

**The Role of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies in Enhancing Legislative Processes: A Performance Review of the Democracy and Governance Department from 2019-2023**

\* Abubakar Sodeeq Suleiman<sup>1</sup> and Emmanuel Adolije Adejoh<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>*Director-General Department, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division, National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), Nigeria.*

<sup>2</sup>*PhD Student, Department of Legislative Studies, Institute of Governance and Development Studies, Federal University Lokoja-Nigeria.*

\*Corresponding Author: [abubakar.suleiman@nils.gov.ng](mailto:abubakar.suleiman@nils.gov.ng)

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**Abstract**

*This paper examines the performance of the Department of Democracy and Governance Department (DDG) from 2019 to 2023, analyzing its contributions to legislative strengthening through bill analysis, policy research, and capacity-building initiatives. Using institutional output data, the study reveals fluctuating productivity trends, with peak performance in 2019 (108 bills analyzed, 138 policy briefs) followed by gradual declines, attributed to COVID-19 disruptions (2020), election cycles (2023), and systemic resource constraints. The study adopts a qualitative-dominant descriptive and evaluative case study research design, with elements of longitudinal institutional performance review. The study was situated on capacity building theory as the framework. Key findings highlight the DDG's adaptive strategies, including expanded partnerships with international organizations (WFD, UN Women) and shifts toward gender-responsive governance programs. The paper proposes three strategic recommendations: strengthening research outputs through academic partnerships, optimizing resource allocation via digital tools and workload assessments, and enhancing monitoring frameworks to track policy impact. These evidence-based solutions address critical gaps in parliamentary support systems while offering transferable lessons for legislative strengthening in Africa. The study contributes to broader debates about institutional resilience, evidence-informed policymaking, and the role of technical units in democratic governance.*

**Keywords:** Evidence-based policy making, Institutional capacity, legislative strengthening, and, parliamentary support.

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**1. Introduction**

The effectiveness of legislative institutions is fundamental to the stability, functionality, and progress of any democratic society. In Nigeria, the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) serves as a critical institution dedicated to enhancing the capacity of lawmakers, improving legislative processes, and promoting democratic governance. The National

Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS), established in 2011 through an act of the Parliament, functions as a central research and training institution for legislators, parliamentary staff, and other governance stakeholders, with the mandate of strengthening democratic institutions in Nigeria (NILDS, 2020). Among its various departments, the Department of Democracy and

Governance (DD&G) plays a central role in fostering good governance, legislative efficiency, and sustainable democratic development through policy research, capacity-building programs, and stakeholder engagement.

The period between 2019 and 2023 was particularly significant for Nigeria's democracy, characterized by general elections, constitutional amendments, and increasing public demand for transparency and accountability in governance. During this time, the DD&G implemented several key initiatives, including specialized training for legislators on public policy formulation, legislative oversight, and ethical governance (Oluwasanmi, 2022). Additionally, the department facilitated dialogues between lawmakers, civil society organizations, and international partners to enhance participatory governance and policy effectiveness. Despite these efforts, Nigeria's legislative framework continues to face challenges such as executive-legislative conflicts, weak oversight mechanisms, and limited public trust in governance processes (Fagbadebo & Hassan, 2021). These issues underscore the need for a critical assessment of the DD&G's performance in driving legislative reforms and democratic consolidation.

This study conducts a comprehensive performance review of the DD&G from 2019 to 2023 (this period marked a critical point of leadership change in the Institute and National Assembly, respectively), evaluating its contributions to legislative strengthening and democratic governance. The research examines key programs and measurable legislative outcomes to determine the department's effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate. By analyzing successes, challenges, and areas for improvement, this study provides valuable insights for policymakers, development partners, and governance experts seeking to enhance Nigeria's democratic

institutions. Previous studies have largely concentrated on the general role of NILDS in legislative capacity building and democratic consolidation. For instance, Omotoso and Kehinde (2020) and Oluwasanmi (2022) emphasize NILDS's contribution to improving lawmakers' technical competence through training and policy advisory services. Similarly, Obadan, Dan-Azumi, and Egwu (2019) document the Institute's support to parliamentary committees through bill analysis, policy briefs, and legislative drafting. While these studies provide valuable insights into NILDS's institutional mandate and activities, they tend to adopt a broad, descriptive approach, often treating the Institute as a monolithic entity rather than disaggregating its internal departments and their specific outputs.

Current debates in legislative and governance scholarship increasingly emphasize the need for empirical, output-based assessments of democratic institutions. Scholars argue that institutional relevance should be evaluated not only in terms of statutory mandates but also through measurable contributions to legislative processes, policy outcomes, and institutional resilience, particularly during periods of political transition and external shocks such as elections and pandemics (Adejumobi, 2020; Khumalo et al., 2022). This shift reflects a growing concern with accountability, performance measurement, and evidence-informed policymaking within legislative systems. Despite this growing body of work, a clear gap remains in the literature. There is limited empirical research that systematically examines the department-level performance of NILDS over time, especially using longitudinal data. In particular, the Department of Democracy and Governance (DDG) which is one of the Institute's core operational units which has not been subjected to a focused performance review that tracks its

outputs, adaptations, and challenges across multiple years. Existing studies rarely analyze how external factors such as COVID-19 disruptions, election cycles, and leadership transitions affect departmental productivity and strategic priorities.

This study is motivated by the need to address this gap by providing a systematic, evidence-based performance review of the Democracy and Governance Department of NILDS between 2019 and 2023

The findings will contribute to ongoing debates on legislative efficiency and offer recommendations for optimizing the DDG's role in Nigeria's legislative processes.

## **2. Literature Review**

Legislative effectiveness is a cornerstone of democratic governance, particularly in emerging democracies where institutional capacity often lags behind constitutional aspirations (Barkan, 2009). In Nigeria, the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) serves as a pivotal institution designed to strengthen the legislative arm of government through research, capacity building, and policy advisory services. Established in 2011, NILDS operates under the auspices of the National Assembly, with its Democracy and Governance Department playing a critical role in fostering legislative efficiency, democratic consolidation, and evidence-based policymaking.

Legislative support institutions like NILDS are critical in emerging democracies where legislative inefficiency often hampers governance (Adejumobi, 2020). According to Omotoso & Kehinde (2020), such institutions enhance lawmakers' capacity through training, research, and technical assistance, thereby improving lawmaking and oversight functions. NILDS operates within this framework, aligning its programs with Nigeria's democratic needs.

The Institute has significantly enhanced legislative processes by producing high-quality publications, including books, policy analysis reports, manuals, and guides tailored for legislators and committee staff. These resources address a wide range of topics such as legislative oversight, drafting, practices, procedures, and induction for new legislators. Serving as essential reference materials, they support legislators and committee staff across regional, national, and sub-national parliaments, both within Nigeria and beyond (Obadan, Dan-Azumi and Egwu, 2019).

The Institute has further bolstered legislative processes by deploying its experts to key committees in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. These specialists provide crucial technical support, including conducting in-depth research and analysis, drafting bills, scrutinizing proposed legislation, and preparing policy briefs. Such contributions ensure that committee decisions are well-informed and grounded in sound evidence. Additionally, the Institute's internship program on legislative drafting, initiated in 2022, aims to bridge the gap in the shortage of legislative drafters in the country. This programme equips interns with the necessary knowledge and skills in legislative drafting, enhancing their capacity to actively contribute to the drafting of laws and other legislative instruments for the legislature in Nigeria (Obadan, Dan-Azumi and Egwu, 2019).

The Institute provides support through training, technical assistance, and policy advice to legislators, parliamentary staff, and legislative aides. Additionally, NILDS offers legislative support services such as bill drafting, analysis, scrutiny, and tracking, as well as conducting research and producing policy and information briefs to assist lawmakers.

The enabling Act of the Institute, enacted in 2011, confers specific powers to

strengthen legislative functions and processes. Section 2 of the Act grants the Institute the authority to Promote critical research material and policy insights as background materials for committees of the National Assembly; and Improve the technical capacity of legislative staff, committee secretaries, and political aides to process appropriation bills and oversee executive policies.

Furthermore, Section 3 of the Act empowers NILDS to Conduct periodic short and refresher courses for National and State legislators, staff, committee secretaries, and political aides on democracy and good governance; and Provide research reports for legislation for the National Assembly, their committees, or the Legal Services Department of the National Assembly.

Between 2019 and 2023, the department delivered a broad array of training programmes targeting legislators, legislative staff and civil-society actors. According to NILDS's own strategic overview, these included induction courses for newly elected federal and state legislators, specialized workshops on committee processes, and targeted seminars on constituency development funds and security sector oversight (PM&E Report, 2023).

Empirical tracking on the departmental website shows that in 2023 alone the department hosted at least 12 major training events, including the Women in Governance Conference and the National Quiz Competition, with over 400 participants drawn from all six geopolitical zones (NILDS, 2023).

The department's research fellows have produced a steady stream of peer-reviewed outputs and "briefs"—from analysis of court judgments affecting legislative autonomy to policy papers on electoral reforms. The NILDS Journal of Democratic Studies published nine articles in its 2023 Volume 3, including empirical

studies on human trafficking and post-legislative scrutiny in Nigeria, reflecting the department's action-oriented research agenda (NILDS, 2023).

In total, NILDS's Institutional Repository lists over 25 policy briefs, occasional papers and committee manuals released between 2019 and 2023 by DDG, making these readily accessible to both legislators and the public (NILDS, 2023).

Beyond training and research, the Democracy and Governance Department provided direct support to parliamentary committees through bill analysis, motion drafting and impact assessments. As documented by NILDS's annual performance summaries, the department contributed to analysis on over 30 bills from the 9th National Assembly (2019–2023), including the Budget Process Bill and the Electoral Act amendments. These analyses underpinned committee debates and were formally cited in committee reports at least eight times during the period and have recently cultivated partnerships with domestic and international stakeholders to amplify its impact. Notable collaborations included joint programmes with UN Women on gender-responsive budgeting, with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy on legislative transparency, and with AWEPA on ECOWAS parliamentary exchanges (PM&E Report, 2023).

## **2.1 Comparative Analysis**

### **2.1.1 The Malawi Parliament Enhancement Programme (MPEP)**

Implemented between 2017 and 2020, the Malawi Parliament Enhancement Programme (MPEP) aimed to foster supportive political behavior, drive institutional reforms, and strengthen parliamentary capacity to improve performance and effectiveness. MPEP adopts a dual approach, addressing both political and technical barriers that hinder Parliament's ability to fulfill its mandate. By engaging power dynamics, incentives,

and external influences, the program seeks to enhance parliamentary functions and promote sustainable governance improvements.

To ensure long-term impact, MPEP is institutionally anchored within the Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC), empowering Parliament to lead, oversee, and sustain the reforms. The project brings together a multidisciplinary team of local and international experts in governance and evidence-based policy transformation. Through close collaboration with leaders across the political spectrum, MPEP drives concrete, lasting actions to elevate parliamentary performance (AFIDEP, 2020).

The Malawi Parliament Enhancement Project (MPEP) was designed and implemented to strengthen institutional capacities across multiple levels of parliamentary operations. The project delivered targeted interventions that enhanced the capabilities of both parliamentarians and the Parliamentary Secretariat staff in effectively executing their core constitutional mandates.

Through its comprehensive programming, MPEP specifically focused on building competencies in three key functional areas which are Legislative processes and lawmaking, Oversight and accountability mechanisms and, Constituency representation and public engagement.

The capacity development initiatives were carefully structured to address both the technical skills of parliamentary staff and the strategic leadership needs of elected representatives. This dual approach ensured that institutional strengthening occurred at all operational levels while maintaining alignment with democratic governance principles.

Funding for this parliamentary reform initiative was provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with grant administration handled through the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Lilongwe. The

project implementation followed a collaborative partnership model between two principal entities; The Parliament of Malawi (as the primary beneficiary and institutional anchor) and, The African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP) (as the technical implementation partner)

This strategic partnership combined AFIDEP's expertise in governance programming with the Parliament's institutional knowledge and mandate, creating an effective framework for sustainable capacity development. The project design incorporated mechanisms for institutional ownership and knowledge transfer to ensure the longevity of implemented reforms beyond the project timeline (AFIDEP, 2020).

#### **2.1.2 The Parliament of Kenya's Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training (CPST) and the Parliament of Uganda's Institute of Parliamentary Studies (IPS).**

The Parliament of Kenya's Centre for Parliamentary Studies and Training (CPST) and the Parliament of Uganda's Institute of Parliamentary Studies (IPS) serve as specialized capacity-building institutions mandated by their respective legislatures to enhance the skills of parliamentarians and support staff through strategic partnerships. Both institutes bring extensive experience across diverse parliamentary functions, offering valuable institutional perspectives on legislative capacity needs. Uganda's IPS recognized early the critical importance of evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) for effective parliamentary debate, leading to systematic reviews of institutional structures and processes needed to support evidence use. The institute collaborates with key partners including INASP, the Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI), and Makerere University's Center for Rapid Evidence Synthesis (ACRES) to deliver ongoing professional development in evidence-based policymaking.



Similarly, Kenya's CPST provides comprehensive capacity-strengthening programs for both the national parliament and county assemblies, featuring a robust curriculum covering parliamentary operations, roles, and responsibilities to ensure effective mandate delivery.

Both institutions have contributed significantly to regional knowledge-sharing initiatives, particularly through their participation in the Regional Peer-Learning Programme (RPLP) led by CLEAR-AA and Twende Mbele, which facilitates cross-border exchange of best practices in legislative strengthening. These parallel efforts demonstrate how dedicated parliamentary training institutes can systematically address capacity gaps while fostering a culture of evidence-based governance and professional development across East African legislatures (Khumalo *et al.*, 2022).

### **Theoretical Review**

This study is grounded in three interrelated theories: Institutional Theory, Systems Theory, and Capacity Building Theory. These frameworks provide the conceptual lenses through which the functions and impact of the Democracy and Governance Department of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies (NILDS) can be critically assessed in relation to its role in enhancing legislative processes in Nigeria between 2019 and 2023.

### **Institutional Theory**

Institutional theory was propounded by John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan (1977); further developed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983).

Institutional theory posits that institutions are not merely structures but also systems of established rules, norms, and routines that guide the behavior of individuals and organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Institutions shape political behavior by embedding certain expectations and

providing legitimacy to specific actions within political and legislative settings.

NILDS functions as a formal institution created to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Nigeria's legislature. Through its Democracy and Governance Department, NILDS offers structured support services such as training, policy analysis, and technical assistance. Institutional theory provides a valuable framework to examine how NILDS, as an institutional actor, influences the behavior, decisions, and performance of legislators and legislative staff through its formalized processes and norms.

### **Strengths:**

It emphasizes the role of formal structures and norms in shaping political behavior.

It accounts for how institutional legitimacy affects the adoption and implementation of best practices.

### **Weaknesses:**

It often underplays the role of individual agency and informal dynamics.

It may overlook how institutions themselves evolve in response to environmental changes.

### **Systems Theory**

The proponent of system theory was David Easton (1953) and this was further articulated in *The Political System* in 1953. Systems theory conceptualizes political institutions as components of a larger, dynamic system where inputs (demands, supports) are processed to produce outputs (laws, policies), which in turn generate feedback (Easton, 1953). It emphasizes interdependence among components of a system and the importance of feedback mechanisms for systemic adaptation.

NILDS can be viewed as a subsystem within Nigeria's broader political and legislative system. The Democracy and Governance Department contributes inputs such as research, policy recommendations, and capacity-building programs that feed into legislative functions like lawmaking, oversight, and representation. This theory

enables the analysis of how these inputs influence legislative outputs and how feedback from legislators can refine future institutional interventions. The strength of the theory is in its ability to provide a holistic view of the interactions among institutions, actors, and processes and, emphasizes the importance of feedback for institutional learning and improvement while its weakness is its overly mechanistic and may ignore power dynamics and political conflict and, sometimes lacks clarity in defining system boundaries and inputs/outputs.

### **Capacity Building Theory**

Capacity building theory was proposed by Paul Streeten at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1997).

Capacity building theory focuses on enhancing the abilities of individuals, institutions, and systems to perform functions, solve problems, and achieve objectives sustainably. It stresses the importance of knowledge, skills, infrastructure, and institutional frameworks in fostering effective governance.

The Democracy and Governance Department's central mandate revolves around capacity building for legislators and legislative bodies. By offering targeted training, workshops, and technical assistance, the department aims to enhance the functional competence of legislative actors. This theory is especially useful in evaluating whether and how these interventions have strengthened the legislature's performance over the period under review. This theory's strength lies in how it focuses directly on human and institutional development and, easily operationalized through performance indicators such as training impact, legislative efficiency, and policy implementation. Its weakness can be viewed from the point that it often assumes a linear relationship between training and performance, which may not hold in

complex political settings and, may neglect contextual political factors that impede capacity utilization.

### **Recommended Framework for Adoption**

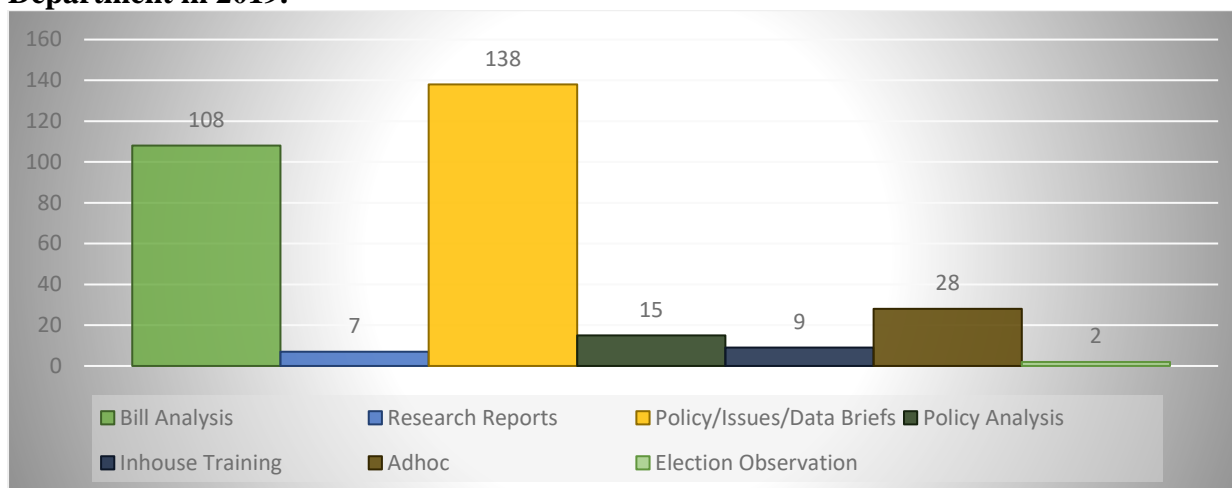
While each of the three theories offers distinct analytical value, Capacity Building Theory is the most appropriate for this study. This is because the Democracy and Governance Department of NILDS is fundamentally focused on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and institutional capacities of the legislature. The theory provides a practical framework for evaluating both the inputs (training, research, technical support) and the outcomes (improved legislative performance) of the department's interventions.

Institutional and Systems theories will serve as supporting frameworks, enriching the analysis by contextualizing NILDS within the broader institutional and systemic political environment of Nigeria. They help explain how and why capacity-building efforts translate—or fail to translate—into measurable legislative improvements.

#### 4. A Performance Review of the Democracy and Governance Department from 2019-2023.

Chart 1: Output for the Department of Democratic Studies

##### 4.1 Performance Review of the Democracy and Governance Department in 2019.



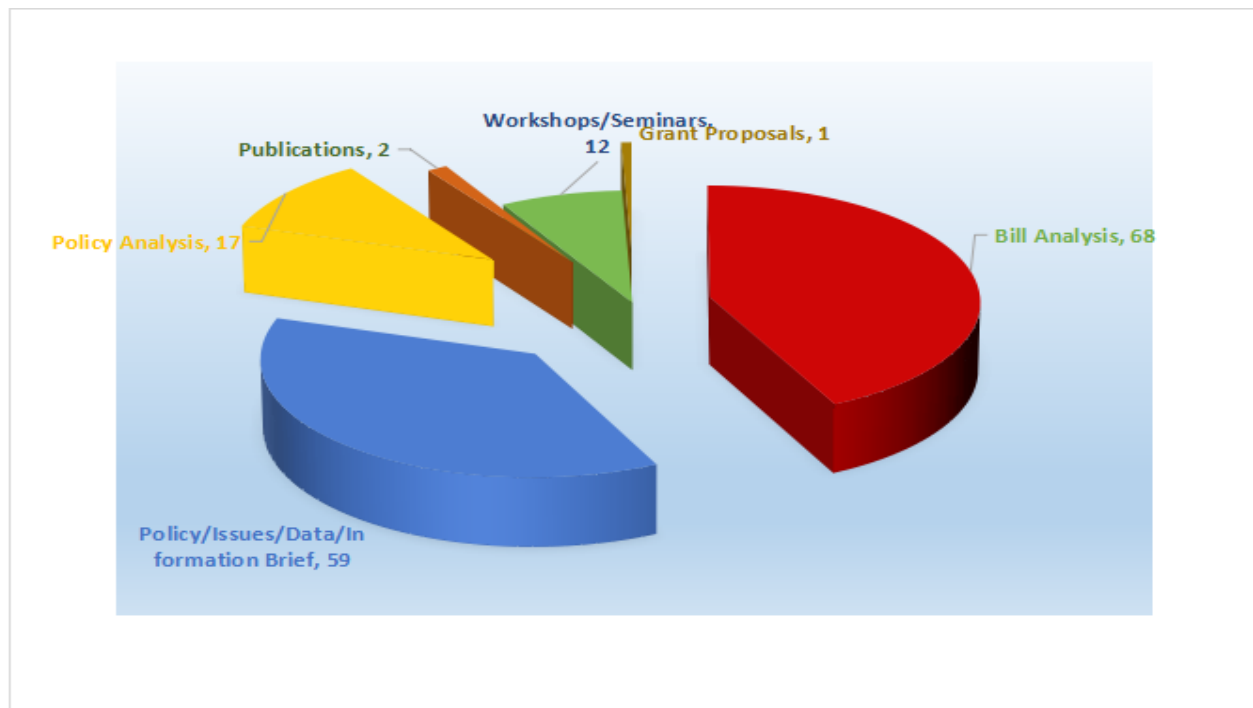
Source: NILDS Monitoring & Evaluation Unit 2019

Chart 1 reveals that at the end of the year under review, the department realized an output of one hundred and eight (108) Analyzed Bills, seven (7) Research Papers, hundred and thirty-eight (138) Policy/Information/Issue/Data Briefs, fifteen (15) Policy Analysis, (which have all been transmitted to National Assembly), nine (9) In-House Trainings, twenty-eight (28) Ad-hoc and two (2) election observations. The data above clearly indicates that the DDG has played a critical in its responsibility in enhancing the legislative processes.

##### 4.2 Performance Review of the Democracy and Governance Department in 2020.

Chart 2: Output for Department of Democratic Studies



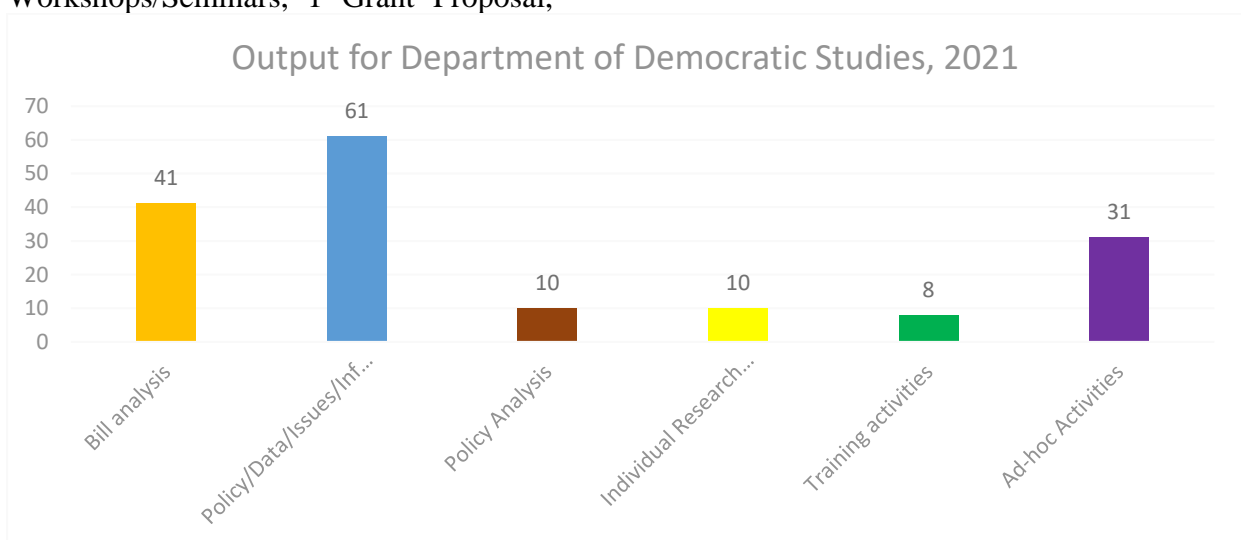


Source: NILDS Monitoring & Evaluation Unit, 2020

Again chart 2 above shows that as at December, 2020, the Department of Democratic Studies recorded a total output of 68 Analyzed Bills, 59 Policy/Issues/Data/Information Briefs, 17 Policies Analyzed, 12 Workshops/Seminars, 1 Grant Proposal,

and 2 Research Publications. This is commendable despite the Pandemic. However, in as much as the output is laudable, there is always room for improvement and especially when compared to the previous year (2019).

### Chart 3: Output for Democracy and Governance Department in 2021.



Source: NILDS Monitoring & Evaluation Unit, 2021

Chart 3 reveals that at the end of the year under review, the department realized an

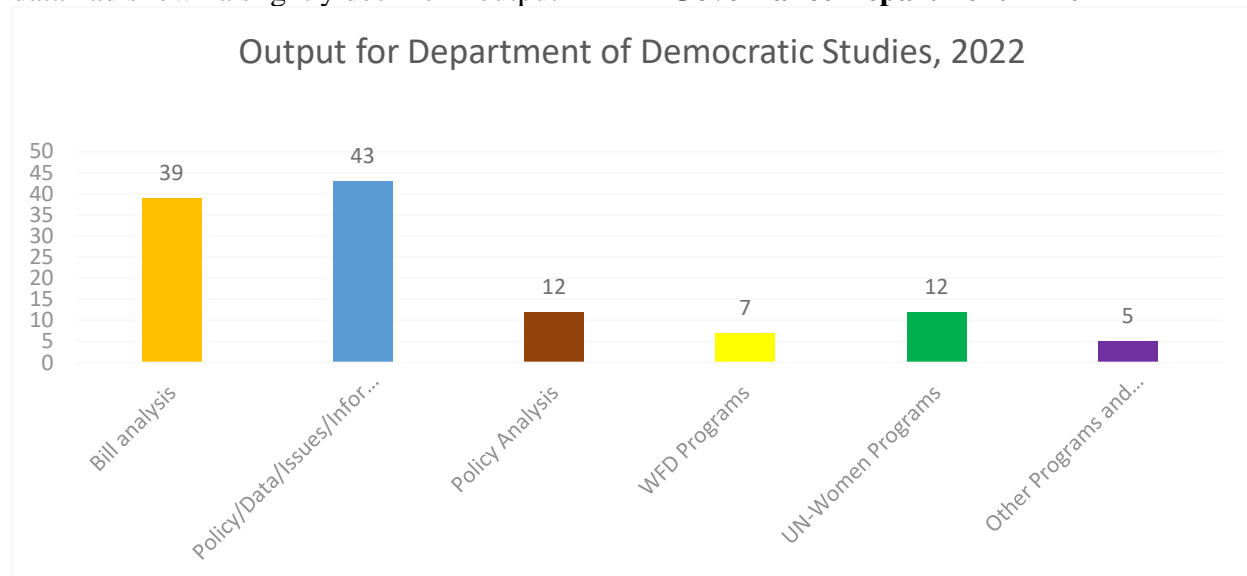
output of one forty one (41) Analyzed Bills, Ten (10) Research Papers, Sixty-one (61) Policy/Information/Issue/Data Briefs, Ten (10) Policy Analysis, (which have all

been transmitted to National Assembly), Ten (10) Trainings Activities, and Thirty-one (31) Ad-hoc Activities. The data above clearly indicates that the DDG while able to discharge their duties towards the betterment of the Legislative processes, the data had shown a slightly decline in output

when compare to the two previous years respectively.

#### **4.4 Performance Review of the Democracy and Governance Department in 2022.**

**Chart 4: Output for Democracy and Governance Department in 2022**



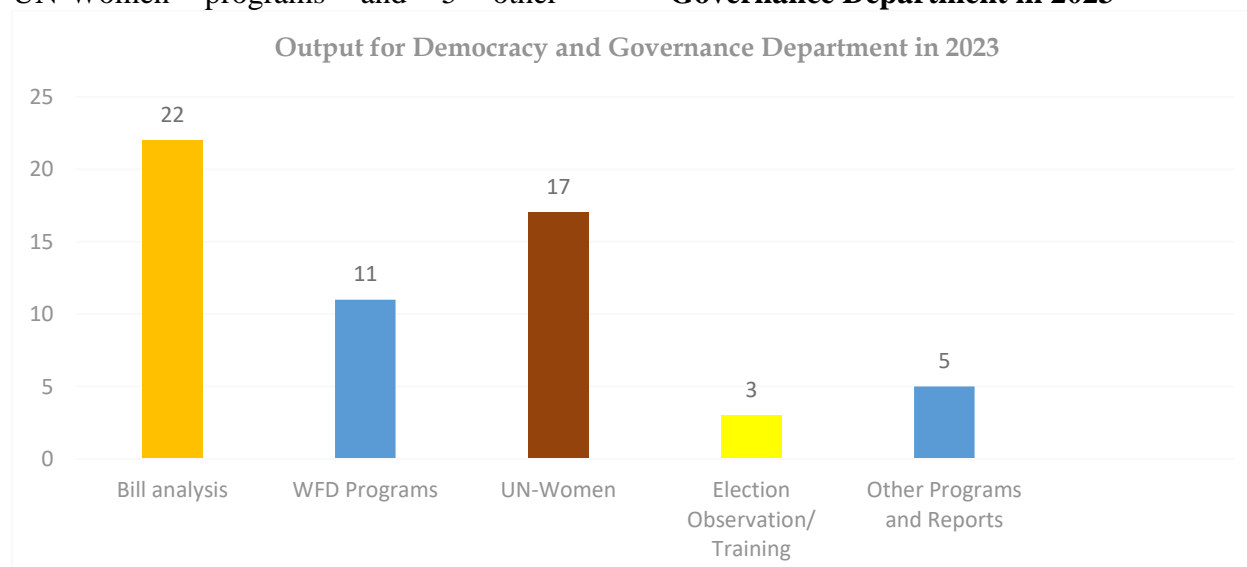
Source: NILDS Monitoring & Evaluation Unit, 2022

Chart 4 above shows that as at December, 2022, the Department of Democratic Studies recorded a total output of 39 Analyzed Bills, 43 Policy/Issues/Data/Information Briefs, 12 Policies Analyzed, 7 WFD programs, 12 UN-Women programs and 5 other

programs. This is commendable and laudable considering that the year witnesses a lot of capacity building training geared towards advancing the legislative processes and procedure.

#### **4.5 Performance Review of the Democracy and Governance Department in 2023.**

**Chart 5: Output for Democracy and Governance Department in 2023**



Source: NILDS Monitoring & Evaluation Unit, 2023

The chart five above shows that as at December, 2023, the Department of Democratic Studies recorded a total output of 22 Analyzed Bills, 11 WFD programs, 17 UN-Women programs, 3 Elections observation/ Training and 5 other programs. This is commendable and laudable considering that the year witnesses general election and an entire change of Government and as well as leadership of National Assembly.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The performance review of the Democracy and Governance Department (DGD) from 2019 to 2023 reveals significant trends in output, challenges, and adaptive strategies in supporting legislative processes. The data highlights both achievements and areas requiring improvement, providing valuable insights into the department's operational effectiveness over the four-year period.

The DGD demonstrated consistent productivity across key areas, though with notable fluctuations:

**Analyzed Bills:** Output peaked in 2019 (108 bills) but declined steadily to 22 bills in 2023. This reduction may reflect shifting priorities, such as increased focus on capacity-building programs (e.g., WFD and UN-Women initiatives) during election years (2023).

**Policy/Information Briefs:** High output in 2019 (138 briefs) and 2020 (59 briefs) suggests robust research and advocacy efforts, though later years saw moderation (e.g., 43 briefs in 2022).

**Capacity Building:** Training activities remained resilient, with 10 workshops in 2021 and specialized programs (e.g., 17 UN-Women programs in 2023), indicating adaptability to contextual demands like elections and leadership transitions.

### **Contribution of Findings to Research and Practice**

The performance review of the Democracy and Governance Department (DGD) from 2019 to 2023 offers valuable insights for legislative studies, governance research, and institutional capacity-building practices. Below are the key contributions:

#### **1. Contribution to Research**

##### **(a) Understanding Legislative Support Institutions**

- The study provides empirical data on the workload and output trends of a parliamentary capacity-building department, filling a gap in research on African legislative technical units.
- Findings highlight how external shocks (e.g., COVID-19, elections) impact legislative productivity, contributing to comparative governance studies.

##### **(b) Evidence-Informed Policymaking**

- The DGD's consistent production of policy briefs (peaking at 138 in 2019) demonstrates the role of research in shaping legislative debates.
- The decline in research papers (from 7 in 2019 to minimal reporting in 2023) suggests a need for further investigation into sustainability challenges in legislative research.

##### **(c) Institutional Adaptation & Resilience**

- The shift toward capacity-building programs (e.g., WFD/UN-Women collaborations) reflects adaptive strategies in legislative strengthening—an area needing more scholarly attention.

#### **2. Contribution to Practice**

##### **(a) Improving Parliamentary Efficiency**

- The findings highlight best practices in bill analysis and policy advisory services, offering a model

for other legislative bodies in Africa.

- The **decline in analyzed bills (108 in 2019 vs. 22 in 2023)** signals a need for better resource allocation and workflow optimization in parliamentary support units.

#### **(b) Strengthening Capacity-Building Programs**

- The rise in **training programs (e.g., 12 workshops in 2020, WFD engagements in 2022–2023)** provides a framework for **targeted legislative skills development**.
- Lessons from **election-year adaptations (2023)** can guide parliamentary institutions in **managing transitions without losing momentum**.

### **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **Recommendations**

#### **1. Strengthen Research Outputs Through Strategic Partnerships**

To elevate the DGD's role as a knowledge hub, deliberate efforts must be made to institutionalize research excellence. This requires moving beyond ad-hoc collaborations to establish structured partnerships with key academic and policy institutions. The department should formalize memoranda of understanding with leading Nigerian universities to create a pipeline for joint research projects, while simultaneously tapping into the expertise of regional think tanks through secondment programs. A dedicated research fund should be established to commission policy-relevant studies on pressing legislative issues, with particular emphasis on emerging challenges like digital governance and climate change legislation to foster a culture of evidence-based policymaking within the National Assembly. Crucially, these initiatives must be supported by the development of in-house research methodology training

programs to enhance the technical capacity of DGD staff.

#### **2. Enhance Resource Allocation for Efficiency**

The department's fluctuating productivity levels reveal systemic resource constraints that demand urgent attention. A comprehensive operational review should be conducted to identify and eliminate bottlenecks in the bill analysis process, potentially through the adoption of standardized templates and digital workflow systems. Strategic human resource planning must address both quantitative staffing gaps and qualitative skill deficiencies, possibly through targeted recruitment of specialists infilling those identified gaps.

#### **3. Expand Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) for Impact**

Moving beyond basic output tracking, the department needs to develop a sophisticated results measurement framework that captures its true legislative influence. This requires the development of outcome indicators that measure tangible impacts, such as the adoption rate of DGD recommendations in committee reports or the quality enhancement of legislative debates attributable to department briefings. Longitudinal tracking systems should be implemented to assess the enduring effects of capacity-building interventions on MPs' performance over successive assemblies. The integration of stakeholder perception surveys would provide valuable qualitative insights, while the public dissemination of performance metrics through annual scorecards would enhance accountability. These M&E enhancements should be supported by dedicated analytical staff and integrated with the National Assembly's broader performance management systems.

## Conclusion

The DGD has played a critical role in Nigeria's legislative processes, balancing core mandates with adaptive responses to external challenges. While output fluctuations reflect operational realities, the department's strategic engagements (e.g., WFD/UN-Women programs) underscore its evolving role in governance. Future success hinges on resource optimization, research revitalization, and sustained capacity development.

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