



UNDERSTANDING THE THREE TIERS OF GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA

Your Guide to the Levels of Government





ABOUT DEMOCRACY BUILDERS

Democracy Builders is a civic engagement initiative dedicated to empowering youths with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to participate actively in governance and nation-building.

Through civic workshops, clubs, member-led projects, resources, digital content and conversations, we are demystifying civic participation and creating spaces where young voices are empowered to lead change.

Ever wondered how Nigeria runs? From Abuja to your street corner, the government is making moves. This e-handbook breaks down the three tiers, so you know who's who, what they do, and why it matters to YOU. Let's go!

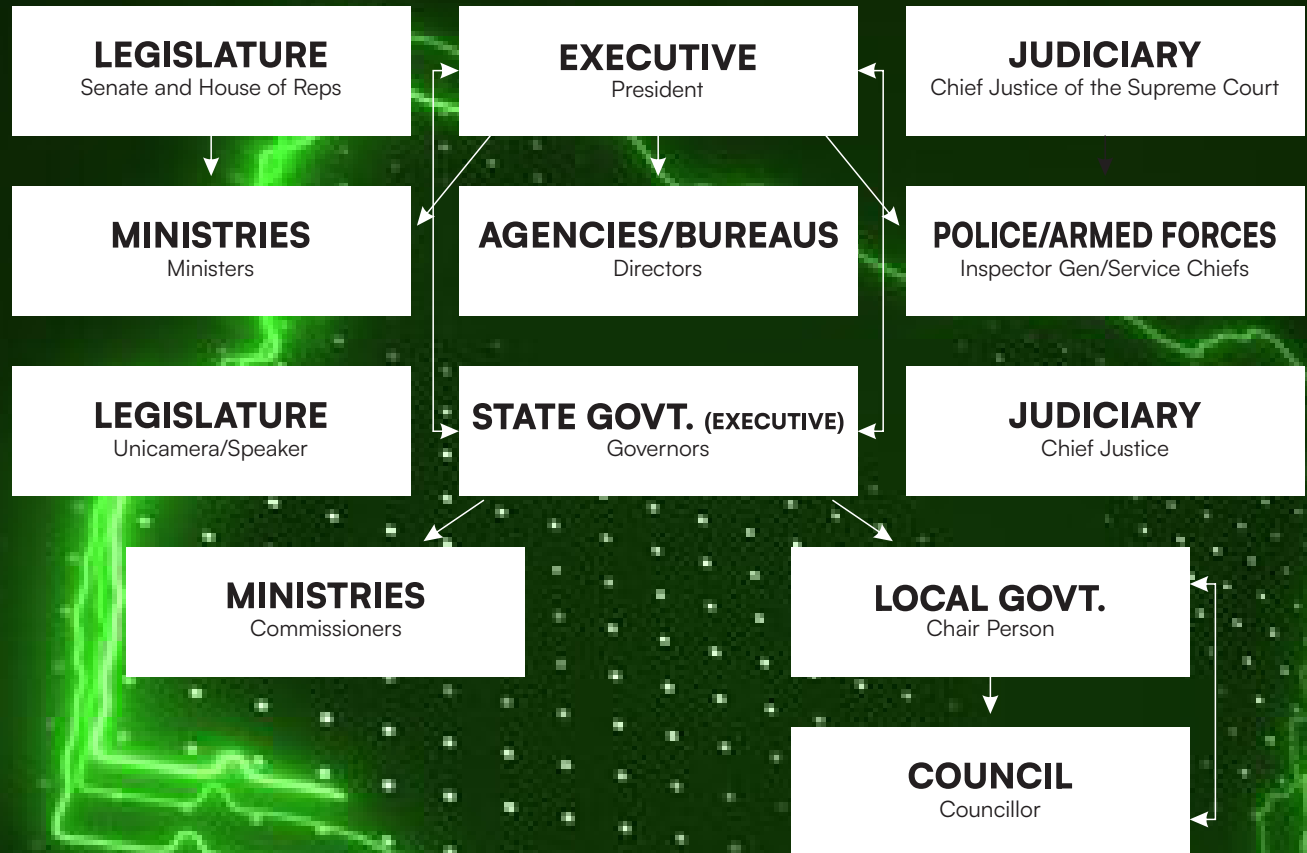
FEDERALISM IN THE HOUSE!

Nigeria operates a Federal System, thanks to the 1999 Constitution.

What does that mean?

Power isn't chilling in one spot; it is split across three major tiers. Each has its lane but also works with the others to keep things smooth for everyone.

- **The Federal Government** (The Big Boss)
- **The State Government** (Your State's Squad)
- **The Local Government** (The Street Level Crew)





1

**THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT
BOSS LEVEL!**

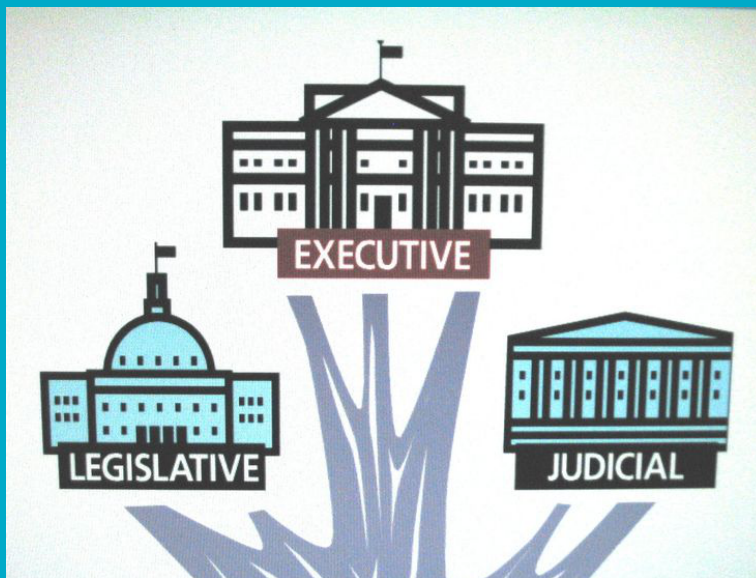
This is the National HQ,
handling all the big-picture
stuff for the whole country.



- **Seat of Power:** Abuja (The National Capital)
- **Governing Authority:** The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

KEY POWERS (SECTIONS 4-6):

- **Legislative (Law-making):** National Assembly (Senate + House of Reps) - Think big debates, law making.
- **Executive (Law-executing):** President and Ministers - The Executive squad making things happen.
- **Judicial (Law-interpreting):** Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Federal High Court - The ultimate refs for legal battles.



Exclusive Areas:

- Defence (national security, protecting the borders)
- Foreign Affairs (Nigeria's global flex)
- Currency (making sure Naira is strong)
- Aviation (planes flying safely)
- Immigration (who comes in/out)
- Oil & Gas (the national treasure)

Why it matters to YOU:

National security, your passport, fuel prices, and how Nigeria shows up on the world stage - all handled at this level!



2

THE STATE GOVERNMENT **YOUR STATE'S VIBE!**

Each State has its own
Government, Adapting
National goals to fit
local vibes.





- **Number of States:** 36 + FCT Area Councils (each with its own flavor)
- **Governing Authority:** Executive Governor

KEY POWERS (SECTIONS 4(7), 5(2), 6(2):

- **Legislative:** House of Assembly - State-specific rules and regulations.
- **Executive:** Governor and Commissioners - The state-level executive crew.
- **Judiciary:** State High Courts, Sharia/Customary Courts - Handling state legal issues.

Concurrent Responsibilities (shared with FG, LG):

- Education (your school and Uni. life)
- Health (hospitals, health centers near you)
- Roads (those potholes you dodge, or smooth rides you enjoy)
- Agriculture (food on your plate)

Why it matters to YOU:

The quality of your local school, access to healthcare, the state roads you drive on, and even job opportunities in your state are all influenced by this tier.



3

**THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT**
THE GRASSROOTS GANG!

Bringing governance
literally to your doorstep.
This is your hood's direct
link to the system.





- **Total LGAs:**
768 + 6 Area Councils in FCT
- **Governing Authority:**
Chairman and Councilors
- **Constitutional Basis (Section 7):**
Guaranteed by law, ensuring governance is super close to the people.

Key Functions (Fourth Schedule):

- Markets (where you buy all your essentials)
- Motor parks (transportation hubs for your daily commute)
- Waste disposal (keeping your streets clean)
- Local birth/marriage registrations (your official records, no faking!)
- Primary education support (first steps in school for the Little ones)
- Local economic development (creating opportunities right in your area)

Why it matters to YOU:

Clean streets, local market prices, getting your birth certificate, community projects like boreholes or youth centers - these are all in the LG's lane.



4

SHOW ME THE MONEY

HOW THEY GET FUNDS

Ever wonder how these tiers get the cash to run things? It's all about revenue allocation!



- **Federation Account (Section 162):**
This is the National Bank, managed by the FG. All major National Revenue goes here.
- **Allocations:** FG, States and LGAs get their Statutory Allocations (their share) from this National Pot.
- So, in Nigeria, there's this squad called FAAC (Federation Account Allocation Committee) that splits the country's money between the different levels of government.

After taking out necessary deductions, they divide the cash like this: the Federal Government gets the biggest slice - 52.68%, the States get 26.72%, and the Local Government Councils snag the remaining 20.60%. Basically, that's how the national bag is shared.





DO YOU KNOW?

In July 2024, Nigeria's Supreme Court basically said, “LGAs, you're grown now.” They officially gave Local Government Areas financial freedom, making it clear they're the third legit tier of government. Now, LGAs can get their money straight from the federation account - no middleman (aka State Governments) messing with it. That means they can handle their own cash, make money moves, and spend based on what matters most to their communities.





Why it matters to YOU:

This process determines where the money for your school, local roads, and health centers comes from. Understanding it means understanding the funding for your community's development!

**TEAMWORK MAKES
THE DREAM WORK**

These tiers don't just exist in silos; they HAVE to collaborate for Nigeria's overall growth!

- **Federal:** Sets the big vision and national direction.
- **State:** Adapts and executes those national visions regionally, considering local needs.
- **Local:** Handles the direct, grassroots development in your community.
- **Coordination:** Institutions like the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) ensure fair money sharing and smooth operations across all tiers.

Why it matters to YOU:

When they work together, everyone wins! Better services,

less chaos, and faster development for your community and the nation. It's about synergy!

Level Up Your Civic Game!

Understanding how these tiers operate empowers you to demand accountability and be part of the solution. Whether it's roads, education, or markets, your everyday life is touched by one or more tiers of government.



A stylized illustration of a crowd of people, mostly in silhouette, holding up various signs and banners. The scene is set against a solid orange background. The figures are diverse in age and appearance, and the signs are simple rectangles of varying sizes. The overall mood is one of active participation and civic engagement.

**GET INVOLVED.
STAY INFORMED.
YOUR VOICE MATTERS.**
#GenZForGoodGovernance

Read the Constitution for More (You should know the content).

Source: Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999
(as amended) - Sections 4-7, Second & Fourth Schedules.

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