

Policy Levers in Nigeria

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Executive Summary

This paper identifies some prospective policy levers for the CRISE programme in Nigeria. It is divided into two parts. The first part is a narrative of the political history of Nigeria which provides the backdrop for the policy environment. In the second part, an attempt is made to identify the relevant policy actors in the country.

Understanding the Policy Environment in Nigeria

The policy environment in Nigeria is a complex one that is underlined by its chequered political history. Some features of this political history deserve some attention here. First, despite the fact that prior to its independence Nigeria was considered as a natural democracy because of its plurality and westernized political elites, it has been difficult for the country to sustain democratic politics. The military has held power for almost 28 years out of 43 years since Nigeria became independent. The result is that the civic culture required for democratic politics is largely absent both among the political class and the citizenry. Politics is construed as a zero sum game in which the winner takes all. In these circumstances, political competition has been marked by political violence and abandonment of legitimacy norms. The implication of this for the policy environment is that formal institutions and rules are often subverted leading to the marginalization of formal actors. During the military period, the military political class incorporated bureaucrats and traditional rulers in the process of governance. Hence a form of diarchy emerged, where both civilians and military cooperated in governance. For example during the twilight years of the Babangida administration, the junta decided to appoint some members of the civilian political class into the cabinet and other advisory posts to stave off demands for democratization. The Abacha regime also depended on members of the civilian political class to contain the struggles for the validation of the June 12 1993 Presidential elections.

Military intervention in politics also led to the relative over-development of the executive arm of government and marginalization of the judiciary and legislature. Legislative bodies were suspended and the powers of the judiciary curtailed under the military dispensations, and the executive arm acquired legislative and judicial powers. This has also influenced the post military period. In the current context, at all

levels the executive arm of government continues to dominate the public policy making process.

The second aspect of Nigeria's political history that has influenced the evolution of the policy environment is the politicization of ethnic and religious diversity. At independence, the country was deeply fragmented as different ethnic groups jostled for pre-eminence. To accommodate fears of dominance, federalism was adopted in the colonial period and at independence - the country was divided into three regions each with significant autonomy. Each region was dominated by a particular ethnic group. Political parties that emerged then were dominated by the leading ethnic groups in the regions. This generated fractious and unstable ethnic coalitions at the federal level in the First Republic. The Westminster cabinet system, with an institutionalized opposition, adopted at independence, resulted in ethnic competition which was cited as one of the major reasons for military intervention. The subsequent military regime replaced the Westminster cabinet system by American style presidential government in the 1979 Constitution. The presidential system was retained in the 1989 and the 1999 (ongoing) constitutions. The 1979 Constitution and successive constitutions also sought to avoid ethnic politics by requiring that political parties have a presence in two thirds of states of the federation. Successive military regimes also increased the number of states that made up the federation to reduce ethnic separatist politics. Currently there are 36 states and a federal capital territory with different ethnic and sub-ethnic compositions. Local government areas have also increased from 301 in 1976 to 775 in 1996. Although the creation of states and LGAs satisfied some ethnic groups it heightened demands from others. The proliferation of subunits of government, however, has left most power in the hands of the federal government, especially in the light of the financial dependence of subunits on the federal government. The federal government statutorily collects revenues accruable from oil and gas that account for nearly 80 per cent of government revenue for redistribution to the components subunits according to constitutionally defined criteria, including deprivation, population size, ecological problems and performance on specified indicators in relation to national minimum standards.

One important principle which has aided ethnic balance is the Federal Character principle, enshrined in the country's constitutions since 1979, which requires that the conduct of the affairs of state should reflect the federal character of Nigeria. In operational terms this requires that social amenities and political appointments should be fairly distributed among the states.

The state has been extensively involved in the economy, starting with the colonial administration which in fact began as an economic project with the Royal Niger Company securing a license to administer the territory. Marketing boards bought produce from farmers at stable prices and used surpluses to finance development. While the national elite were united on the quest to gain political and economic power they were divided by their struggle for control of the political economy vacated by the colonial state. On independence, economic interventions increased, both with the development of publicly owned industries and through a variety of price controls, tariffs and import quotas. The state was expected to control the economy while nurturing an indigenous capitalist class that would eventually take over control. The dominant role of the state in the economy consequently enhanced the political ambitions of various ethnic groups. Ethnicity, regionalism, and religion became important tools for mobilization in the struggle for dominance, often leading to violent conflicts. The central role of the state in capital accumulation has made the policy environment a contested terrain in which different social forces and interest groups have struggled for inclusion and control. This explains the multiplicity of actors that populate the policy arena.

Nigeria has had ten heads of state and government so far. Only three of these, including the current President, (who was elected in 1999 and re-elected in 2003 for another four years), contested elections under the country's multiparty Presidential system. The present government is committed to respect for human rights guaranteed under the 1999 constitutions and a free market economy. Deregulation in the context of economic recession has however provoked strikes led by labour and other civil society organizations. This, and the mobilizations among the political elite towards the 2007 elections, might reignite communal, ethnic and religious conflicts which have been on the decrease, except in the volatile oil belt, since the end of the 2003 elections.

Policy Actors

Policy actors can be divided into two groups- state and non-state actors. State actors include individuals, groups or institutions that occupy the formal state structure while non-state actors are external to the formal state structure.

State Actors

Actors in the executive, legislature and judiciary operate at the federal, states and LGAs levels. At the Federal level, the President presides over the *Federal Executive Council (FEC)*, which is made up of the Vice President and ministers who are the political heads of ministries. The FEC approves policy changes, some initiated by ministries, and some by the presidency itself, composed of the President, Vice-President and special advisers. The latter include advisers on budget and economic matters, legal and constitutional matters, political affairs, agriculture and ethics and good governance. Other policy levers at the federal level are ministers and prominent officials in ministries relevant to CRISE. This includes the Ministries of Finance, Education, Justice, Internal Affairs, Works, Health, Women and Youth Development, and National Planning. Also relevant are a number of statutory bodies of the federal government under the executive, including the *Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission*, the *Federal Character Commission*, the *Federal Civil Service Commission*, the *National Boundary Commission* and the *National Poverty Eradication Commission*.

The legislature is bicameral at the federal level consisting of the Senate and House of Representatives. Both are charged with making laws and vetting appointments, and hold oversight functions over the executive and government agencies. Relevant policy levers in the legislature are the president of the senate and the deputy senate president, speaker and deputy speaker of the house of representative, senate and house leaders as well as leaders of opposition parties. Both houses also operate through committees that deal with a wide range of issues, including investigating violent conflicts. Chairs of committees on appropriation, health, judiciary, education, works and national planning would be useful policy levers.

The judiciary is not directly involved in policy making except in cases of constitutional review. However, some judicial officers such as those that have headed commissions of enquiries into various civil disturbances will be relevant to the research process and should be approached during the initial workshop and the dissemination stage.

At the state level, similar structures exist with mostly minor differences. One major difference, however, is that the state legislatures are unicameral. Since it is not possible to target all states, we intend to select a few states that have experienced

violent conflicts such as Plateau, Kaduna, Delta, Kano and Lagos and a few that have avoided serious conflicts such as Cross River, Edo, and Niger. In addition, the chairperson of the Conference of Speakers of Houses of Assembly will be included. We will also incorporate a few LGAs, selected on similar criteria.

Non-State Actors

Political parties

Although elected officers are generally not controlled by political parties, the parties still wield influence over policy making. The parties that have representatives in the national assembly are *Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)*, *All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP)*, *Alliance for Democracy (AD)* and *All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA)*.

Civil society

Civil society organizations that have been influential in policy making include labour organizations, non governmental organizations, ethno-political associations, religious groups and professional associations.

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) is the most popular and influential trade union and the *Nigerian Bar Association (NBA)* and *Nigeria Economic Society (NES)*, the most influential professional associations. Among the many NGOs in the country, some have a national spread while others are more localized and specialized. We therefore suggest that the *Citizens Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR)*, the *National Council for Women's Societies (NCWS)* and the *Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD)* which has been proactive in recent years should be considered as policy levers. Other NGOs will be relevant for dissemination purposes.

Like the NGOs, ethno-political associations are proliferating. It is even more difficult to make a choice here as such judgments could be interpreted as exclusionary since most ethnic groups have one or a number of associations. This notwithstanding, we suggest that CRISE should consider organizations such as *the Middle Belt Forum*, *Odua Peoples Congress*, *Ijaw National Congress*, *Arewa Peoples Congress*, *Afenifere*, *Ohanaeze Ndi Igbo* and *Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People*.

The *Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)* and *Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA)*, umbrella bodies of the two major religions, would also be relevant to the CRISE dissemination programme. Their importance is underlined by the fact that government routinely consults them during periods of crisis.

The organized private sector

In recent years, the organized private sector has engaged the policy making process through different platforms. The major platforms that CRISE might contact are the *Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG)*, the *Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN)*, the *Nigerian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (NACIMA)* and the *Nigeria Employers Consultative Forum (NECF)*. Oil companies should also be approached, given the central role they play in conflict and development in the Niger Delta region which has experienced most of the violent conflicts since the early 1990s. Oil companies are also believed to be very influential in the broader arena of policy making process given the dependence of the national economy on oil revenues.

The media

Nigeria has a virile and influential media. The media has also been implicated in some of the violent conflicts in the country. As a result of the significance of the media in education, shaping public opinion and political mobilization there is a silent

struggle among different ethno-religious and business interests to control the media. CRISE could incorporate the major media agencies especially the main national newspapers such as the Guardian and This Day in the dissemination process.

Think tanks

There are many think tanks which specialize in different areas. For the purposes of the CRISE programme, the *Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution* in the Presidency, *National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies*, *Nigerian Institute for Economic and Social Research*, *African Centre for Economic and Social Studies*, and the *Centre for Advanced Social Science* will be relevant.

International agencies

International governmental and non governmental agencies influence public policy in Nigeria. The World Bank has had a dominant presence with respect to economic policies, and is presently involved in facilitating the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategic Papers for Nigeria. The UNDP was instrumental in the preparation of the Vision 2010 and continues to collaborate with the government in various poverty alleviation programmes. For the issues CRISE will be dealing with, the UNDP, the World Bank, the DFID, USAID, the European Commission and the IMF will be relevant policy levers.

1. Introduction

Soon after the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) declared Chief Olusegun Obasanjo duly elected as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for a second term in the 2003 general elections, he promised to embark on a radical reform of the presidency, nay the entire federal executive council, which had become bloated and inefficient during his first four- year tenure. The reform would entail, according to President Obasanjo, the appointment of qualified personnel in executive and advisory positions as well as downsizing to retrench many sinecure positions. This policy, which was borne out of the longstanding position of the World Bank and IMF since the early 1980s that the government in Nigeria, as elsewhere in the developing world, was too large and absorbed much of the national revenue that could have made a difference to the social sectors, was extended to the civil service and legislature with the monetization of fringe benefits and a reduction in their value. Several state governors followed suite promising to ensure that meagre funds are not spent on maintaining political appointees and to base appointments on merit not on political affiliations. These were indeed radical pronouncements and Nigerians were all too interested in their implementation as earlier attempts at policy reform had ended in the dustbin, which official shelves had transmogrified to.

Against this background the processes for the selection of appointees as ministers, senior special assistants and presidential advisers attracted an unprecedented interest among the general public. Granted that the democratic system which required that nominees should be screened by the legislature, unlike the long military years when appointments were arbitrarily made by the commander-in-chief, necessitated popular approbation for would be political appointees, enthusiastic public interest also stemmed from the fact that the most Nigerians wanted to ascertain whether the pronouncements of the president and some state governors would be fulfilled.

This then is the background context for the petitions that flooded the Senate and the popular media from sundry groups and persons for and against the nominees. A few would interest us here: Dr. (Mrs.) Ngozi Okonjo's nomination as Minister of Finance was opposed by a community in Abia State which claimed that she was not from the state but was merely married to an Abia man and by implication was not qualified to fill the slot of Abia for ministerial appointment. Dr. Mrs. Okonjo's nomination was ratified by the Senate given her 'international constituency' and reputation as an accomplished economist who rose through the ranks to become Vice President of the World Bank, despite opposition mounted against her nomination by the powerful forces of patriarchy and 'indigeneity'. In the same vein, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu's nomination for the post of industry minister survived, despite the accusation of abuse of office in his previous political careers and allegations that he was the brain behind some of the violent conflicts that have rocked Benue State in recent years, because he was believed to have strong support in the Senate. On the other hand, Dr. Babashola Borishade's nomination as education minister did not go through despite the fact that the president re-submitted it, not really because he had claimed to be a professor when he was a reader and had awarded contracts to his company during his first tenure but because most of the senators had campus kit and kin that were forced to stay at home for 6 months as a result of Borishade's intransigence and mismanagement of the industrial dispute between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Federal Government.¹ Finally, Ambassador O. Adeniji, nominee for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was simply asked to take a bow and leave without being any question because the senate president said the nominee was his former boss in the Foreign Service. These cases bring to the fore the fact that ministerial endorsements were based on the interests of the senators or forces to which the senate was sympathetic. In fact, the senators' unabashed display of amity with some nominees provoked a caution from one of the senators who advised against what was becoming the "take a bow and go" syndrome where some nominees were cleared without being asked any question. The recent allegation by Malam Nasir El-Rufai, the minister of the Federal Capital Territory, that some senators pressured him to pay some money to them to facilitate the endorsement of his nomination may well be useful in explaining why some ministerial nominees were simply asked to "take-a bow and go".²

Ultimately, the president succumbed to pressures to give jobs to the boys and did not reduce the number of his ministers and assistants. While the number of minister per state was trimmed from 2 to 1, the president simply used his discretionary powers to appoint more advisers and special assistants, which included scions of some prominent Nigerians as well as some critics of the administration such as Prof. Wole Soyinka, Nobel Laureate. The advisers and assistants also include some ministers that were dropped for political expediency. It is instructive to note here that this was also the case in several states where governors, faced with the compelling need to repay political debts, have retained most of their commissioners, appointed new ones and enlarged the retinue of personal assistants. In some states, such as Rivers, this has entailed the creation of new ministries further raising the cost of administering

¹ It is instructive to note that the President determined to have Borisade in his cabinet has refused to nominate another minister from Ekiti State prompting the Ekiti House of Assembly to mount pressure on Senate to clear the controversial nominee. *This Day*, 17 October 2003.

² Malam El-Rufai recently told the Senate Committee on Ethics which was set up to investigate his allegations that Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu, the Deputy Senate President and Dr. Jonathan Zwingina, the Deputy Senate Leader demanded the sum of N54million from him when he went to get their support based on the instructions of the vice-president who nominated him for the position. The Senate has since dismissed the allegation for lack of evidence. See, *This Day*, October 11, 2003.

the state. It would appear therefore that there is a great gulf between policy pronouncements and implementation in Nigeria. The foregoing prefatory comments on appointments put in bold relief the complex environment in which policy is made in Nigeria: It paints *albeit* faintly answers to such questions as: Who makes the policy? What are the motivations of policy makers? What are the constraints and challenges they face in making policy?

Our objective in this paper is to identify relevant policy levers that can be relied on to transmit the results of the proposed research on inequality, ethnicity and human security in Nigeria into the policy arena with a view to making those who exercise the levers part of the research process itself and not just end users of the research. It is based on the observation among theorists and practitioners of development that one of the reasons for the failure of grand theories in development studies and social sciences to bring about meaningful and profound changes in society is the neglect of both policy makers and policy takers in the processes of knowledge production. Given this realization, social science has adopted participatory methodologies to bring in these relevant stakeholders with the hope that their sometimes unschooled insights might enrich recommendations. The participation of policy makers and takers in the making of scientific knowledge is also expected to facilitate their ownership of research findings and make them work towards their actualization.

The paper will focus on constitutional issues, economic and social policy, public employment and expenditure, and educational and cultural policies germane to horizontal inequalities in Nigeria. It is based on interviews conducted with several actors in contemporary Nigeria and the robust and extensive literature on Nigerian government and politics as well as the author's participation in a survey on poverty knowledge and policy processes sponsored by the Institute of Development Studies of University of Sussex at Brighton, and policy dialogues organized by the Centre for Advanced Social Science (CASS), Port Harcourt, Nigeria on "Governance and Politics at the Local Level" and "The Ecology and Framework of Foreign Policy Making in Nigeria". Structurally, it is divided into two major parts. The first sketches the policy environment or policy spaces in Nigeria outlining the governmental system and the nature of politics and policy making in Nigeria. The second part identifies relevant actors in the policy making process as well as the entry and exit mechanisms they adopt. The concluding section suggests a methodology for inclusion of identified policy leavers.

2. The Policy Environment

The policy environment which is the context within which policy is made is a complex one that is largely defined by the nature and character of state and society in Nigeria, which has evolved through the years of both civil rule and military dictatorship. Thus, it is necessary to present a short political history of Nigeria in order to put in perspective the evolution of the policy environment and the many actors it involves.

False Steps in the First Republic

With a population of 120 million, Nigeria is both Africa's most populous nation and the 10th most populous country in the world. The strength of its demography lies in its diversity as there are at least 350 ethnic groups in the country (Otite 1990).³ At

³ The exact number of ethnic groups in the country and the numerical strength of each ethnic group remain unknown partly because official records such as census does not require ethnic identification (Agbese 2001).

independence in 1960, Nigeria had, based on various constitutional experimentations in the colonial period, adopted a federal system of government, which had as its component units, three regions which were quite autonomous and were even allowed by the constitution to be participants in international relations. The adoption of a cabinet form of government with a bicameral legislature at both the regional and federal levels of government was inherited from the British colonial system. The ceremonial governor-general at the federal level remained a representative of the Queen of England. Executive powers resided in the office of the Prime Minister who was elected from the party that held majority seats in the Federal legislature. Since Sir Ahmadu Bello, Leader of the party with majority seats in the parliament and premier of the Northern Region had unlike his counterparts in other parties who resigned their premierships positions to contest for seats in the Federal House of Representatives in the 1959 elections, preferred to remain in the Region as Premier, the lot fell on Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Bewawa, the First Vice President of the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) to become the prime minister. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, leader of the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC), the coalition partner of NPC became the governor-general while Chief Obafemi Awolowo leader of the Action Group (AG) effectively became the leader of opposition. Though the focus of political power gradually shifted to the centre as the country approached independence, the decision of the leader of the ruling party to remain at the region was evidence that the regions were still veritable centres of power. It was also a reflection of existing reservations that some players in the politics of nationalism still entertained about the viability of the Nigerian project. Proof for this could be found in the fact that at that historical juncture, which marked over 40 years of cohabitation as a political unit, several political leaders still refrained from calling Nigeria a nation but saw it as a 'mere geographical entity'. Therefore, whenever the leaders felt that their interests or that of the group they represented was at stake, they threatened to exit from the Nigerian project.

The competitive federalism of the period was aggravated by the fact that the three major parties-NPC, NCNC and AG- were in control of the Northern Region, Eastern Region and the Western Region respectively. This meant that-apart from the Northern region since the NPC controlled the Federal Government- the dominant party at the centre was an opposition party in the regions while the regional hegemony was in opposition at the centre. In each of the regions, the main parties and *ipso facto* the government were dominated by the major ethnic group leading to agitations from minority ethnic groups for self determination through the creation of autonomous regions, a matter that was treated casually by the colonial administration which accepted the report of the Willinks Commission. The Commission, which was set up to look into the fears of the minorities, had, while affirming that such fears were justified, recommended against the creation of autonomous regions for the minority areas. Another interesting feature of the first generation political parties was that they all tried to suppress opposition parties and agitations of minority groups in their own regions but offered moral and financial support to opposition parties in other regions where the rival parties dominated. The objective was to weaken such parties in order to take over control of the region. It is against this background that the northern NPC government, which also controlled the federal government, and its coalition partner, the NCNC that controlled the Eastern Region Government, collaborated to create the Mid-Western State in 1963 from the Western Region in order to whittle down the influence of the Action Group which was the main opposition party at the federal level. Both the NPC and the NCNC ensured however that demands for the creation of new states or regions in their own domains were frustrated. Another significant development in 1963 was that the country became a republic with the adoption of the Republic Constitution. The governor-general

(previously the representative of the Queen) was renamed the President but still had only ceremonial powers as the executive head was the prime minister.

In the First Republic every issue was viewed through partisan, regional and ethnic lenses. For instance, the national population census of 1961 was politicized because regions were more interested in its application to the revenue allocation formula instead of seeing it as a prerequisite for economic planning and development. Thus, the parties and regions traded accusations and counter accusations of gross inflation of figures. A repeat of the census produced even more controversial results leading to the adoption of the first count which remained unacceptable to the Eastern Region government, as the region had the lowest figure. Politicians tended to adopt efficiency norms which guaranteed victory rather than legitimacy norms that were stipulated in the rules of the elections, leading to the emergence of such political strategies as banditry, arson, killings, blackmail and bribery (Ake 1973). There was gross victimization of voters who did not vote for the dominant party in the regions. An extreme case of such victimization was when the premier of the Eastern Region reportedly personally supervised the uprooting of pipes for potable water provided by the Eastern Nigerian government for minority ethnic communities who voted against the dominant NCNC. In the Western Region, the controversial results of the 1964 election which showed that the AG lost to the New Nigeria Democratic Party (NNDP), resulted in mayhem across the Region. The Federal Government declared a state of emergency in the region and appointed a federal administrator to take charge of the region.

The Advent of the Military

These events, as well as widespread reports of corruption by the political elite, were advanced as reasons for the military coup that sacked the First Republic on January 15, 1966. The fact that the leaders of the military coup were predominantly from the Igbo ethnic group and that no Igbo politician of note was among the casualties created a credibility problem which forced the leaders of the coup to hand over power to the most senior military officer at the time, Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi, who ironically was also an Igbo officer. Given the centralizing tendencies of the military and that political competition was influenced by the autonomy granted the regions through the federal constitution, the new military administration embarked on a unification policy which substantially whittled down the powers of the regions. The unification policy as well as the non-prosecution of the coup plotters who remained in detention raised fears that the head of state who was an Igbo had assumed office to complete the agenda of the predominantly Igbo majors that ran the nail through the coffin of the First Republic. Consequently, powerful interests, especially in the North which had historically desired autonomous development and had just lost the cream of its political leadership, opposed the unification policy. One sub-set of this group were the bureaucrats who came to be known as the Kaduna Mafia and have been attributed with almost magical powers to install governments and dispose them at will, as well as being reputed to be behind every significant government policy (Othman 1989, Olukoshi 1996).

The counter coup of 29th July 1967 was therefore predictable. Not only was the head of state killed, the coup was followed by the killings of southerners especially those from the Igbo ethnic stock resident in the North, leading to a mass exodus of survivors back to their places of origin in the East. Faced with increasing attacks on easterners as well as disgruntled by the fact that the new military leader was not the most senior officer in the military, the military governor of the Eastern Region declared the secession of the region and emergence of a new nation, to be known as Biafra, leading to the outbreak of the Nigeria civil war which reportedly claimed over

one million lives. Three days before outbreak of the war which lasted from 1967 to 1970, the Federal Military Government led by Col. Yakubu Gowon announced the creation of 12 more states. Although this met the longstanding desires of the minorities for states of their own, it was a strategy aimed at severing the minority coastal and oil producing areas from the control of the Eastern Region Government, and *ipso facto*, denying the secessionists access to the sea and petroleum resources that would be critical to the outcome of the civil war. The creation of states by the military however fostered centralization, as military governors were now appointees of the Military Government which retained the federal appellation. The military retained power for 13 years during which four heads of state held sway over the country and one of the head of state losing his life in a foiled coup plot in 1975.

During this period, the military relied on traditional rulers and bureaucrats to govern, having discredited politicians. Thus permanent secretaries were very influential in the policy making process so much so that some of them who were closest to the military authorities became known as super permanent secretaries especially during the Murtala regime. Through this process the civil service was also politicized and some of the rules and regulations in the service were jettisoned to serve the motives of the military dictators (Williams and Turner 1978).

The military years (1966-1979) coincided with the period of the oil boom. However, despite the professed corrective mission of the military, oil revenues were frittered away in conspicuous consumption and corruption. Oil wealth, which might have aided the transformation of Nigeria undermined development policy as agriculture, which was the mainstay of the economy in the 1950s and 1960s, was severely weakened in the 1970s. Successive military administrations devoted their attention not to creating incomes, but to expenditure. The money was spent on award of jumbo salaries to civil servants, creation of additional states and local government areas, dependent on the federal government for their revenues, as well as on attempts to indigenize ownership of the commanding heights of the economy. Some of the oil wealth was also devoted to a vigorous foreign policy which saw Nigeria becoming the arrow head of nationalist and anti-Apartheid struggles in Africa. The military also embarked on an expensive transition to civil rule programme in response to agitations within civil society for a return to democratic rule.⁴

The Civilian Interregnum

The 1979 Constitution, on which the Second Republic was based, differed from the 1960 and 1963 constitutions in significant respects. It marked the jettisoning of the Cabinet system of government and adoption of the American Presidential system. The rationale for this adoption was the argument that the cabinet system created room for institutionalized opposition and was not well suited to a diverse country with many different ethnic and religious groups, in a milieu in which ethnicity and religion had become a political weapon. The new constitution consequently required political parties to have offices in at least two thirds of 19 states of the federation. The objective was to discourage the formation of ethnic political parties. However, this was not to be as the five registered political parties rapidly became associated with ethnic groups since it was the same politicians of the First Republic that remained in the saddle. Each of the parties had its stronghold in one region but some were able to gain some foothold in another region. For instance, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) which produced President Shehu Shagari won in Cross Rivers, Rivers, and

⁴ In response to demands for civilian rule, Gen. Yakubu Gowon, the military head of state was deposed by other military officers when he said the date earlier fixed for handover was no longer realistic.

Bendel which were states carved out from former Eastern and Western regions even though its stronghold was in the north. The Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) also won in Plateau State which was carved out from the Northern region even though it earned most of its votes from the Igbo speaking states. The UPN retained control of all 4 Yoruba speaking states of the South-West. The Great Nigerian Peoples Party (GNPP) won in Borno and Gongola States while the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) won in Kano and Kaduna States. Like the 3 dominant parties, support for the GNPP and PRP came from areas where their leaders and presidential flag-bearers originated.

The dominant NPN also adopted pragmatic steps to ensure that political appointments were made in a way that reflected the federal character. This zoning policy was required by the 1979 Constitution which specified that appointments into the armed forces, civil service and other national institutions should reflect the federal character. The civilian administration resisted the pressures to create more states which Nigerian political elites had come to see as an opportunity to create more political domains and spread opportunities for capital accumulation (Ekeke 1986). The different political parties, apart from the radical Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) that had its base in the northern underclass, shared the ideology of nurture capitalism (Falola and Ihonvbere 1985). Thus all the state governors irrespective of political affiliation as well as the NPN dominated federal government scrambled to establish import substitution industries, seek foreign investments and loans. Economic mismanagement, social disorder, rise of organized criminal networks, unprecedented corruption, political intolerance and increasing incidence of ethno-religious conflicts combined to alienate the mass public from the civilian political elite. However, the 1983 elections were the last straw that broke the camel's back. The systematic rigging, wanton destruction of lives and property and bribes to entice voters discredited the outcome of the elections leading to widespread protests. In Ondo State for instance, the announcement that NPN had won the governorship provoked mayhem reminiscent of the aftermath of the controversial 1964 elections in the Western region. Generally, while losers headed for the courts which overturned some of the controversial results several informed Nigerians believed it was only a matter of time before the military would return. One retired general while critiquing the elections remarked that the landslide victory of the NPN would be followed by a 'gunslide' (Joseph 1990). This was exactly what happened when the military sacked the civilian administration on December 31, 1983.

The Return of the Man on Horse Back

The civilian administration left a despondent population that had moved from abundance to a state of scarcity of essential commodities in less than a decade and cheerfully welcomed the return of the military. One of the first major assignments of the new military rulers was to break warehouses where consumer goods were hoarded and distribute them to the citizenry as a punishment to dealers who hoarded the goods. The regime also embarked upon the arrest, detention and conviction of the corrupt politicians it deposed. The regime attempted to bring politicians that had relocated to foreign lands back, dead or alive as was seen in the dramatic case of the kidnap of former Transport minister Alhaji Umaru Dikko. These populist moves were however marred by suspicions of selective detention (Osaghae 1998). The regime alienated itself from the Nigerian public as a result of its strong arm tactics. It promulgated a number of decrees to curb press freedom and freedom of association. As a result many journalists were jailed under the dreaded Decree No. 4. During this period, decisions were taken under the aegis of the Supreme Military Council. There was no pretence about consultation. It consequently estranged itself from the people, the mass media, politicians- who had just lost their massive investment in the 1983

elections- the traditional rulers, the bureaucrats, and the gate keepers of global capitalism who were alarmed by the radical rhetoric of the regime.

These circumstances were exploited by Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, Chief of Army of Staff in a palace coup in August 1985. The new regime adopted various populist methods to gain support. For instance, it ordered the release of political prisoners and journalists that were pining away in detention centres. In contrast to his predecessors, Babangida consulted different social forces before taking any decisions. His record of creating advisory committees is unparalleled both in military and civilian dispensations. However, the regime's populism was challenged by its decision to call a national debate on the proposal to take the IMF loan. Although the response of Nigerians was overwhelmingly against it, the Babangida administration proceeded to adopt IMF conditionality, although it claimed it had not taken the loans. The government established commissions and committees, and appointed renowned professionals on them because it hoped their presence in government would secure popular support, although the government was not bound by their advice.

The discrepancy between promise and fulfilment was also noticeable in the political transition programme engineered by the Babangida regime as the president, continually manufactured reasons for the postponement of the hand over date. Gen. Babangida, who was the only Nigerian military of head of state to have appropriated the title of president, was eventually forced to step aside and handover power to the Interim National Government (ING), made up of civilian and military members. The immediate cause of the mass protests and censure from the international community was the annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential elections which was widely adjudged the freest and fairest in the country's chequered electoral history.

The political arrangement of having an unelected civilian rule with the backing of the military failed within three months with the re-emergence of Gen. Sani Abacha who was the former Chief of Defence Staff and Deputy Chairman of the INC, as head of state. However, pro-democracy groups continued their struggles for the validation of the June 12 elections. As pressure mounted the regime convened a national constitutional conference to discuss the constitution of the next republic but the conference was barred from discussing certain issues such as the validation of June 12 election or the corporate existence of Nigeria among other no go areas. As a result several left of centre groups boycotted the conference. Five political parties, registered during this period, agreed to present Gen. Abacha as their consensus candidate for the presidential elections. The mysterious death of Gen. Sani Abacha on June 8, 1998, which Karl Meier (2000:4) has aptly described as 'a coup from heaven' terminated the self-succession project.

Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar who took over tried to form a broad-based government in order to have an enabling environment to conduct new elections. The regime did not however release Chief MKO Abiola, the acclaimed winner of the June 12 elections but insisted that he should abandon his controversial mandate. The refusal of Abiola to give up the mandate culminated in the circumstances that led to his mysterious death. With the death of the major actors in the political impasse, the regime hurriedly conducted elections, leading to the inauguration of a civilian administration in 1999.

The foregoing discussions have attempted a socio-historical narrative of the evolution of the policy making environment in Nigeria. It is evident that this environment has been largely influenced by the character of the state and dominant classes in Nigeria, as well as the location of the Nigerian state and economy in the world system. The pervasive struggle to control the state in order to accumulate its resources has meant

that formal rules of policy making are often superseded by informality and expediency. Indeed as Billy Dudley, the late eminent Nigerian political scientist had put it "Politics in Nigeria is not about alternative policies but about control over men and resource" (Cited in Williams and Turner 1978:146). This perspective is important if we are to understand the species of policy makers, levers, takers in Nigeria.

3. Actors in the Policy Environment

For the purpose of this paper, we shall discuss actors in the policy arena under two categories, namely state and non-state actors. Given the pervasive nature of the state in Nigeria and indeed how several actors who ostensibly appear autonomous are ultimately linked to the apron-strings of the state, it is clear that this classification could be problematic. However, we shall use the classification carefully not to denote independence from the state but location in the formal state structure. Consequently, we shall regard as state actors those groups, persons or institutions that are established by the state and constitute part of the formal governmental structure while non-state actors will refer to other actors that fall outside this category, including international organizations and development agencies that feature in the public policy arena of the country. We should state however that the actors discussed here are not the only actors in the policy arena but are those who in our estimation are relevant to policy areas that impinge on horizontal inequality and ethnic relations.

State Actors

State actors will in turn be considered under the different arms of government: executive, legislature and the judiciary as well as special government agencies and departments which fall under the purview of the executive.

The executive

The 1999 Constitution provides for a presidential system of government with clear separation of powers between the three different organs of government. At the federal level the executive is made up of the president, who is elected directly alongside the vice president, and ministers and ministers of state who are appointed by the president and are assigned different portfolios. The president and his ministers constitute the Federal Executive Council which meets weekly. At the Executive Council, ministers, the office of the president and the vice-president, present policy proposals which are debated and approved. Once approved the policy is usually sent as a bill to the National Assembly for ratification.⁵ Once ratified by the Legislature, the bill is returned to the Executive for the president's final seal. The vice president presides over the executive council in the absence of the president and has constitutional responsibilities for economic matters. For instance, he heads the National Economic Council, the National Council on Commercialization and Privatization and also supervises the ministry of sports, as well as other duties that may be assigned to him by the president. It is worth noting here that the vice president is only as powerful as the president wants him/her to be. The present vice president unlike that of the second republic has been assigned important functions of state and wields substantial powers. This may not be unrelated to the fact that he is the head of the Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM) which is the most powerful fraction of the political groups that constitute the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). In fact, his support for President Obasanjo was crucial in the primaries which presented the president as the candidate of the party for the second term in 2003.

⁵ The president may also send bills to the Legislature without recourse to the executive council.

Also, within the presidency are special advisers and senior special assistants to the president and the vice president that influence policy through the advice they offer to the president. Under the present dispensation, the president has up to 44 of such advisers. Apart from advising the president, the advisers and senior special assistants are delegated to represent the president in various public functions or programmes organized by non-governmental agencies and international development organizations. The author has participated in such programmes⁶ and saw that the advisers took copious notes and promised to brief the president fully on the deliberations. Another observation was that advisers were apt to defend and explain government programmes even though they admitted there were gaps that needed filling. The fact that former advisers in government, especially during the military period had publicly tried to exonerate themselves from the misdemeanour and failures of the governments they served by saying that the chief executive never took their advice has created the impression among Nigerians that it is the perquisites of office and not job satisfaction that motivates political office holders. This position is confirmed by the fact that despite the legion of complains by former advisers and ministers it is rare to find politicians who resigned their positions because they disagreed with government policies. Notwithstanding their limitations, advisers still play some roles in the policy making process. A considerable number of advisers are academics or professionals who have been drafted into politics but still value the importance of knowledge as a guide to public policy. For the purpose of this research, the advisers on National Security, Legal and Constitutional Matters, Intergovernmental Relations, Ethics and Good Governance, Budget and Economic Matters, Religion, Poverty Alleviation, and Political Affairs are all relevant policy levers. The ministers also have personal advisers who play similar roles and are faced with similar constraints.

Another significant body is the National Council of State, made up of the President, Vice President, Senate President, speaker of the House of Representatives, Chief Justice of the Federation and all state governors as well as former heads of state and chief justices. It meets at least once a year and may be convened by the president at any time. It plays an advisory role. The National Security Council which advises the president on security matters is made up of the president, the vice president, minister of defence, the chief of army staff, chief of naval staff, chief of air staff and inspector-general of police. The strategic significance of these bodies to conflict management and their influence on the president suggests they could be policy levers in the CRISE programme.

At the state level, the governor occupies a similar position to the president having been directly elected by all the population of the state. He heads the state executive council which meets once a week to deliberate on policy issues. Other members of the state executive council are the deputy governor who is usually elected on the same ticket with the governor, commissioners who are appointed by the state governor, and special advisers to the governor. Draft policies are forwarded from the different ministries and deliberated by the council. Once approved, they are forwarded to the state legislature for ratification and returned to the state governor for his assent. Unlike at the federal level, where some constitutional responsibilities are assigned to the vice president, the deputy governor's influence depends solely on

⁶ These include the General Assembly of the Social Science Academy of Nigeria where the president was represented by Mr. Godwin Kanu Agabi, presidential adviser on Ethics and Good Governance; and the Policy Dialogue on 'Governance and Politics at the Local Level' organized by the Centre for Advanced Social Science (CASS) where Hon. Ojo Maduekwe, presidential adviser on Legal and Constitutional Matters represented the president.

the role the governor assigns to him/her. The lack of a constitutional role has been a major source of conflicts in many states where the governors have been at logger heads with their deputies, especially in states where the deputies were failed gubernatorial candidates who were compelled by the party to run with the candidate chosen as gubernatorial candidate. There are other cases where friction has arisen from the fact that the governor and his/her deputy are from different fractions of the parties and were imposed on one another for convenience. However, there are several states where the governors have enjoyed harmonious working relationships with their deputies. In such states, like Rivers State, as well as the governor, the deputy governor who represents the state governor at public functions and usually exercises oversight over the ministry of local government and chieftaincy affairs, form potential policy levers for CRISE.

There is also a state security committee which is made up of the governor, deputy governor, commissioner of police, heads of different military formations in the state and local government chairmen, which advises the governor on security matters. In some states, some prominent members of the State Council of Traditional Rulers are also members of the Security Committee and are usually called upon to help the government to resolve and manage religious and communal conflicts. Members of the Security Committee especially the traditional rulers should be associated with the CRISE programme. Most traditional rulers are legally appointed by the state governor and traditional rulers are paid salaries in most of the states. Some of them wield influence in government circles. This is more so as in contemporary Nigeria many retired generals, bureaucrats, professors and accomplished professionals aspire to positions of traditional ruler-ship. While the role of traditional rulers has been controversial especially during the periods of military dictatorship, there is no gainsaying that they constitute a critical social force. Many regard them as custodians of culture and dispensers of social status. It is hardly surprising that more and more people and groups have been canvassing for a constitutional role for the traditional rulers.⁷

At the local government level, the Chairman who is elected from local government area is the executive head of the Council which also includes the vice chairman and councillors elected to represent wards. Council takes decision based on submissions made by the councillors or chairman. Apart from the Council, traditional rulers and prominent personalities from the local government typically influence policy at this level of government. Some of them are rich and influential politicians or businessmen who sponsored the chairman and councillors. Others are leaders of thought that are respected in the locality. All these could be identified as CRISE policy levers.

The legislature

The legislature at all levels of government makes and influences policies through its constitutional role of considering bills sent in by the executive or proposed by members of the legislature. The legislature also makes policy by virtue of the fact that it exercises oversight functions over the executive arm of government and makes resolutions on public issues. The constitutional responsibility of considering nominees for appointment into public offices is vested in the legislature. Such powers put legislatures in a strategic position to influence policy. The legislature which is bicameral at the federal level, and unicameral in the states, makes inputs into public policy. Under the 1999 Constitution, Federal responsibility includes 68 items on the Exclusive List, including foreign policy, national security, custom, excise and

⁷ A recent poll from the Guardian (Lagos, Nigeria), showed that the majority of Nigerians questioned answered yes to the question "should traditional rulers be given constitutional responsibilities".

immigration, education, agriculture, mines and minerals, prisons, post and telecommunications, copyright and patents, among other items. It also legislates on 30 other items which appear on the Concurrent List that states also legislate on. However, where there is a conflict the federal legislature has overriding jurisdiction. The balance of responsibilities is indicative of the centralization of powers put in place by successive military governments and has been identified as a fundamental flaw in Nigeria's federalism (Anam-Ndu 2003).

Though the legislatures at the national and state levels legislate on distinct issues, they follow the same procedures. Once a bill is considered by the whole house, it is forwarded to special committees of the legislature for in-depth consideration. The committee is empowered to summon state officials or agencies to provide any explanation needed and could also get memoranda from the general public in deciding on a particular bill. If the committee is satisfied with the bill it is returned to the whole house for the second reading and adopted before it is sent to the executive for assent. Where the executive and legislature disagree over a particular bill, the legislature can exercise its constitutional powers to pass the bill into law through a two thirds majority. No treaty is binding on the country unless it has been ratified by the National Assembly. In cases of constitutional amendments, the state houses of assembly are also expected to be part of the ratification process. The president must also inform the legislature within a specified period of time on the reasons for deployment of troops in an emergency situation. Sustainability of the action of the president would depend on the approval or disapproval granted by the legislature.

The judiciary

Through the powers vested in it to interpret the constitution and adjudicate on matters between different tiers of government, the judiciary also makes and influences policy. The judiciary is made up of the Supreme Court which is the court of last resort. This is followed by the Court of Appeal that entertains cases referred from the High Courts. Below this are the Magistrate Courts which are the court of first instance in issues that do not require capital punishment. There are also customary courts in the southern part of the country, and Sharia courts in the North, that exercise jurisdiction over religious or customary matters. The National (or State) Judicial Council with support from the Judicial Service Commission is responsible for the appointment, promotion and discipline of judicial officers at the federal level, though appointments of key positions such as that of the supreme and appeal courts should be made in consultation with the chief executive at the federal and state levels. Generally, apart from criminal and common law, the judiciary adjudicates in constitutional matters. For instance, the Supreme Court's judgment on the controversial off-shore and on-shore dichotomy in revenue allocation was instrumental in the change of the revenue allocation formula. The court's judgment on the Electoral Act changed the whole policy on recognition and registration of parties. While the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) refused to register parties that did not have a presence in two-thirds of states of the federation, the Supreme Court ruled that INEC had no such powers; all parties who canvassed for votes should be allowed to do so; it is the Nigerian people that should decide the parties they want through their votes. The result is that in the last elections, more parties, most of them, previously unknown, appeared on the ballot paper. Apart from their constitutional roles, members of the bar and the bench are respected individuals in society who influence policy through their association with the state executive. They are usually invited to chair government panels and commissions of inquiry. These and the knowledge they possess about the inner workings of government make them invaluable policy levers that the CRISE programme may draw from.

A note on intergovernmental relations

It is important to note, however, that in practice the chief executive at all tiers of government has the final say in terms of public-policy making. While this is an attribute of the presidential system, there is no gainsaying that the long years of military rule which had impacted profoundly on the nation's political culture has strengthened the executive arm of government above other arms which were usually absent or devalored under military dispensations. Within the executive itself the ministers and commissioners often claim they wield little or no influence and that state policies are those determined by the governor or president. The picture given by actors in the executive and legislative arms of government, as well as senior civil servants, was one of helplessness if the chief executive was not in favour of a policy proposal. Many were of the view that the executive council meetings merely took place to rubber stamp the wishes of the chief executive. Some public officials claimed that this was also the case for disbursement of funds for programmes already agreed upon and budgeted for. Several means were adopted in order to have the chief executive approve the release of funds. For example, a commissioner of health in one of the states said he used the good offices of influential politicians and contractors to secure release of funds for his ministry. According to him each time a politician or contractor came to him for contracts, he will tell him, "Sir, the contract is yours if only you can get the governor to approve the money which had already been budgeted." Since such politicians or contractors have more access to the governor, they are able to get approval for release of funds. This example shows that formal actors often have to depend on informal actors to get what they want from the chief executive. Sometimes refusal to rely on such informal channels could result in frustration.⁸ Consequently, programmes approved may not necessarily be those that would contribute most to social welfare but rather ones that would give juicy financial rewards to some big men that the chief executive depends on for votes or support. This politics of patronage which pervades the Nigerian political system is what Richard Joseph (1990) referred to as prebendal politics. It explains not only the choice of programmes but also the methodology of programme implementation.

The chief executive is also pre-eminent and omnipotent in operations of the legislature. It is common knowledge today that the president and governors influence the selection of the leadership of the legislatures. This is done to ensure that the legislature does not fall into wrong hands that could be used by unfriendly forces to impeach the chief executive as happened recently in Anambra State⁹. It is also a means of ensuring that bills and nominations sent by the executive to the legislature are rubber stamped and bills or proposals that do not serve the agenda of the chief executive are nipped in the bud. For instance, a former minority leader¹⁰ in one state legislature said members of the house who were interested in introducing bills usually sent the bills to the governor for approval before introducing them on the floor of the house. Bills that did not follow that route could not progress beyond the first reading. However, as Jinadu (2003) has argued, the National Assembly has displayed some independence in relation to the executive arm of government in the present

⁸ This was the experience of Gen Theophilus Danjuma, former Defence minister in the Obasanjo administration who recently claimed he was frustrated by a clique in the Presidency (See, *This Day* 10th November, 2003).

⁹ The speaker of the House of Assembly upheld a controversial letter of resignation by the state governor and recognized the deputy as substantive governor.

¹⁰ This position no longer exists in several states following the 2003 general elections where the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) won every single seat. There is however no cause for alarm and there no indications that the operations of the legislature would be jeopardized since opposition parliamentarians were known to be more ardent supporters of the executive than some party men.

dispensation unlike the charade that goes on in most states of the federation. Despite the seeming omnipotence of the chief executive, the CRISE programme would nonetheless be enriched if it attempts to bring in not only members of the executive arm of government but also some from the legislature and the executive. These leaders could be invited to participate in workshops.

Apart from the permanent organs of government, we can also classify as state actors special panels and ad hoc committees established by government to provide advice on sundry issues. These groups, for instance, the Bureau for Public Enterprise have greatly influenced the direction and substance of public policy. The government has also inaugurated a Technical Committee for the Reform of Local Government, which is expected to guide the government on the proposed reform of the third tier of government. Although, the legal basis of some of the committees is doubtful, the fact remains that government listens to them and that their input often influence public policy makes them probable levers for the CRISE programme. Their significance is underlined by the fact that they are usually chaired by influential personalities such as retired judges, generals, civil servants and or serving traditional rulers. It was gathered that the kind of public confidence any committee has depends to a great extent on the calibre of its leadership. Thus, people tend to take very seriously committees that are headed by such leaders will make objective recommendations. This explains the widespread confidence that the Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission (HRVIC) enjoyed. However, though the influence of the chairpersons of committees and commissions is important, implementation ultimately depends on the implications of such recommendations for regime survival. For instance, although the HRVIC was chaired by a respected former Supreme Court judge, the retired Hon. Justice Chukwudifu Oputa, government has declined to publish and act on the report of Commission because it indicted some former military heads of state whose support the president considered crucial for his re-election campaign. Nonetheless, eminent leaders of such committees do constitute potential policy levers.

The bureaucracy

The bureaucracy refers to civil servants who service the operations of the three arms of government. Unlike the elected politicians, the bureaucrats are appointed. Apart from civil servants who work directly with the chief executive at the federal and state levels, the legislatures and the judiciary, most of the civil servants work in government departments known as the ministries. The number of ministries depends on the agenda of the chief executive and the number of political appointments to be made at any point in time. The federal government and the different states have different numbers and kinds of ministries.

Employment into the Federal bureaucracy is usually determined by the Federal Civil Service Commission which conducts interviews and recruits the civil servants based on merit and the principle of maintaining the federal character. The different states also have state civil service commissions with similar roles. Coordination between federal and state ministries take place at the ministerial level with periodic meetings of National Council on Agriculture, Information, etc. where ministers and commissioners of similar ministries meet to discuss broad policy issues; and at official levels where government parastatals such as the Joint Tax Board meet to discuss and harmonize issues.

Heads of departments within a ministry report to the permanent secretary who is the chief administrative officer. The position of permanent secretary has been politicized over the years. The Babangida administration explicitly decided to make the position a political one by renaming it director-general, with appointments coterminous with

the administration. This policy was abandoned by the present administration. However, appointment to the position of permanent secretary which is ideally based on the recommendation of the Civil Service Commission actually depends on the political links of the appointees. The fact is that it is the president and governors that appoint the permanent secretaries who hold their position not on the basis of seniority or merit but the patronage of the chief executive. Most policies are presented by the ministers at the executive council meetings are prepared and submitted by the permanent secretaries and heads of departments. An important example in this respect is the annual budget. At both federal and states levels, the Secretary to the Government, which constitutes the overall head of the bureaucracy, as well as heads of services and permanent secretaries are important levers that would be relevant to the CRISE programme. Relevant ministries from which they could be selected include Finance, National Planning, Education, Health, Information, Women and Youth Affairs, Agriculture, Petroleum, Commerce, Industry, Intergovernmental Relations, Internal Affairs and the Police.

The following federal government agencies could also be targeted given the kinds of issues they deal with.

The National Boundary Commission

This is an extra-ministerial body that was established in 1987 to “deal with, determine and intervene in any boundary dispute that may arise between Nigeria and any of her neighbours or between any two states with a view to settling such disputes” (Asiwaju 2003:8). The Commission is chaired by the vice president. Over the years it has mediated in conflicts arising from boundary issues between communities and states and advised the president on boundary adjustment. For instance, it facilitated the meetings that led to cessation of hostilities between Akwa Ibom State and Cross River State over the disputed Bakassi Peninsula. The experiences of the Commission and its linkages to critical government officials make it a useful policy lever for CRISE.

The Federal Character Commission

As earlier indicated, the 1979 Constitution had provided that appointments into institutions of the federal government should reflect the federal character, in other words represent all interests and groups. However, over the years the principle has been breached, raising protests from groups who believe they are unrepresented. This has often led to violent conflicts. The provisions of the 1999 constitution amended the 1979 constitution by adding that the same principle should also hold at the states and local government levels. It also established a Federal Character Commission to enable government to enforce the provisions. The Commission has a chairman and all states are represented on the Commission. The Committee has published a breakdown of distribution of all federal posts among the states (Mustapha 2003). Given the fact that horizontal inequality includes skewed representation in political and bureaucratic appointments (Stewart 2002), the Commission is a body that can be relied upon to influence adoption of the research results.

Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC)

One of the most contentious issues in Nigeria’s federalism is the principle of the revenue allocation formula. In the 1950s and 1960s derivation was favoured over other considerations. However, with the ascendancy of oil as the major revenue earner and the advent of military rule, the derivation principle was deemphasized and almost abandoned. Several authors, such as Ben Naanen (1995), have argued that the abandonment of derivation principles is because oil, which is the mainstay of the Nigerian economy, is found in minority areas which are victims of internal

colonialism. The RMAFC representatives from all states and is constitutionally mandated 'to monitor the accruals to and disbursement from the Federation Account; to review from time to time the revenue allocation formulae and principles in operation to ensure conformity with changing realities; and to advise the federal, state and local government on fiscal efficiency and methods by which their revenue can be increased". It thus deals with one of the critical causes of horizontal inequalities and is a probable policy lever for the CRISE programme.

Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

Since the early 1990s, there has been an appreciable increase in the incidence of violent conflicts in the Niger Delta. There have been conflicts among communities, and between communities against government and companies (Ojo 2002). At the roots of these conflicts are shared perceptions that the Oil companies and government have taken so much from the lands and waters of the Niger Delta but have returned little or nothing in the forms of investments, employment opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths, and social amenities. Such agitations and conflicts have not only led to a loss of lives and property but discredited the federal government. For instance, the hanging of the writer and environmentalist, Ken Saro Wiwa led to Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth. The invasion of Odi community in Bayelsa State by soldiers who acted on the orders of the presidency raised many eyebrows early in the life of the civilian administration.

Consequently, the Federal Government established the NNDC to take over the development of the Niger Delta. The Commission has representatives from all states of the Niger Delta as well as some representatives from non oil producing states and oil companies. It is funded through statutory contributions from the federal government, state governments in oil producing areas and oil companies. It has embarked on what it calls crisis management projects in several communities of the Niger Delta and is working on a master plan for the development of the region. In the Niger Delta, the NDDC is strategically located to be a policy lever for the CRISE Programme. This is more so as it has adopted partnership with other stakeholders as one its principal modes of intervention.

National Poverty Eradication Committee (NAPEC)

Since the mid 1980s, in response to the hardship imposed on Nigerians by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) the Federal Government has adopted various poverty alleviation strategies. By the time the civilians regained power in 1999, the complaint was that there were too many poverty alleviation schemes that were unwieldy and uncoordinated and whose presence had not helped in any way to reduce poverty. The National Poverty Eradication Committee (NAPEC) was established to administer the National Poverty Eradication Programme. It has a national secretariat supervised by the office of the vice president. At the state level are State Coordination Committees and there is a provision also for local government monitoring committees. Since it was established, the NAPEC has been responsible for the coordination of all government poverty alleviation and has been implementing the youth empowerment scheme, social welfare services scheme, rural infrastructures development scheme and the natural resources development and conservation scheme. Although, the agency has been over-politicized and many Nigerians feel it has not changed the face of poverty in Nigeria (Ukiwo 2002), it remains the main government agency assigned with the function of poverty alleviation and will be a useful policy lever for CRISE.

Other state actors

Other state actors that will be useful are the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS), the National Population Commission (NPC), Independent National Electoral Commission

(INEC), National Orientation Agency (NOA) the Nigeria Police Force and the Nigerian Army.

Non-State Actors

Under non-state actors we shall include political parties, civil society organizations, the organized private sector and international development agencies. It should be noted that these groups are not under the direct control of the Nigerian state. We recognize that some of the groups are agencies of foreign governments or represent other countries.

Political parties

Three political parties were registered to present candidates for election in the 1999 as the military planned to return power to civilians. These are the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the All Peoples Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD). Unlike the first two which were registered because they met the constitutional requirement of having offices in two-thirds of the states in the country, the AD was registered even though it failed to meet this requirement because the military felt it represented a critical component of the political class whose participation was essential to lend legitimacy to the transition programme. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) draws its support from retired military men, 'progressives' who were in the NPP of the Second Republic and significant segment of the membership of the former NPN. It is a party that was from the onset a marriage of convenience contracted with the sole objective of taking over power from the departing military. In fact, it started as the Group 34 which was the first mainstream political group to ask Gen. Sani Abacha to hand over power. Given the terror that dominated the Abacha regime, the action of the group endeared them to some Nigerians though perceptive Nigerians saw opportunism in the whole scheme as the Group 34 emerged when it was clear that pro-democracy movements in the country had through their campaigns within and outside the national borders fought Abacha to a standstill and it was a only a matter of time before he would cave in. Because the PDP was desirous of getting power at all costs it invited people with different persuasions into its fold. Given the importance of money and vote rigging in Nigerian politics, it was clear that the PDP which was funded by the retired generals and engineered by political godfathers¹¹ would pick up the votes. The PDP produced President Olusegun Obasanjo even though the APP and AD attempted at the last minute to present a joint presidential candidate. It also produced 16 state governors and had its stronghold in states of the south-south, south east, and north central. The APP was populated by 'conservative' elements of the former NPN, especially those from the Sokoto caliphate and some politicians who lost out in the scheming within the PDP. It won in nine states in all: 4 from the North West, 3 from the North East and 2 from North Central. The AD, which was formed by the scions of late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, was unabashedly a reincarnation of the Action Group of the First Republic and Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) of the Second Republic. Its major aim was to produce a Yoruba president, which Babangida botched by annulling the June 12 elections. The AD retained most of the progressive policies of the UPN such as free education. It won all states in the south west and did not make any impact outside the south-west.

Given the way the PDP was put together it was not surprising that it was bedevilled by crisis which led to the exit or benching of its founding leaders. This was because

¹¹ In Nigerian politics, godfathers are powerful individuals in different localities who use their wealth, power and connections with state security agencies and electoral bodies to ensure that only candidates they support win elections.

the elected president who was invited to join the party and given a platform to become president was not interested in being guided by the PDP leadership who would remind him of the political debts he owed them. His strategy was therefore to use executive powers to take over the party machinery. This, and similar attempts by state governors to gain independence from those who provided them the platform to become governors, plunged the PDP into crisis which led to intermittent changes in leadership, decamping and breakaways. The other parties faced similar crises which led to defections and expulsions of members. The APP was renamed the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) in the process. Those who left the parties formed parties which were registered following the Supreme Court ruling on party registration. However, apart from the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) which was perceived as an Igbo party and had Chief Odumegwu Ojukwu, the leader of the Biafran secessionist movement as its presidential candidate, most of the new parties did not make any impact in the 2003 general elections. The PDP not only won the general elections but also performed what many considered a miracle by winning five out of the six states in the South-West controlled by the AD despite its own internal problems.

With the foregoing scenario where the party is subject to the whims and caprices of the president and governors who have used state power to make their party reverse rules on rotation and zoning and sacked non-conformist leaders, what role does the party play in policy formulation? This question is critical in the case of Nigeria where it has been shown that manifestoes no longer count in electoral outcomes. Most of the 22 political associations that appeared on the ballot paper in the 2003 elections did not have manifestoes. Thus, some analysts have pointed to the death of the party as an articulator and aggregator of public interest and policies which it plans to implement when it captures power. The role of the party as a policy maker is also constrained by the fact that it is hardly monolithic. There are rather various interests struggling against one another for supremacy in each of the parties. Still, we hold that the party does influence public policy. This is because as we alluded to in the introductory section, it is party men that emerge as ministers, advisers, etc. and the party men who contributed to the victory of the elected officials remain influential. For instance, the president appointed chairman of the PDP as his adviser on Agriculture and Natural Resources. While it is true that the chief executive is not bound by the views of party leaders on all issues it is evident that the frequent changes in party leadership has made party leaders to avoid confrontation with chief executive even at the risk of their personal reputation and integrity. To that extent therefore they enjoy the confidence of the elected officials and could be useful policy levers in the CRISE programme.

Civil society organizations

Let us begin by stating that by civil society organizations we are referring to those groups which seek to advance the public interest or the interest of their members through use of collective behaviour strategies, lobbies and dialogues. They do not stand in perpetual opposition to the state but often cooperate with state agencies to attain their goals. We include in this category Labour movements, pro-democracy and human rights organizations, ethno-political associations, religious bodies and various non governmental associations. It would be difficult to list and discuss all of the groups in this paper. Suffice it to note that civil society organizations have been at the forefront of policy reform in Nigeria in all spheres. Many groups with local, state and or national spread have worked in areas as varied as poverty alleviation, prisons reform, conflict resolution, civil education, and constitutionalism. Through the use of the popular media and specialized publications, demonstrations, advocacy and even litigation, they have indirectly influenced public policy even more than policy makers acknowledge.

Labour organizations

Labour has historically influenced public policy in Nigeria. In the colonial period, labour was a formidable component of the nationalist struggles for independence. It has also participated in anti-dictatorship and democratization movements. The importance of the labour movement is underlined by the fact that it remains one of the survival pan-ethnic social forces in the country and has resisted attempts by successive administration to undermine it through schisms. The present composition of the labour movement has been influenced by attempts by successive administrations to control the movement. The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) which is the most popular and influential labour organization in the country is an umbrella body of 29 trade unions in different sectors of the society. It is made up of junior workers in both private and public organizations. Over the years, the NLC has moderated the push of market forces and the state to raise the prices of petroleum products¹² and has made the government to recognize that poverty alleviation would remain a pipe dream if workers are not paid a living wage. The NLC has also mounted strong opposition to the World Trade Organization regime on trade liberalization. Given their critical role, government has often invited labour to join special committees that are intended to advise it on specific issues. The NLC has been successful in using strikes to influence government policy not only on wages but also on the price of petroleum products. The Trade Union Congress (TUC) also exists and has often been used by government to offset the power of the NLC. However, it has failed to earn public support. Other influential trade unions are the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association (PENGASSAN) and the National Association of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) who have used strikes to secure better working conditions for oil workers. They were active in the pro-democracy struggles and have recently been protesting against the global mergers of oil companies in Nigeria. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Non-Academic Staff of Universities (NASU) and Senior Non-Academic Staff of Universities (SNANU) have also used strikes to get better working conditions for their members. ASUU's strikes have however not been limited to welfare issues but been targeted at the funding of education. Of these, the leadership of the NLC particularly is a relevant CRISE policy lever.

Human rights and other non governmental organizations

The human rights organizations such as Campaign for Democracy (CD), Civil Liberties Organizations, Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), the Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), Human Rights Monitor (HRM), League for Human Rights (LHR), etc. worked tirelessly for the return of the military to the barracks. They have also worked with legislatures across the country toward the repeal of laws that restricted human freedoms. Through the reports of these organizations which are usually presented to legislatures and government officials several structural and attitudinal constraints to democracy and good governance have been exposed. Some groups such as the Environmental Rights Action (ERA) have championed the protection of the rights to a clean environment while others, such as the Shelter Rights Initiative (SRI) and the Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP), have focused on specific socio-economic rights. These groups have influenced some policies. Some like the Port Harcourt based Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (IHRHL) provided forums through which legislatures and local government executive briefed the public on their activities.

¹² Presently, NLC is leading several civil society organizations to stop the government from going ahead with the increase in the pump price of petrol. Government moves to curtail the powers of the NLC has incurred public disapproval. See, *This Day*, 15th October, 2003 and November 4, 2003.

Some government officials confirmed that the civil society organizations have contributed to policy making and have tried to make these organizations part of the policy making process, partly in response to the requirement of international organizations that provide funding for some programmes. Most of the human rights organizations receive funding from international development agencies, grant making organizations and foreign governments. They influence public policy through their ability to shape public opinion and lobby parliaments. Recently, many activists contested for elective offices and are expected to become contacts for the human rights NGOs in parliament.

One interesting development is the tendency of NGOs to collaborate on common issues and even form coalitions to ensure that they influence government policies. A good example here is the Citizens Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR) an umbrella organization of several pan-Nigerian non-governmental organizations which produced a draft constitution which was presented to the National Assembly for consideration. Moreover, another coalition of NGOs, the Electoral Reform Network (ERN), contributed to the reform of the Nigerian Electoral Act. Not to be forgotten are organizations that advance the cause of women such as the conservative National Council of Women's Societies and the radical Women in Nigeria. It is note worthy that the major political parties agreed to give specific percentage of slots to women, with the result that there are more women who occupy both elected and appointive political positions under the present dispensation. The women's groups have also influenced the appointment of women into executive positions. There is a powerful women's lobby group in the Peoples Democratic Party headed by Mrs. Josephine Anenih that could be targeted. The present female deputy governor, female ministers, legislators, commissioners and special advisers could also be approached to anchor some of the initiatives of the CRISE programme that may have gender implications.

Ethno-political and cultural organizations

The intensity of identity politics in Nigeria since the 1990s has led to the proliferation of ethno-political and cultural organizations. These groups draw their support from members of their ethnic groups and regions. In moments of national crisis, the government has often invited them to mediate or offer advice. The groups have flourished in the Niger Delta region where they have been at the forefront of the struggles against multinational corporations, environmental degradation and marginalization and exploitation of minorities. They include the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), Ijaw National Congress (INC), Oron National Forum, Urhobo Progressive Union, Afenifere, etc. Most of these groups have been able to earn the support of some of the states governors of the Niger Delta states. The resource control struggle which was initiated by the groups has been embraced by the governors. Their struggles also influenced the government's decision to establish the NDDC and have changed the approach of oil companies to community development. Some of them like MOSOP have received logistic and financial support from the international community and prominent international NGOs. In other parts of the country, ethno-political associations such as the Odua Peoples Congress, the Arewa Peoples Congress, Ohanaeze Ndi Igbo, Middle Belt Forum, etc. have been canvassing for a fundamental restructuring of the Nigerian state to make it truly federal. In some cases, these groups have attempted to build common platforms to engage the government. Worthy of note here is the All Nationalities Conference on the Warri Crisis convened by the OPC. Such common platforms strengthen the appeal of the groups. The rising popularity and relevance of such ethnic organizations, who have sometimes taken over the functions of a decrepit state by providing services, is probably responsible for the fact that both the National Assembly and the president seem not to be interested in discussing the bill

on the ban of the groups which the government describes as ethnic militias. As one leader of the OPC said in an interview with us, such a law was bound to fail because most of the members of the legislature are members of one ethno-political organization or the other. He even claimed that the copy of the draft bill he had was given to him by a serving legislator who was a member of his organization.

Religious groupings

Also categorized as part of civil society that should be identified are religious bodies such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and the National Supreme Council on Islamic Affairs (NSCIA).¹³ Given the fact that conflicts in Nigeria have often been triggered by disagreements among religious adherents, the apex bodies of the two major religions in the country should be specifically targeted. Many public officials have tried to court friendship of these leaders. Witness for instance how most of the governors of the northern states moved to adopt Sharia because they feared the sanction of the religious clerics. Somehow, the Nigerian political elite mostly believe it is politically wise to be religious and to be an adherent of the dominant religion in their immediate constituency. They are therefore amenable to the influence of religious leaders. The importance of religious organizations and leaders in policy making is further buttressed by their role in education and in influencing public opinion.

Professional associations

Professional associations have also played significant roles on public policy making. The major ones that could be identified as levers for the CRISE programme are the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigerian Economic Society (NES), Nigerian Guild of Editors, and Nigeria Political Science Association (NPSA). In some of the professions, women have formed associations such as the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) and the Nigerian Union of Women Journalists (NAWOJ) to meet the peculiar interests of women. These groups not only influence policy with regards to their profession but on several issues of national development. The NBA seems to have been more influential than other groups. It recently voiced its opposition to the proposed local government reforms, citing its unconstitutionality. Some of them such as the NBA and NES have also used the good offices of their members in government to influence policies.

The organized private sector

Business has always influenced Nigerian politics. Even in the colonial period, the interests of the fledging business elite cohered with those of the nationalist political elite and were instrumental in the adoption of the ideology of state capitalism, for instance, the state established banks in order to provide opportunities for local businessmen to get credit facilities on softer terms. With the advent of globalization and fetishization of the market and the private sector, business continues to influence the direction of public policy. Apart from multinational corporations and individual business enterprises such as the oil companies that single-handedly influence policy, business groups have sought to influence policies through various associations such as the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), the Nigeria Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (NACIMMA) and other city-based chambers of commerce, the Nigeria Employers Consultative Forum (NECF), Newspapers Proprietors Association, and more recently the Nigerian Economic Summit Group

¹³ Several groups exist both within Islam and Christianity. For instance, the Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Pentecostal Fellowship have been influential in some states in the South. Several groups representing sects in Islam such as NASFAT also exist. However, for the purpose of this paper we shall concentrate on the apex bodies that the federal government routinely makes consultations with.

(NESG). The NESG has become a major umbrella of business in Nigeria to influence public policy. The government and the Group are agreed that the way forward for Nigeria is a private sector led economy.

MAN, one of the oldest business organizations has since the inauguration of SAP, regularly published an annual report on the performance of the manufacturing sector and its assessment has always differed from that of government. Its ability to collate scientific information on the performance of the economy has made it a reference point in the media and among think tanks. Thus indirectly the government has been influenced by their positions. Campaign funding is another important factor that strengthens the role of business as policy levers. During the last elections, several captains of industries and business tycoons intervened in the political process in a major way, by donating huge sums of money to the campaign of the president, the governor of Lagos, where most of Nigerian big businesses are based, as well as other politicians. Some companies owned by some of the donors such as Alhaji Aliko Dangote, Chief Emeka Offor and Dr. Mike Adenuga are known to have secured telecommunications licenses and contracts from government and also bought over some privatized enterprises.¹⁴ Some policy positions of the business class dovetails with the views of the majority of Nigerians. For instance, the Nigerian Economic Summit Group has advocated that one way to create effective demand for Nigerian products in the face of globalization is to alleviate poverty and improve the public wage system. The CRISE programme therefore would find important policy levers in business groupings in Nigeria.

Some private companies whose operations affect public welfare could also be relevant CRISE policy levers. For example, in the Niger Delta where the activities of multinational oil companies have led to massive degradation of the environment, loss of sources of livelihoods and violent conflicts, oil companies have been forced by popular agitations by both local and international civil society organizations to embark on community development programmes. This has resulted in the present situation where oil companies are involved in the provision of social services such as roads, water, electricity and schools in some communities. Although the oil companies operate as partners with the federal government under the joint venture agreement, the public perception is that they provide the services. They are also generally perceived as capable of influencing government policies. Oil producing communities have therefore adopted the strategy of closing oil facilities in order to get the attention of government and have used stakeholders' forums organized by oil companies to express their policy preferences.

The media

The Nigerian media is a very strong influence on public policy. It not only reports on the activities of government but also provides a medium through which government receives a feedback from the populace on its policies. The media plays a critical role in public opinion. The Nigerian media has been particularly influential because of its historical role in the democratization processes. It has helped to check the excesses of public officers and exposed several forms of ineptitude, corruption and indiscipline in public life.

The media is divided into two main groups, the print and the electronic media. The print media which includes all newspapers and magazines includes both government owned and private publications. Some of the private publications such as *the Guardian*, *This Day*, *Daily Trust*, *Vanguard*, *Punch* and *National Champion* have attempted to have a national spread but mostly they represent the views or interests

¹⁴ See, Shaka Momodu, "Moneymen Behind PDP", *This Day*. July 25, 2003.

of particular sections of the country. For instance, the Abuja based *Daily Trust* canvasses the interest of the north, *National Champion* champions the interest of the Igbo while the *Punch* tends to speak for the Yoruba. Because most of the publications are located in the south-west, they are regarded as representing the interests of the Yoruba groups. However such perceptions could be exaggerated as Olukotun (2002) points out because although reputable newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *This Day* are published from Lagos, in the South-West, they are actually owned by non-Yoruba and a considerable proportion of their staff come from other ethnic groups other than Yoruba. Federal Government owned papers such as *Daily Times* and *New Nigeria* and a number of states owned papers are virtually moribund. The mouth piece of the Federal Government and most of the states government appears to be the electronic media. Most of the media are owned by either the states government or the federal government. These include the Nigeria Television Authority, Federal Radio Corporation, News Agency of Nigeria and Voice of Nigeria as well as the various television and radio stations established by the states. With the opening up of the electronic media to private entrepreneurs, private electronic media such as Africa Independent Television, Ray Power, MINAG Broadcasting, Channels, are popular because they take an independent stance in their commentary and reporting unlike the government owned media that tend to be biased in favour of government.

Media reports have often influenced government to adopt particular policies. However, the operations of the media are constrained by political, cultural and socio-economic factors. In 2002 for instance, Nigeria's decision to host the Miss World Beauty Pageant was botched following riots that were triggered by a publication in *This Day* which some Muslims considered offensive to their religion. The reactions of Moslem groups which ultimately led to the self exile of the journalist who authored the controversial story puts in bold relief the importance different groups in the Nigerian society attach to the media. In fact, there is a silent struggle among Nigerian ethnic and religious groups to control the media. The closeness of the journalists to policy makers and the fact that journalists often appointed to manage the information ministry or become personal assistants to public officer holders have made journalists influential in the corridors of power. Recently, for instance *This Day* Newspaper reported that about 8 of its staff have been offered political appointments.¹⁵ Apart from the government, international organizations and non-governmental organizations have used the media to advance their different projects by inviting journalists to participate in their programmes and circulating their reports to the press. Some of the papers such as *This Day* devote special pages to "Development" to serialize such publications and have written editorials on the critical ones to add their voice to them. The media will be a useful lever in the CRISE programme, especially for dissemination.

Think tanks

There are a number of think tanks in Nigeria which aspire to influence public policy in Nigeria. This includes those established by government like Nigeria Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER) Ibadan, National Centre for Economic Management (NCEMA) Ibadan, Nigerian Institute for International Affairs (NIIA) Lagos, Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in the Presidency, Abuja, etc.; and the non governmental initiatives such as the African Leadership Forum (ALF) Ota, African Centre for Economic and Social Studies (ACDESS) Ijebu Ode, Centre for Advanced Social

¹⁵ It is important to note here that the NUJ has threatened that it will no longer cooperate with governments that appoint non-journalists as Information Commissioners from 2007 when the next government will take off. See, *This Day*, 15 October 2003.

Science (CASS) Port Harcourt, Development Policy Centre (DPC) Ibadan, Centre for Research and Documentation (CRD) Kano and the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD). Some of the think tanks like the Centre for African Regional Integration and Border Studies, University of Lagos are attached to universities. While it is reasonable to expect government owned think tanks to influence policies, the exact linkage of the non-governmental think tanks to the policy-making process can not be precisely stated and they face some constraints in accessing the key policy makers (Ajakaiye 1992). Nonetheless, some of them influence policy through their research and publications. Government has been known to use their intellectual resources. Moreover, some of the groups such as the ACDESS which is directed by Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, former executive secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) are led by persons who have direct links with government and are therefore in a position to sell their ideas. The ALF which was formed by the present president after retiring as general is still close to the president and has been involved in policies related to the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). The think tanks frequently invite government officials to their programmes and have used such opportunities to pass on their views to government. Mention has already been made of the Policy Dialogues of CASS. The Centre also has a Board of Economists which meets occasionally to brainstorm of the state of the Nigerian economy, make inputs into and review the national budgets. Communiqués of the meetings are usually published in the popular media and circulated to relevant government officials and agencies and international organizations. Some of the recommendations have been adopted and implemented by government. Finally, some of the groups have leverage over policies by virtue of the fact that they work with international organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that are influential in government circles.

International organizations and development agencies

There are various international development agencies that influence public policy in Nigeria. Some are multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and others are specialized agencies of the United Nations of which Nigeria is a member. This includes the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to mention but a few. The United Nations Development Programme has implemented various programmes ranging from adult literacy, micro credits, skills acquisitions and cooperative development in various parts of the country. In 1996-1997, the UNDP conducted a major survey on the Peoples Vision Plan of Development, and through it brought to the attention of policy makers the kinds of visions that the people of Nigeria have concerning development. That initiative was instrumental to the preparation of the Vision 2010 Plan by the Federal Government. Following the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the UNDP facilitated the first international conference of the NDDC and has since assisted the NDDC in organizing stakeholder workshops where community groups, business and policy makers explore ways to partner with the NDCC to actualize its mandate of facilitating development in the Niger Delta. There are also agencies of foreign governments such as the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). DFID is currently supporting a programme titled "Access to Justice" to enable NGOs and policy makers improve on the country's judicial system and has also provided support for water programmes in central Nigeria. USAID had supported the training of elected officials on democracy and good governance as well as initiated various programmes on conflict resolution. The European Union supported Nigerian NGOs to monitor the 1999 and 2003 elections and since 2000 has launched a major micro credit scheme in impoverished Niger Delta communities.

These initiatives were all done in partnership with the Nigerian government or civil society organizations. Most of the studies of the UNDP for example, were actually conducted by Nigerians who recorded people's views. The linkage with government is also evident in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) where the World Bank is working with the National Core Team to produce a poverty reduction strategy paper, which has become a sort of conditionality for debt rescheduling, for Nigeria.

Finally, the Stockholm-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) collaborated with Nigeria academics, artists and civil society activist to produce a book "Nigeria: Continuing Dialogues for Nation-Building" which details the problems and strengths of Nigerian democracy and suggests ways of enhancing democratization and nation-building. The report was presented to the president and various government officials participated in the presentation workshops organized at the six geo-political zones of the country.

The international development agencies are useful policy levers even though their narratives or ideologies have not always been seen to be in the best interest of Nigeria. Several public officials, we interacted with, for instance, expressed concern at the penchant of the development organizations to come with ready made ideas that they want implemented and to shun local initiatives. Under such circumstances, the bureaucrats claimed that they co-operated with the agencies and gave them the kind of report they needed just to secure finance even though they knew from the onset that such initiatives were unworkable. This explains some of the failures of the development agencies. This notwithstanding however, the fact is that the IDAs possess the institutional resources and international backing to influence policy. The CRISE programme might explore the possibilities of making them carriers of the outcome of the research and policy initiative.

4. Conclusions

The Nigerian public policy sphere is a complex one where various interests both local and external jostle for pre-eminence. By looking at this complex milieu, we have identified a large number of state and non-state actors in the policy making process which has been defined as "the processes of planning, programming and allocating service resources to public programmes" (Akindode 1976). The challenge for CRISE is to develop the appropriate methodology for engagement with the different policy levers discussed in this paper. We suggest a framework in which some of the actors will be core policy levers strategically located in the policy space and will be useful in taking CRISE policy recommendations into the engine rooms of policy, while the others will be part of the dissemination process and are expected to adopt CRISE findings as part of their policy inputs. This framework is elaborated in the following table.

Policy Levers for CRISE programme

Core Policy Levers		Dissemination Group	
<i>State Actors</i>	<i>Non State Actors</i>	<i>State Actors</i>	<i>Non State Actors</i>
Presidency President, Vice President, Advisers/ Assistants on Legal and Constitutional Matters, Budget and Economic Matters, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Ethics and Good Governance,	Civil society NLC NBA NUJ NES	Institutions The Nigeria Police Nigerian Army	Religious Bodies NSCIA CAN Ethno-political Assoc. Afenifere, MOSOP APC, OPC, MBF, Ohanaeze Ndi Igbo, Urhobo Progressive Union, Eastern Mandate Union
Statutory Bodies National Executive Council, National Council of States, National Security Council, and Federal Character Commission. Agencies such as NDDC, NBC, RMAFC, NAPEC, NCC, CSC	Eminent persons Retired judges and chairs of judicial commissions of enquiry	Parastatals NOA NPC INEC FOS	Political Parties Chair/ Secretary PDP ANPP AD APGA
Bureaucracy Secretary to the Federal Government Permanent Secretary in ministries of Finance, Justice, Education, Health, Internal Affairs, Youth and Women, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Water, Police Affairs, Works, Intergovernmental Relations	Think Tanks ALF ADCESS DPC CASS CRD	Legislature Chair, Conference of Speakers of State Houses of Assembly	Civil society NCWS ASUU CLO ERA CFCR ERN HRM LHR
Think Tanks IPCR, NISER, NIPSS	International Financial Institutions World Bank IMF	Media NAN NTA Radio Nigeria Daily Times	Media The Guardian This Day AIT
Federal Legislature Senate President, Speaker, House of Representatives, Chair, Senate and	Organized Private Sector NESG MAN	Local Govt. Chairmen/Secret ary	Organized Private sector NACIMMA NECF

House Committees on Appropriation, Internal Affairs, Local Government, Health, Education and Works			Shell
State levels actors Governors, commissioners, permanent secretaries, state security councils,	International Development Agencies WHO, UNICEF UNDP, ECOWAS DFID, USAID, EU	Think tanks NISER NIPSS NCEMA	International Agencies UNICEF WHO I-IDEA SIDA

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