools for the vulnerable.
- Revive school sports programmes and effective support system for school athletes. This will be designed to serve as talent hunt events across the state.

HEALTHCARE



Our commitment and programmes in the health sector shall be built around ensuring that everyone living in the state, no matter their social/economic status, gets access to quality healthcare when they need it. From rural to urban centres, our



administration shall build systems that shall guarantee that residents have access to the right services when they approach any of our health facilities. We shall also pay attention to ways of preventing diseases that arise from unhealthy lifestyles, by creating enlightenment programmes on multiple channels.

We shall:

- Create a public health sector policy framework that effectively guarantees adequate funding for primary, secondary and tertiary health facilities in the state.
- Earmark fund in the state’s annual budget to provide adequate infrastructure for health facilities, including access roads, running water, diagnostic equipment as dictated by the capacity of the health institutions, present and emerging needs.
- Establish the health facility Accreditation and Monitoring Agency, responsible for ensuring that all health facilities, public and private, meet minimum standard requirements as a basis for granting operation permits.
- Review welfare packages and incentives for workers in the sector, to ensure that remunerations, training, and conditions of service are competitive enough to attract the best hands.
- Hire and motivate competent professionals, to drive our vision for the sector.
- Create the Abia Health Insurance Scheme, to ensure affordable healthcare for a greater number of Abians in an economically viable and sustainable way.
- Initiate campaigns that will encourage life style changes, to reduce the high incidents of life-threatening ailments like, cancer, diabetes, and hypertension.
- Partner with national and international agencies with interest in effective healthcare delivery especially in the rural areas.
- Create platforms of partnership with healthcare professionals of Abia origin in the diaspora. The partnership here would be structured to offer support to our health facilities in the areas of equipment, drug supply, and involvement in our community-based health programmes - especially for the elderly and pregnant women; create platforms of partnership with healthcare professionals of Abia origin in the diaspora.
- Provide ambulances and emergency medical facilities for all health institutions in the state, to enable them respond promptly to emergency cases on a 24/7 basis.
- Establish State of the Art, well equipped, modern tertiary health care facilities in the state in identified medical villages, resourced by some of the best medical personnel in the diaspora and locally, to position the state to take advantage of the over \$1.6 billion medical tourism industry in Nigeria.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND SPORTS



Our population density is favourably skewed towards the younger generation, which is good for our economic reform plans. To fully take advantage of this situation, we will actively equip the youths with the requisite skills to drive our development and growth agenda. Therefore, we will:



- Strengthen all government institutions with responsibilities for impacting the welfare of the youths, to include education, commerce, industry, and technology.
 - Make deliberate policies to include qualified youths in leadership positions in government.
 - Support the setting up of a youth-specific venture capital fund of up to N5 billion, in partnership with the private sector and international venture capital firms, to provide funding for technology and other start-ups in the innovative industry.
 - Formalise the apprenticeship scheme as an organised framework for developing participating youths into educated entrepreneurs, who are equipped with skill sets to function competitively in the global market.
 - Redevelop the Nsulu games village as a destination for sports excellence, furnished with modern sports equipment and resources to groom world class sports men and women.
 - Set up ICT hubs with enabling bandwidths, uninterrupted power supply and tech labs, to harvest the huge talents for gainful employment.
 - Mainstream school inter house sports and inter community sports competitions, as an opportunity to identify talents for special attention and grooming.
- Provide matching grants for communities, to develop sports arenas in their various communities for recreation and competitions.
 - Open up the entertainment ecosystem in the state through adequate investments, partnerships and programmes to promote talented youths in music, movies, comedy and all other ventures related to the business of entertainment.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment for Abia women is key to achieving all our socio-economic development programs. This, among other reasons, is because over 70% of teachers in our primary and secondary schools, where early formal learnings are incubated, are women. Women also constitute about 64% of our total population. Therefore, the social and economic welfare of women will be our key priority.



We will:

- Provide special support for women corporative societies, especially those involved in agriculture and general trading. Interfacing with them through relevant arms of government, to identify areas of partnerships and support





- Adopt and ratify all international and national conventions on protecting the rights of women and children, especially when there are no contradictions between such laws and our moral values.
- Partner with agro-research institutes across Nigeria and within the state, to support our women farmers with enhanced productivity, using superior farming methods and improved seedlings.

VULNERABLE GROUPS – THE ELDERLY AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES (PLWDS)



- Actively support gender balance at all levels of leadership in the state. It will be the policy of our government to intentionally headhunt qualified women, to give them a voice on the table where key government decisions are made.
- Revitalise all welfare establishment programs to support women in difficulties or facing unjust treatment at home or in their communities.
- Create specific empowerment programs to help women-owned small and medium scale businesses access funding from NGOs, DFIs, and other partners.
- Work with relevant agencies to eliminate unacceptable practices against women and the girl child, including gender driven violence, underage marriages and deliberate denial of opportunities to women.

Living among us are people with disabilities, the elderly, who do not have the social safety net that our extended family system normally provide to retirees who can no longer live decent lives because either their pensions are not paid or that inflation has drastically diluted the value of their income. As a labour party government, we shall intentionally create policies and programs that will reverse a long history of uncharitable treatment of our retirees,





PLWDs, and the vulnerable, to ensure that the basic needs of this segment of our population are met, to enable them continue to contribute to society and live a life of dignity.

“As a labour party government, we shall intentionally create policies and programs that will reverse a long history of uncharitable treatment of our retirees, PLWDs, and the vulnerable, to ensure that the basic needs of this segment of our population are met, to enable them continue to contribute to society and live a life of dignity.”

We will:

- Create and regularly update a database of senior citizens, PLWDs, and other vulnerable citizens as a foundation for dispensing our programs.
- Revive all government agencies connected with the support and welfare of retirees, pensioners and the elderly, to make them more efficient and responsive.
- Subsidise medical care for all men and women who are 65 years and older when required. This will be coordinated through special agencies, to ensure effectiveness and accountability.
- Collaborate with faith-based institutions and NGOs, to set up special homes and centres for the elderly.
- Pay retirees their pensions and entitlements as and when due

- Create special centres to cater for PLWDs, to ensure that they acquire the necessary skill sets that will help them earn decent livelihood, and contribute to the society.
- Ensure that this category of citizens is represented at all levels of leadership in the state government.
- Provide free training in our skills acquisition and craft centres, for children from severely economic disadvantaged backgrounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



We shall develop and implement a comprehensive framework for keeping our cities and communities healthy, supportive of our general wellbeing and economic activities. We will among other things:

- Launch a robust public campaign against unhealthy practices that endanger our health and make the environment unsafe for residents of our state.
- Reclaim lands lost to gully erosion in all parts of the state, through robust partnership with the federal government and its agencies, international development partners, and local communities.
- Ensure strict implementation of urban master plans, where they exist, or produce one where they do not exist.





- Outlaw road construction without drainages.
- Restructure the Abia State Environmental Protection Agency (ASEPA) to become a fit-for-purpose establishment; fully funded and supported to fulfil its statutory obligations.
- Build a framework that would welcome private sector participation in waste management and recycling.
- Promote waste to wealth policy in the State.
- Ensure the clearing of all blocked drainages in Aba and Umuahia, to reduce the incidence of flooding.
- Ensure that as a matter of state policy, open drainages are prohibited in all residential or business areas, to avoid dumping of household or business wastes inside the drainages.
- Encourage recycling, whereby every waste management contractor must demonstrate capacity to recycle wastes generated by businesses and households.
- Work with private businesses to set up well-run and hygienic public toilet systems in markets and in strategic corners, in urban and rural centres to fight the menace of open defecation.

SECURITY



The security of life and property of Abians will be the primary priority of our administration. This is because

life is sacred and no meaningful development will take place in an unsafe or insecure environment. Our administration will -

“Ensure zero tolerance for violent crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, murder and whatever poses a danger to public security”

- Support all the federal security apparatus in the state (the Police, the military, DSS, NSCDC, and others) with operational facilities and other forms of logistics, to enable them effectively do their jobs.
- Ensure harmonious relationship between the state government and the heads of the security agencies.
- Revive and restructure all state-owned security architecture, so as to make them more responsive and operationally efficient.
- Ensure that there is seamless collaboration between our home-grown security networks and the federal security structures.
- Collaborate with the leadership of the correctional facilities to ensure that inmates are rehabilitated and equipped with skills that would make them useful when released from custody, and not go back to criminality.
- Ensure zero tolerance for violent crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, murder and whatever poses a danger to public security.
- Mainstream community security initiatives to make sure that they are serving to protect life and property within their areas of operations.





- Work with the heads of the agencies to improve intelligence gathering so that criminal activities can be nipped in the bud, while exposing anyone connected to activities that are forbidden by our laws including child trafficking, illegal trade in drugs, drug abuse, trafficking in arms and other activities that encourage criminality.
- Deploy technological solutions across the streets and major economic hubs within the state to track and curtail crimes.
- Provide traditional rulers and presidents general of town unions with the necessary support to enable them maintain peace and security in their various communities.

ETHICAL RE-ORIENTATION AND SOCIAL HARMONY



We believe that when the moral and ethical fabrics of the society are destroyed, as we are currently witnessing, we fall into the seven deadly sins that the Indian sage and political leader, Mahatma Gandhi, cautioned against when he taught about the tragedy of wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, science without humanity, knowledge without character, politics without principle, commerce without morality and worship without sacrifice. These unfortunate realities are now stakeholders in our political space. Our government will strive to reverse this trend and return our society to the path of honesty and trust, built on a commitment to be fair and transparent at all times

and in all our dealings. Our government would begin from the first day to model the best standard of good behaviour.

We will ensure that:

- Only persons with proven career history and records of professional and career accomplishments are appointed to serve in our administration.
- All appointees and senior government officials, starting from myself, would publicly declare our assets for public scrutiny. This shall be a regular routine to curb the menace of corruption and self-enrichment from government coffers.
- Government functions under our reign would be modest, devoid of flamboyance and beyond the need to be modest. This decision is also informed by the need to avoid channelling funds to activities that have no real impact on the communities
- The office of the auditor-general of the state and other statutory agencies would be fully empowered to limit financial wastes in government offices.

“Our government will strive to reverse this trend and return our society to the path of honesty and trust, built on a commitment to be fair and transparent at all times and in all our dealings.”

- The relevant departments in charge of public procurement would be empowered to vet bids and ensure value for money on all government procurements, by ensuring that only those who have a proven track record of delivery at the best prices are engaged.





- Government appointees and civil servants will be prohibited from bidding for government contracts directly or through proxy. Additionally, any proven case of conflict of interest shall be appropriately sanctioned.
- We will only do business with ethical companies who are regular in their payment of taxes and statutory enterprise fees, pay their staff as and when due and remit their employees' PAYE accruals to the government and have a verifiable record of delivering on projects.

Technologically driven smart systems will be deployed to tackle rampant acts of indiscipline in the civil service, with particular emphasis on lateness, truancy, and other actions and behavioural dispositions that hinder productivity and short-change tax-payers who fund the civil service.

Additionally, we shall on assumption of office, undertake the following:



- Create a mechanism to honour everyday Abians from all walks of life who demonstrate honesty and fair judgment in their regular endeavours
- Launch all-out war on criminality, using relevant authorities and applicable laws
- Launch a whistle blower policy targeted at rewarding those who bring the activities of criminal elements to the attention of the authorities.
- Establish mechanisms to drastically cut down on the practice of honouring dishonest persons and individuals of questionable wealth by creating a template that shall be used in conferring titles and awards within the state.

- Our civil service employment and career growth process shall be based on verifiable merit and competence driven process.

Social Harmony



Our administration shall evolve certain strategic initiatives to encourage harmonious relationship amongst individuals, communities and businesses in the state. The following shall guide our engagements in this regard:

Develop a framework of strategic engagement with all stakeholders at various communities to ensure peaceful co-existence amongst various interest groups within the communities.

- Revive all traditional and formal institutions for speedy resolution of disputes.
- We shall also work closely with the leadership of all trade associations in the state to ensure that everyone is given an opportunity to ply their legitimate trade in any part of the state.
- We shall make Abia a community of law and order, justice and peace by developing effective mechanisms for dispute resolution at the communities, markets, or wherever interests may clash.





4. FUNDING



As a student of economics with extensive background in the financial services industry, I understand that huge social and economic plans such as we have presented in this document are not worth the paper on which they are written if there is no strategic framework for financing every single item. I can humbly say that what differentiates me from the pack is my understanding of economics and its direct relationship with development.

A time of great economic strain such as this, makes it more imperative for someone with my kind of training, network and experience to lead the charge towards the development and prosperity of our dear state. I know that our state is blessed with abundant human and material resources, all that we have to do to earn the finances needed to fund our ambitious economic and social programmes across all parts of the state is to activate these mostly dormant economic resource centres, nurture them to maturity, and then watch government finances swell up on a geometric basis, with taxes from happy citizens and prospering businesses.

Our administration shall develop a holistic framework for funding our projects across frontiers with a combination of:

- Revenue generated from the economic entities in the state (Internally Generated Revenue (IGR))
- FAAC income (for as long as it lasts).
- Development grants and funds from international agencies.

- Partnership options with the private sector to fund projects of mutual benefits on clearly defined arrangements, including concessioning and joint venture partnerships.
- Infrastructure Tax Credit Scheme.
- Capital market and all other such mechanisms of raising structured finance within national and international borders.

As a matter of policy, we shall only borrow to fund bankable projects that can pay for themselves in the short to medium term at the best interest rates possible. We will not borrow to fund recurrent expenditure. Our dream is to hand over a financially viable state to those coming after us for the benefit of our children's future.

To effectively fund the projects which we have estimated to cost between N250 billion and N350 billion annually, our first job shall be to develop a framework that blocks all channels of revenue leakage, and strengthen the use of technology across the IGR value chain for improved generation. Accomplishing this would involve extensive use of technology for the following purposes:

- Enumerating all revenue sources in the state to enable effective tax administration, expansion of the revenue database and mapping of economic zones.
- Tax assessment.
- Creation of unique identity (ID) for each taxpayer or improving on existing systems.





- Revenue collection, receipting and remittance.

By the application of smart and robust technology backbone for our IGR process, we shall be eliminating the following corruption-laden practices:

- The use of touts for the purpose of revenue collection.
- Manual receipting, which is very easy to duplicate and manipulate.
- Payment of government revenue into private bank accounts of revenue officials.
- Underhand deals in tax assessment, receipting, and payment.

Our target is to generate up to N10 billion monthly from various formal and informal sector businesses, and other economic actors and channels within the state. We shall accomplish this not by multiple taxation (in fact we shall create mechanism for eliminating that) but through a smart pairing of robust technology solutions and team of dedicated revenue officials. It is instructive that we had defined tax as government's share of the prosperity it has created amongst the populace. It therefore follows that until we have created wealth, we would not be entitled to taxes. We shall restructure the operations of the state's internal revenue service for optimal performance even as we work hard to equip the staff and expose them to the most functional technology systems to enable them do their jobs effectively.

We shall create an integrated revenue management framework that would enable us to largely channel a part of our IGR to offsetting our recurrent expenditures. On the other hand, the state's FAAC allocation would be channelled mostly to infrastructural development.

5. CONCLUSION



This is an all-encompassing manifesto that is aimed at the holistic and balanced development of every sector/part of the state. A detailed implementation plan would be presented soon after my inauguration and we shall have standard frameworks detailing what to expect every quarter. The leadership of every MDA is expected to work closely with my office to create a better synergy for the structured execution of every item captured in this manifesto. We shall create a framework that would guide individuals and businesses on what to expect each month and how all of it would impact their lives economically and socially, to get them prepared to make the most of what is available with the understanding that the government is working for the best interests of all.

Let me use this opportunity to thank you for following, believing and supporting us. As I hinted earlier, we must never allow the past become the enemy of the future. We must state that the 2023 election is a clear contest between those that created and want to continue with the problem and those that want to rescue us from the problem. There is no point mourning over what is lost when we can rise from the ashes of our disappointments, and create a future that would be the envy of all. Rescuing this great state from the grip of bad leadership is our collective responsibility to undertake. We have come a long way and I can assure you that the victory song won't be long in coming. Together, we have journeyed through the misery of the wilderness, now is the time to step forward and enter the promised land of our redemption.

Never forget this: Abia is worth fighting for. May our endeavours and commitment this time be met with the victory that transforms the present, and inspires those coming after us. Remember, we need each other to do this. Let us all work for a better Abia. Let us do a new thing- together.



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