

WORKERS STATEMENT TO THE ONGOING PENSION DIALOGUE, PREPARED BY THE NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS

The 2014 pension reform act was enacted to make provision for the uniform contributory pension scheme for public and private sector. since the enactment of the pension reform act. Nigeria has achieved a transition from the old defined benefit scheme to defined contribution scheme. The scheme has achieved the principled of collective financing between employer and employee; participation of workers in the formal economy, establishment of regulatory body-the Pension Commission (PENCOM) and participation of the social partners in the governance of the pension scheme.

However, the social security system is limited to the formal sector workers; salient coverage gaps among older persons, young people, women, as well as people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, are a few of the countries' challenges. 80% of the labour force is in vulnerable employment with no or very limited access to social protection. Similarly, the emergent shift in the world of work through the rise of new forms of work in the digital economy; raises fundamental concern on expanding the scope of the social protections scheme to platform workers operating in the gig economy.

similarly, the demographic shifts signify a surge in younger people entering the labour market; more women operating in the informal economy, and displacement of many workers as a result of technology and other pandemics such as Covid-19, and increasing spate of terrorism across the country. this Calls for a social protection coverage in Nigeria.

Similarly, the increasing casualization of work in both public and private sector has left millions of workers without pension. Covid-19 exposes the inadequacy of the social protection schemes in Nigeria; many workers lost their jobs without any form of social security to fall back. This trend is rampant especially in the media, hospitality, manufacturing, and tourism sectors. in the public sector, especially in the local government there are reported cases of '*unscheduled workers*' employed by the local government authorities without any social security cover.

we are equally concern about the lack of coordination and coherency at federal, state, and local government levels in Nigeria. despite the enactment of the Contributory Pension Scheme, many states are still at the stage of enactment of pension laws, even those that enacted the law the remittance of the contribution is still a challenge. This brings challenges in implementation of the contributory pension scheme (CPS) in Nigeria.

The Nigerian workers are also concern about the safety of the pension funds, given the increasing pressures to borrow the pension fund for development projects by the government. The poor coverage of the informal sector workers who constituted 75% of the workforce is a major concern for organised labour. We call for more inclusion of informal sector workers in the pension coverage. As trade unions expand their organising of the informal sectors, we call for effective collaboration between trade unions and government agencies in the design of micro-pension schemes for the informal sector workers. we call for effective compliance of the pension reform act especially at state levels. Finally, the pension not be left to logic of the market forces, we call for periodic social dialogue in the management of pension scheme/funds in Nigeria.