



A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF FUEL SUBSIDY REMOVAL ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS) IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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NETWORK FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH VISIBLE DISABILITIES (NAPVID)
info@napvid.org | www.napvid.org

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Abbreviations and Meanings

1. CBOs: Community-Based Organizations
2. FGD: Focus Group Discussion
3. GEEP: Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme.
4. JONAPWD: Joint National Associations of Persons with Disabilities.
5. KII: Key Informant Interview.
6. MDAs: Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government.
7. NAPVID: Network for the Advancement of People with Visible Disabilities.
8. NDI: National Democratic Institute
9. NGN: Nigerian Naira
10. PWDs: Persons with Disabilities
11. MSDGI: Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues.
12. ECTS: Edo City Transport Service.
13. MBTC: Ministry of Business, Trade, and Cooperative
14. MYHA - Ministry of Youth and Humanitarian Affair.
15. MOH - Ministry of Health.
16. EDSIPO - Edo Social Investment Programme.
17. BOI - Bank of Industry.

1. Executive Summary:

This executive summary presents the findings of a comprehensive study conducted to assess the impact of fuel subsidy removal on Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Edo State, Nigeria. The study examined the economic, social, and healthcare dimensions of the issue and evaluated existing government support programs.

Before the fuel subsidy removal, PWDs in Edo State faced certain challenges, such as limited employment opportunities, inadequate access to healthcare services, and social exclusion. However, the removal of the subsidy has intensified these challenges for PWDs.

The study reveals that the removal of fuel subsidies in Edo State has had significant negative impacts on PWDs, including economic hardships, as they face increased transportation costs and higher prices of essential items and services. PWDs also experience social isolation and limited participation in events and gatherings. Access to healthcare has become more challenging due to rising medical costs, increased transportation cost and difficulties in accessing quality healthcare services.

To address these challenges, the study recommends implementing subsidized transportation programmes for PWDs, stabilizing prices of essential items such as food, improving accessibility and affordability of public transportation and health facilities, streamlining the distribution of palliative items strengthening support systems and providing targeted support for PWDs in agriculture and employment, are all vital steps. In addition, inclusive social programs, awareness campaigns, involving PWDs in decision-making, and operationalizing the Edo Persons with Disabilities Law of 2022, are recommended to support PWDs in Edo State.

These measures aim to alleviate the difficulties faced by PWDs and improve their overall well-being in the post-subsidy removal context.

2. Objectives

The objective of this study was twofold: to assess the impact of fuel subsidy removal on Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Edo State, Nigeria, and to evaluate the effectiveness of existing government support programs for PWDs. The study aimed to comprehensively examine the economic, social, and healthcare dimensions of the issue, taking into account the specific challenges faced by PWDs in the post-subsidy removal context. By understanding these challenges, the study sought to provide actionable recommendations that would enhance support systems and improve the overall well-being of PWDs in Edo State. Assess the Impact of Fuel Subsidy Removal on Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Edo State, Nigeria

3. Methodology

3.1. Description of the Study Area

Nestled in the heart of southern Nigeria, Edo State pulsates with the rhythm of ancient traditions and modern life. It is a land characterized by diverse landscapes, including rolling hills, lush farmland, vibrant cities, and serene waterways. With a population exceeding 4.7 million and covering an approximate landmass of 17,803 square kilometers, Edo State offers a wide range of experiences.

3.1.1. Geography and Climate:

Edo State benefits from a tropical savanna climate, which manifests in two distinct seasons. The wet season, occurring from April to October is marked by verdant landscapes and refreshing thunderstorms. The dry season, spanning from November to March, brings warm temperatures and clear skies. The topography of the state comprises rolling hills, fertile plains, and the majestic Niger River flowing along its eastern border.

3.1.2. History and Culture:

Edo State boasts a rich and colorful history, intricately woven with the legacy of the powerful Benin Kingdom. The iconic Oba's Palace in Benin City, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, stands as a testament to the kingdom's architectural brilliance and artistic prowess. Its intricate carvings and priceless artifacts whisper tales of past grandeur. Presently, the state retains its vibrant cultural tapestry, evident in numerous festivals like the Igue Yemwen, which celebrates the Oba's coronation. The state is also home to diverse ethnic groups such as the Bini, Esan, and Afemai, each with their unique traditions and languages. Skilled artisans in the state create magnificent bronze sculptures and intricate beadwork, showcasing the region's artistic heritage.

3.1.3. Economy and Infrastructure:

Edo State serves as a vital economic hub for Nigeria, with diverse industries driving its growth. Agriculture remains the backbone of the state, with major crops including cassava, yams, and rubber. The state also boasts a thriving manufacturing sector and a burgeoning oil and gas industry. Benin City, the state capital, is a major commercial center, while towns like Auchi and Ekpoma make significant contributions through agriculture and education. In recent years, Edo State has witnessed significant infrastructural development, including improved roads, air connectivity through Benin Airport, and the presence of esteemed educational institutions like the University of Benin and Ambrose Alli University, which contribute to a skilled workforce.

3.2. Methods and Data Collection Tools:

To conduct an in-depth study on the impact of fuel subsidy removal on Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Edo State, a mixed research method was employed, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The goal was to capture a comprehensive understanding of the economic, social, and healthcare dimensions affecting PWDs, as well as evaluate government support programs and develop practical solutions.

3.2.1. Quantitative Research:

The quantitative aspect of the assessment focused on obtaining statistical insights into PWDs' humanitarian needs and access. This was achieved through the use of Household Survey

Questionnaires distributed among a representative sample of PWDs in Edo State. The questionnaires, available in English, were designed to collect structured data on various aspects, including economic challenges, social impacts, healthcare concerns, and the effectiveness of government support programs.

3.2.2. Qualitative Research:

The qualitative research approach aimed to delve into the subjective experiences, feelings, thoughts, and perceptions of sampled informants regarding the Impact of Fuel Subsidy Removal on Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) In Edo State, Nigeria. Key informants-government officials representing government Edo State Ministries participated in the Key Informant Interviews, while representatives of registered PWDs associations, affiliated to JONAPWD participated in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). These discussions provided valuable qualitative data to complement the quantitative findings. The research also included a desk review of Edo State government legal documents, frameworks, and policies to examine the existing social protection programs, if any, and make recommendations for new or strengthened policies by the Edo state government to alleviate the effects on people with disabilities (PWDs).

3.2.3. Household Survey Participant Selection Process:

Participants were selected from households within the target population of people with disabilities (PWDs). A total of 60 PWDs were selected for the survey, ensuring representation from different disability clusters. The selection was done in collaboration with registered PWD associations affiliated with JONAPWD, taking into consideration the three senatorial districts of the state. To ensure a balanced representation, 20 PWDs were chosen from each district, considering factors such as disability type and gender distribution.

3.2.4. FGD Participant Selection Process:

36 PWDs across disability clusters were selected from registered PWD associations affiliated with JONAPWD. 12 PWDs were chosen from each of the three senatorial districts of the state, taking into account disability type and gender distribution.

3.2.5. Data Collection Tools:

3.2.5.1. Household Survey Questionnaires: Structured questionnaires were designed to gather quantitative data on economic challenges, social impacts, healthcare concerns, and the effectiveness of government support programs. These questionnaires were distributed among a representative sample of PWDs in Edo State. A total of 60 questionnaires were administered, with 20 questionnaires given to PWD households in each of the three senatorial districts: Edo South, Central, and North, in Edo State.

3.2.5.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): FGDs were conducted with persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the three senatorial districts of Edo State, namely Auchi for Edo North, Ekpoma for Edo Central, and Benin for Edo South. Each district had 12 PWD participants. The purpose of these discussions was to gain qualitative insights into the subjective experiences, feelings, and thoughts regarding the impact of fuel subsidy removal on PWDs in Edo State, Nigeria.

3.2.5.3. Key Informant Interview: Key informant interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups involved in social protection initiatives in Edo State. These interviews aimed to gather valuable insights from expert policymakers in government MDAs, charged with providing social services for PWDs. The information obtained from these interviews provided a deeper understanding of the availability and inclusiveness of social protection initiatives for PWDs in the state.

3.2.5.4. Desk Review: A desk review was conducted to gather information on social protection initiatives in Edo State. This review aimed to examine existing documentation, such as legal documents, frameworks, and policies, related to social protection programs for people with disabilities (PWDs). By analyzing these documents, the desk review sought to gain insights into the availability and inclusiveness of social protection initiatives for PWDs in the state.

3.3. Data Sources:

Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized in this assessment:

3.3.1. Primary Data: Collected through Household Survey Questionnaires, FGDs, and key informant interviews with stakeholder groups.

3.3.2. Secondary Data: Comprising information obtained from a desk review of available frameworks in the state to ascertain the availability of social protection initiatives and the inclusiveness of these initiatives for PWDs.

3.4. Data Analysis Approach and Ethical Considerations:

3.4.1. Data Analysis Approach:

The assessment employed a multifaceted data analysis approach, encompassing descriptive statistical, legal, and thematic analysis techniques to organize, analyze, and interpret major findings.

3.4.1.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis: To present quantitative responses, descriptive statistical techniques such as percentages, frequency, averages, tables, and charts were applied. This approach aimed to provide a clear quantitative overview of the impact of fuel subsidy removal on Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Edo State.

3.4.1.2. Legal Analysis: A legal analysis was undertaken to scrutinize existing gaps in the context of normative frameworks related to the rights and protection of PWDs. This allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the legal implications surrounding the rights of PWDs in the aftermath of the fuel subsidy removal.

3.4.1.3. Thematic Analysis: The assessment thematically organized and analyzed major findings across three principal themes. These themes were developed based on the primary objectives of the study: a) the overall situation of PWDs; b) the nature and accessibility of humanitarian services and needs of PWDs; and c) barriers challenging access. Thematic analysis facilitated a nuanced exploration of the multifaceted impact of fuel subsidy removal on PWDs.

3.4.2. Data Triangulation:

The entire data analysis and interpretation process involved a series of data triangulation processes. This rigorous approach enhanced the reliability and validity of the findings by cross-verifying information from multiple sources and methods.

3.4.3. Ethical Considerations:

The assessment adhered to relevant ethical principles and standard data management protocols. The involvement of PWDs in the entirety of the process, from the development stage to the final report, was in the capacity of data enumerators, supervisors, and team leaders. The data collected during the assessment were treated with utmost confidentiality, undergoing thorough transcription, coding, and analysis anonymously. The sharing of data with partners and relevant government bureaus will only occur based on prior consent from the National Democratic Institute (NDI). This ethical framework ensured the protection of participants' rights and privacy throughout the assessment process.

4. Household Surveys and Focus Group Discussion Findings

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.2.1. Sex and Age Range of Respondents

	Male	Female	Total	Age Range	
Household Survey	28	32	60	18-35	6
				36-40	24
				41-50	20
				51-60	10
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	20	16	36	18-35	6
				36-40	14
				41-50	9
				51-60	7

Key Informant Interview		6 State Ministries	
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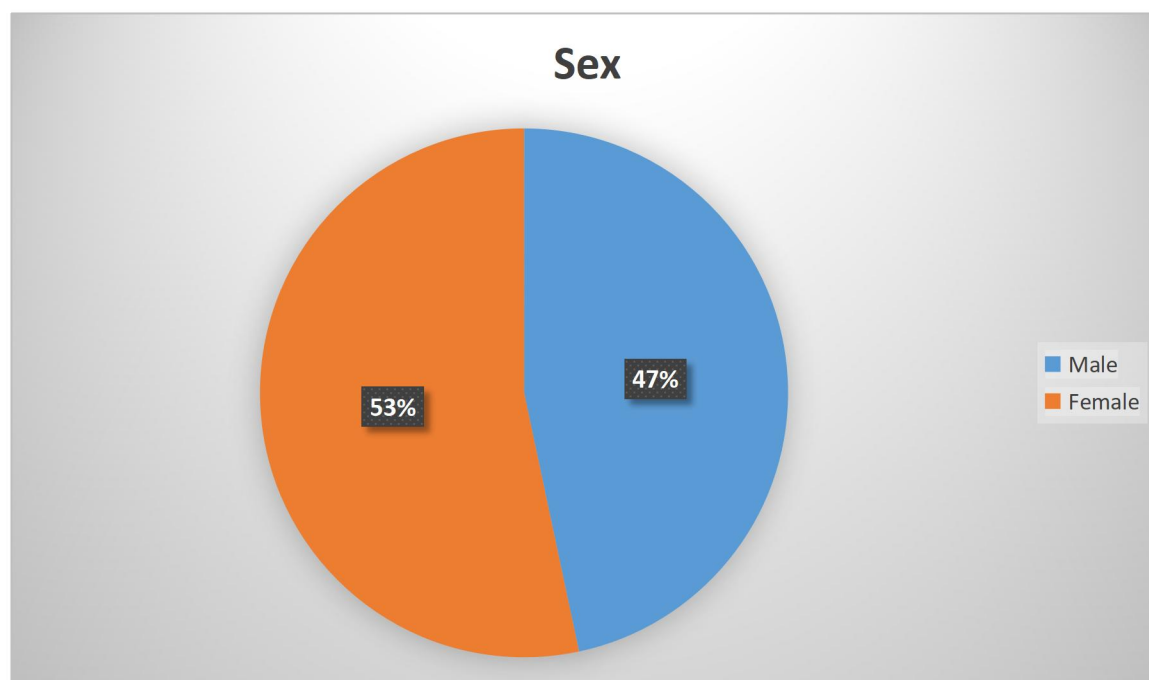


Figure 1 Household Survey

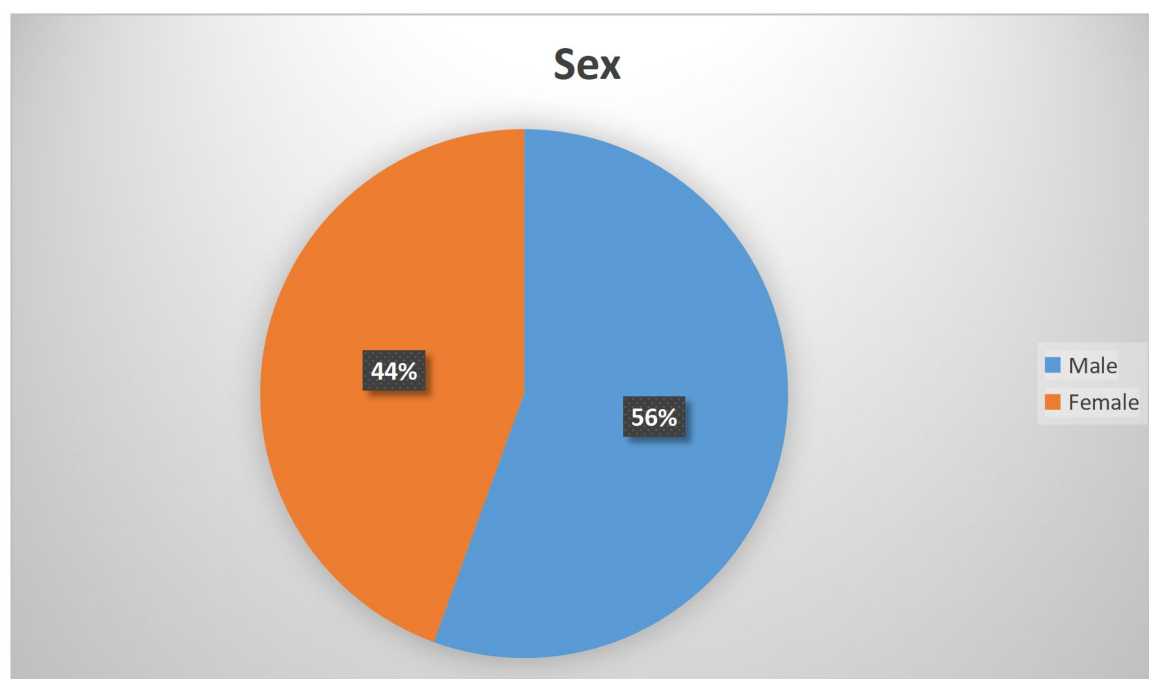
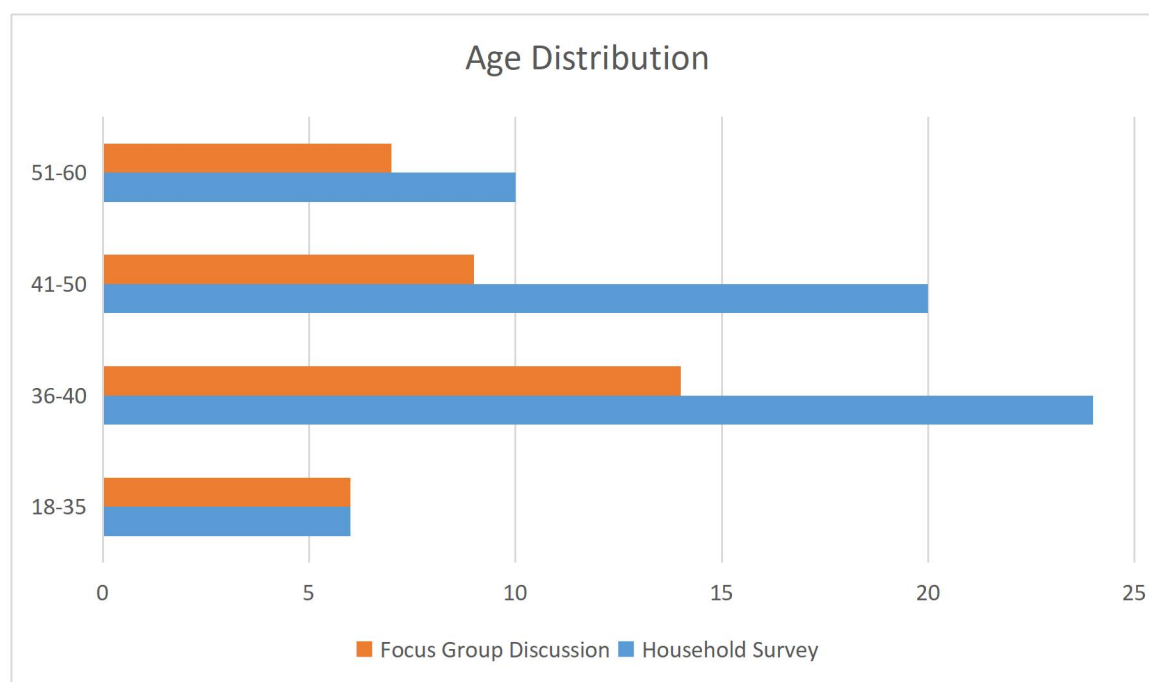
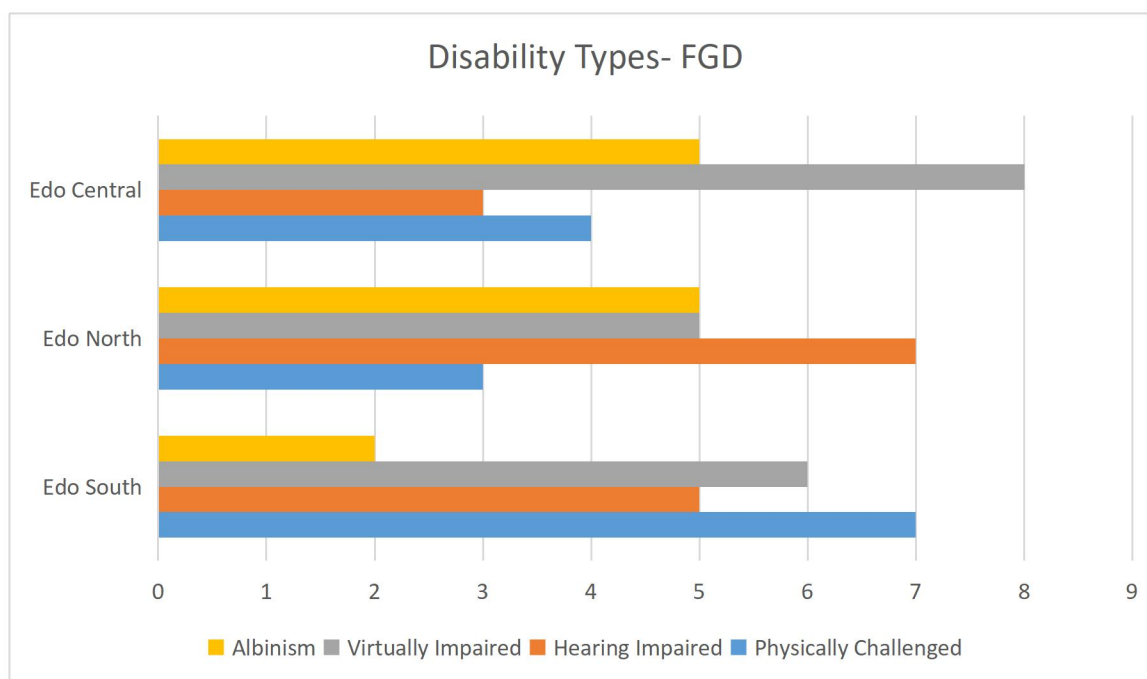


Figure 2 Focus Group Discussion



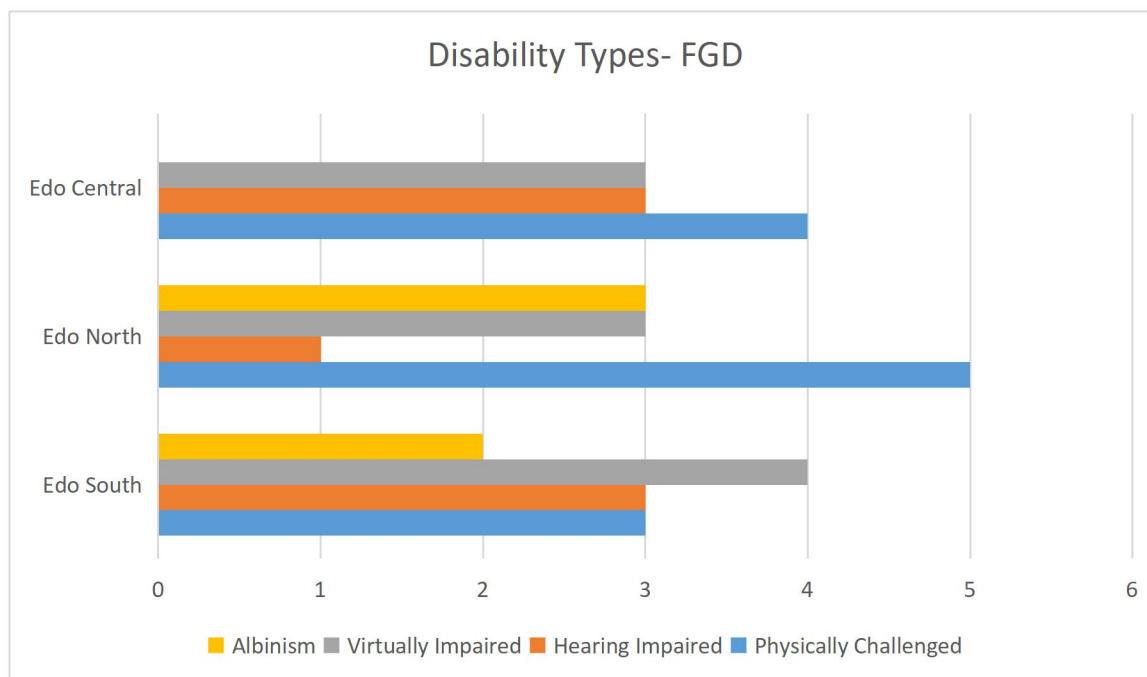
4.2.2. Disability Type Household Survey

		Physically Challenged	Hearing Impaired	Virtually impaired	Albinism
Edo (Benin)	South	7	5	6	2
Edo (Auchi)	North	3	7	5	5
Edo (Ekpoma)	Central	4	3	8	5



4.2.3. Disability Type FGD

		Physically Challenged	Hearing Impaired	Virtually impaired	Albinism
Edo (Benin)	South	3	3	4	2
Edo (Auchi)	North	5	1	3	3
Edo (Ekpoma)	Central	4	3	5	

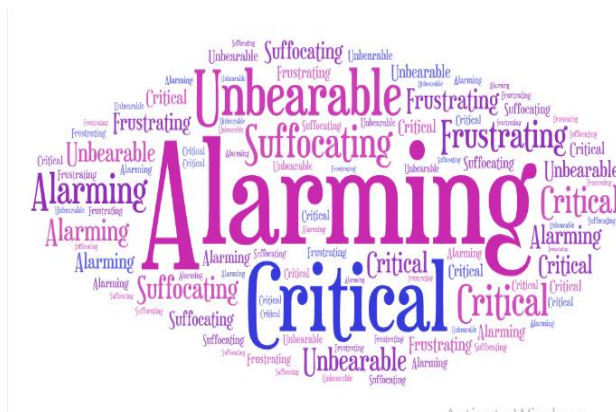


4.3. General impact of fuel subsidy removal on PWDs

This research study examines the general impact of fuel subsidy removal on PWDs in Edo State, focusing on the economic, social, and healthcare implications. The findings highlight the challenges faced by PWDs, such as increased costs of basic items, reduced access to support, discrimination by transport workers, limited social participation, and compromised healthcare due to financial constraints. The research also evaluates the effectiveness of existing government support and accessibility programs and provides suggestions and solutions to address the identified issues.

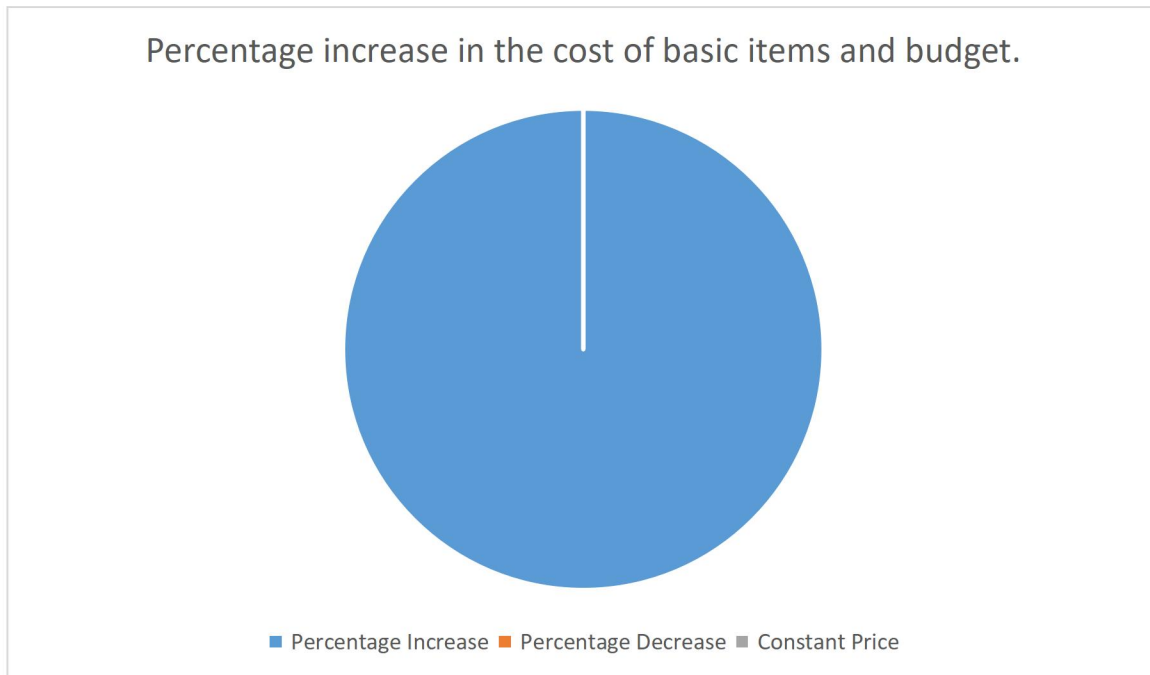
4.3.1. Economic Impact of Fuel Subsidy Removal on PWDs

PWDs describe the current economic situation as alarming, critical, unbearable, suffocating, and frustrating.

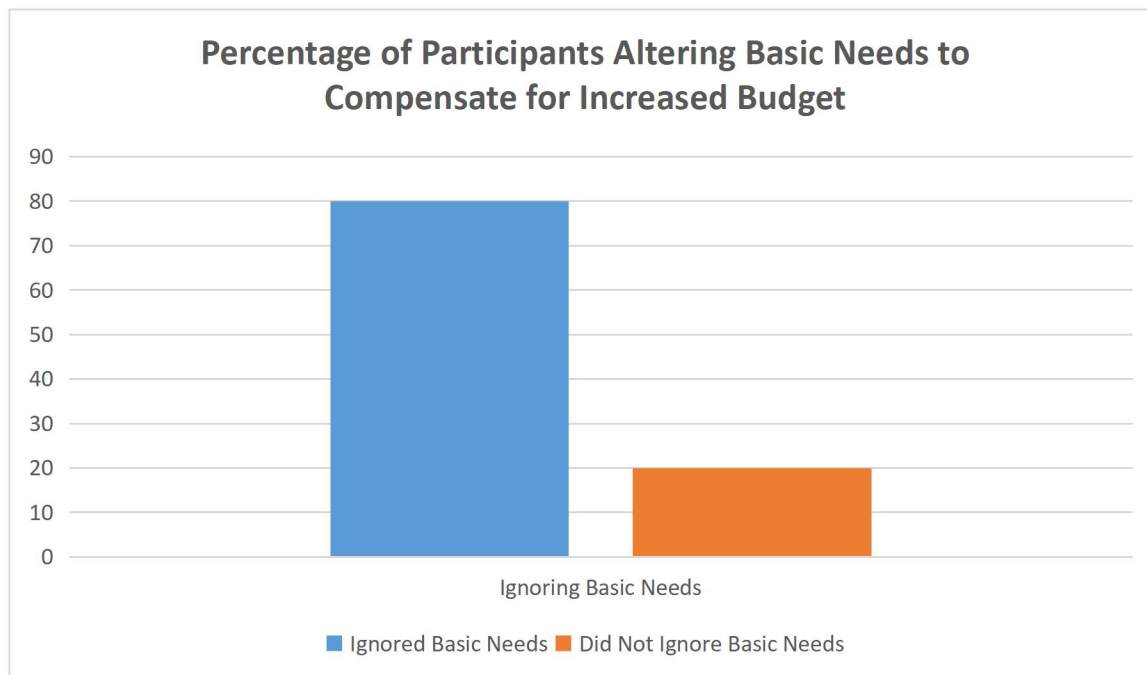


4.3.2. Economic Impact

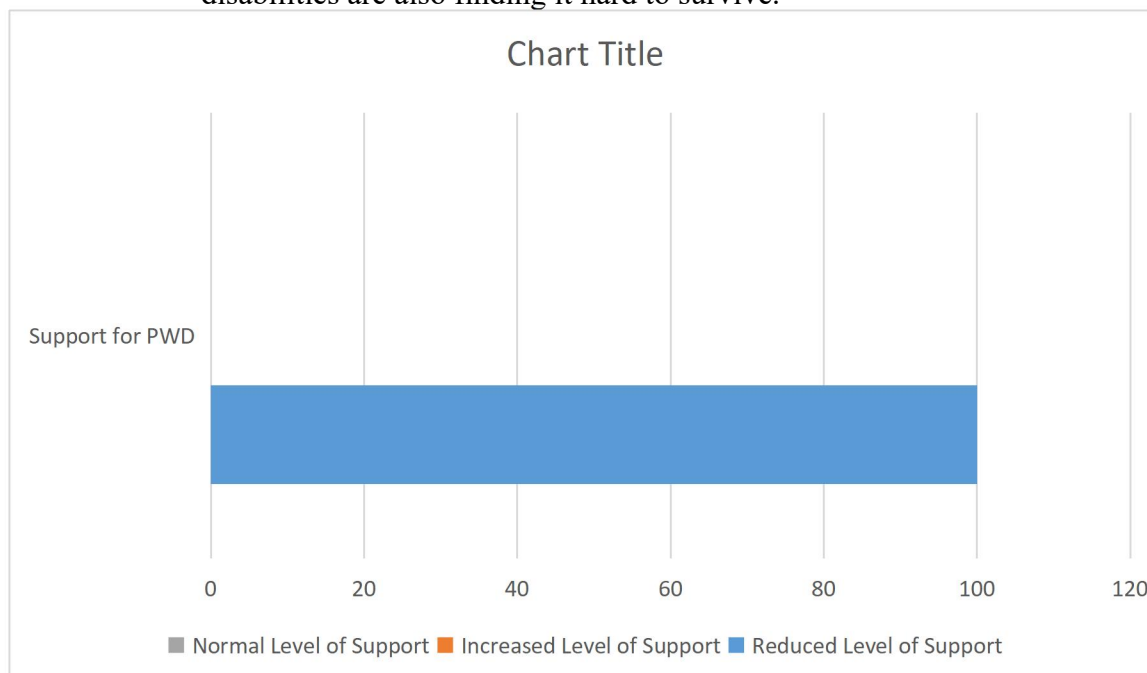
- 4.3.2.1.** Cost of basic items and budget: 100% of the participants stated that the cost of basic items and their budget have increased by more than three times since the removal of the subsidy. This increase in cost is mostly felt in the purchase of foodstuff and transportation. The prices of commodities are very unstable and change daily. The visually impaired individuals also face additional transportation costs for their aid.



- 4.3.2.2.** Ignoring basic needs: More than 80% of the participants say they make up for the increased budget by ignoring some basic needs, such as minor health issues and having three square meals.

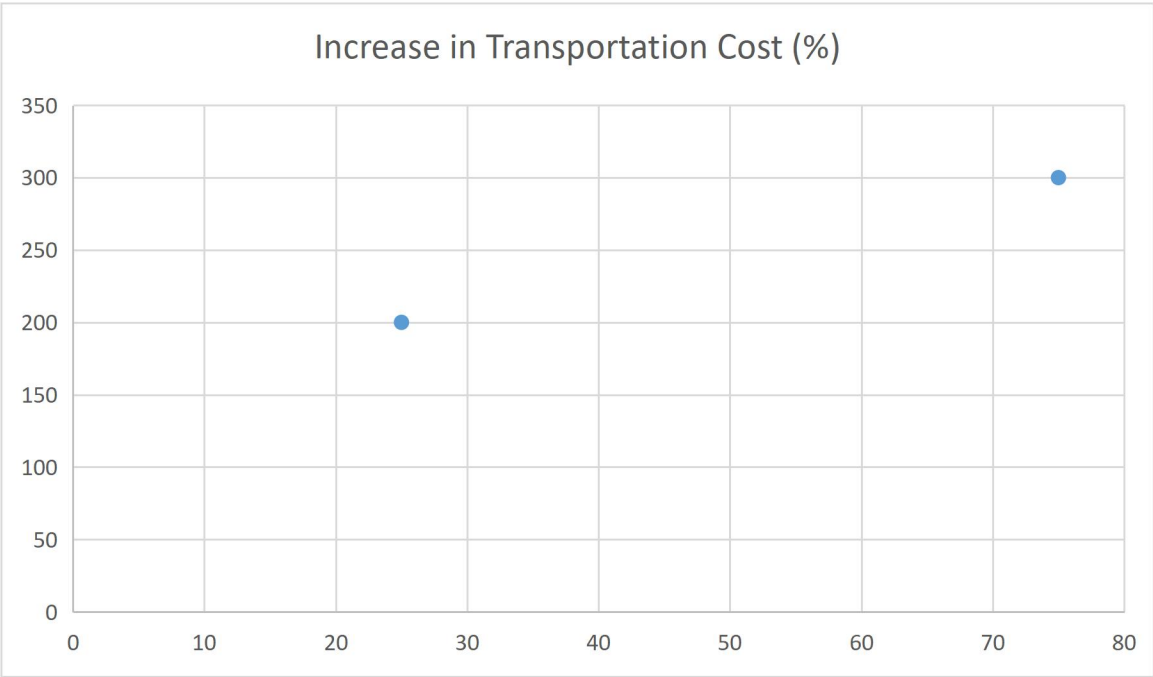


4.3.2.3. Reduced support: Many PWDs rely on the charity and goodwill of others to survive. 100% of the participants said that due to the current economic hardship, the level of support PWDs receive has drastically reduced, as even those without disabilities are also finding it hard to survive.



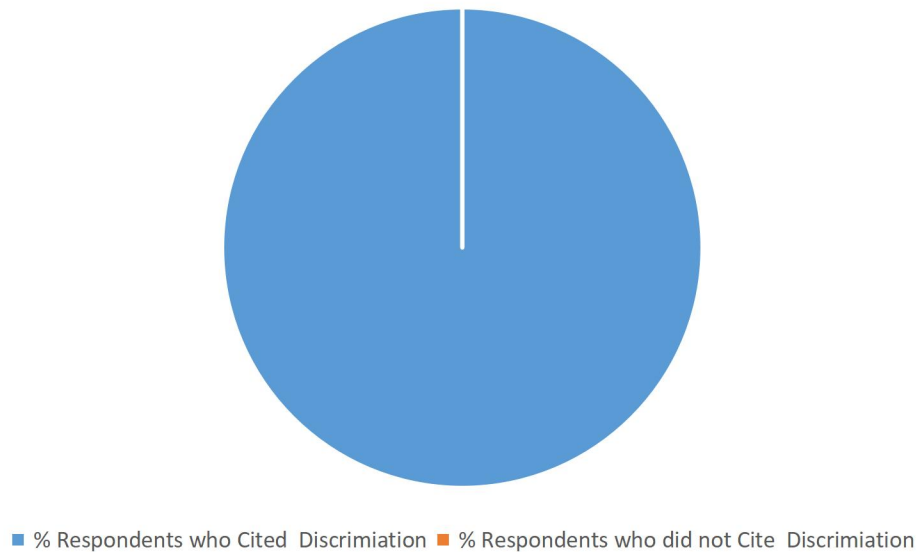
4.3.2.4. Increased transportation cost: On average, 75% of the respondents reported a 200% increase, while 25% stated it to be 300%. One respondent revealed that he

used to spend NGN 500 on transportation to work, but now he spends NGN 2000 daily. To cut down on costs, they have to push their wheelchair a long distance before finding a vehicle, which leaves them tired.



- 4.3.2.5. Lack of regular, healthy meals:** Due to the increase in the cost of food, PWDs no longer have regular, healthy meals as required. Some participants mentioned that they and their children go hungry most days so that their children can have the little available food. This has health implications and can worsen disabilities in the long term.
- 4.3.2.6. Discrimination in transportation:** In Edo Central (Ekpoma), 100% of the participants stated that discrimination by transport workers is a major challenge. They rely heavily on motorcycles for movement, and the drivers would rather not carry a person with a disability, except for an extra cost.

Discrimination in Transportation - Ekpoma, Edo Central



4.3.2.7. Scarce water supply: In Ekpoma, water is usually scarce, and PWDs rely on buying kegs of water at a high cost.

4.3.2.8. Unemployment and economic challenges: More than 85% of the participants are unemployed and rely on petty trades and charity to survive daily. The increased cost of items has led to a decline in patronage for their businesses, resulting in debts and closure of businesses.

4.3.2.9. Marginalization in the workplace: A small percentage of employed PWDs face marginalization in the workplace, as they are given more work and paid less. Unemployed participants stated that they have not enjoyed any increase in salary, promotion, or tax waiver benefits.

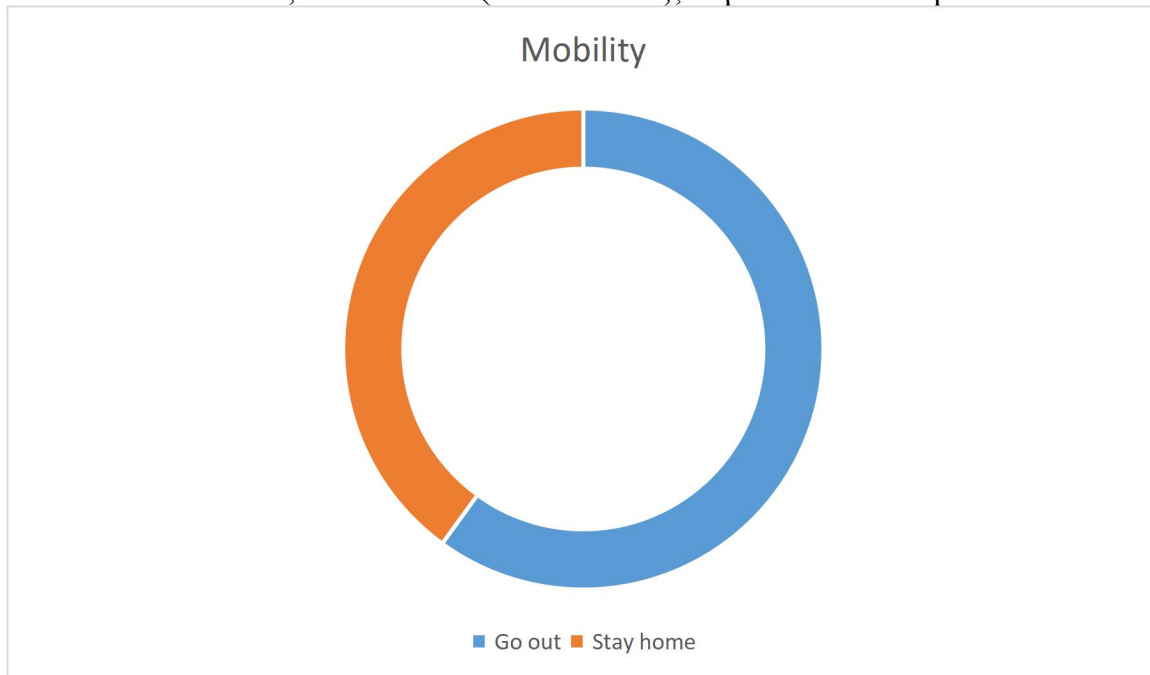
4.3.2.10. Negative impact on agriculture: More than 50% of the participants in Edo North (Auchi) rely heavily on agriculture. Due to increased costs of agro-chemicals and wages for farm labor, they experience great farm losses. Approximately 60% of respondents reported significant farm losses due to the increased costs.

4.3.2.11. Children with disabilities out of school: Many children with disabilities are out of school as parents choose not to spend scarce resources on their education.

4.3.3. Social Impact

4.3.3.1. Limited participation in social events: The removal of the subsidy has greatly impacted the social life of PWDs. 100% of the participants stated that they no longer participate in social events like they used to before the subsidy removal.

- 4.3.3.2. Restricted mobility:** About 60% of the participants said they only go to places of worship and other events when specifically invited and provided with transport cost. The remaining 40% mentioned that they do not go out at all, not even to see friends, attend events (invited or not), or places of worship.



- 4.3.3.3. Impact on relationships:** Some participants mentioned that the removal of the subsidy has affected their love life and relationships. The increased cost of maintaining a relationship has led to breakups and conflicts within marriages.

- 4.3.3.4. Feelings of loneliness and depression:** 100% of the participants agreed that staying at home without hope for the next meal has caused feelings of loneliness, overthinking, depression, and even suicidal thoughts.

4.3.4. Healthcare Impact

- 4.3.4.1. High cost of transportation and medical bills:** Due to the high cost of transportation and medical bills, 100% of the participants stated that they ignore health symptoms unless they become very serious. Many rely on self-medication and purchase the least expensive brand of drugs.

- 4.3.4.2. Inadequate healthcare services:** Services and drugs under the insurance plan are not of quality and do not adequately address the specific conditions of PWDs.

4.3.5. Government support and accessibility programs:

- 4.3.5.1. Disparities in government support programs:** Existing government support and accessibility programs are felt differently across the three senatorial districts. Most existing programs are enjoyed mainly by PWDs in Edo South (Benin Metropolis), while those in Edo Central (Ekpoma) and Edo North (Auchi) have limited access to such programs and support.

- 4.3.5.2. Inadequate implementation of accessibility programs: Participants mentioned that accessibility programs, such as ramps and special transportation services, are inadequate and not implemented effectively. This limits their mobility and independence.
- 4.3.5.3. Lack of awareness: Many participants stated that they were not aware of government support programs and accessibility initiatives. There is a need for improved awareness campaigns to ensure that PWDs are informed about available support.
- 4.3.5.4. Need for inclusive policies: Participants emphasized the need for inclusive policies that address the specific challenges faced by PWDs. They called for the inclusion of PWDs in decision-making processes and the development of policies that cater to their needs.

5. Findings from Key Informant Interviews.

NAPVID conducted Key Informant Interviews (KII) with relevant stakeholders to assess the implications of fuel subsidy removal on the lives of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Edo State. These interviews aimed to comprehensively understand the challenges faced by PWDs, the government's measures to support them, and the effectiveness of existing initiatives.

The findings presented in this report are derived from interviews conducted with representatives from the Edo State Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues, Edo City Transport Service, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, the Ministry of Business, Trade, and Cooperatives, and the Ministry of Health. Each key informant interview explores specific aspects related to the impact of fuel subsidy removal on transportation, humanitarian support, business, and health. These interviews provide a nuanced perspective on the challenges encountered by PWDs and shed light on the initiatives implemented to address their needs.

5.1 Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues (MSDGI)

5.1.1. Measures to Support Persons with Disabilities Following Fuel Subsidy Removal:

The Edo State government, under the leadership of Mr. Godwin Obaseki, has taken specific measures to support persons with disabilities (PWDs) following the removal of fuel subsidy. The recently signed Edo disability bill is a significant step towards ensuring the rights and well-being of PWDs. Additionally, the government has implemented a three-day workweek for civil servants, including PWDs. This initiative aims to alleviate the impact of the subsidy removal. Furthermore, free bus services have been introduced across the state to address the transportation challenges faced by individuals due to increased fares.

5.1.2. Initiatives and Programs for Economic and Social Well-being of PWDs:

The Ministry has implemented various initiatives and programs to support the economic and social well-being of PWDs. The Ministry is currently in the process of sending PWDs to a training program called "FARM CRAFT" in Lagos. Collaboration with NAPVID and other organizations ensures the implementation of diverse programs that benefit PWDs.

5.1.3. Effective Dissemination of Information to PWDs:

To ensure information about available support reaches PWDs effectively, the Ministry utilizes the network of the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) across the 18 local government areas in the state. This channel serves as a means to reach and communicate with PWDs.

5.1.4. Collaborations with Stakeholders for Enhanced Impact:

The Ministry collaborates with JONAPWD and NAPVID, among other relevant organizations and stakeholders, to enhance the impact of its plans. These collaborations ensure effective coordination and support for PWDs.

5.1.5. Financial Assistance or Subsidies for Coping with Increased Fuel Costs:

The Ministry considers applications for financial assistance from PWDs and advises them to channel these requests through JONAPWD. Such applications receive priority attention, and financial support has been provided to several individuals in need.

5.1.6. Addressing Risks of Poverty and Inequality:

The Ministry addresses the potential risks of increased poverty and inequality among PWDs resulting from the removal of fuel subsidies through various empowerment programs and training initiatives. Educational and skill development opportunities are made available through agencies like EDOJOB, GIZ, and others, ensuring PWDs can benefit from these programs.

5.1.7. Assessing Effectiveness and Success Stories:

The Ministry assesses the effectiveness of its initiatives by regularly receiving reports from the JONAPWD chairperson. Notably, success stories include the training of five PWDs in Lagos two years ago, where they received start-up capital from the federal and state governments. Additionally, PWDs trained in shoemaking at the Edo Innovation Hall have established their businesses and are doing well.

5.1.8. Addressing Employment Challenges:

The Ministry and the Edo State government prioritize the employment of PWDs. Their inclusiveness is evident within the ministry, where many PWDs are employed, and discrimination is not tolerated.

Note: This report is based on the responses provided during the key Informant interview conducted with a representative of the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues.

5.2. [Ministry Of Youth and Humanitarian Affairs \(MYHA\)](#)

5.2.1. Mandate and Focus of the Ministry:

The mandate of the MYHA is to empower the youth and ensure their positive contribution to society. The focus is on enabling the youth to become self-reliant and prevent them from engaging in activities that may be detrimental to society.

5.2.2. Measures to Support Persons with Disabilities following Fuel Subsidy Removal:

The Ministry does not currently have specific measures or plans in place to support persons with disabilities following the removal of fuel subsidy. As a ministry, it implement policies and directives from higher authorities, and there is currently no national or state policy in place specifically addressing the needs of persons with disabilities in light of the fuel subsidy removal.

5.2.3. Initiatives or Programs for Economic and Social Well-being of Persons with Disabilities:

Currently, there are no initiatives or programs implemented by the Ministry to support the economic and social well-being of persons with disabilities in relation to the fuel subsidy removal. The Ministry has not focused on disability issues in the past. However, they expressed openness to hearing about potential programs or initiatives that could benefit persons with disabilities.

5.2.4. Effective Dissemination of Information to Persons with Disabilities:

The Ministry did not provide information on how they ensure that information about available support reaches persons with disabilities effectively. Further clarification on this matter was not provided.

5.2.5. Collaborations with Organizations and Stakeholders:

The Ministry did not mention any specific collaborations with relevant organizations or stakeholders to enhance the impacts of their plans, particularly in relation to persons with disabilities.

5.2.6. Financial Assistance or Subsidies for Persons with Disabilities:

At present, there are no plans in place to provide financial assistance or subsidies specifically targeted towards persons with disabilities to cope with the increased cost of fuel.

5.2.7. Addressing Risks of Poverty and Inequality:

The Ministry did not provide information on how they address the potential risks of increased poverty and inequality among persons with disabilities resulting from the removal of fuel subsidies. No specific initiatives or plans were mentioned in this regard.

5.2.8. Assessing Effectiveness and Success Stories:

The Ministry did not provide information on how they assess the effectiveness of their initiatives or whether there have been any success stories in supporting persons with disabilities in adapting to the removal of fuel subsidies.

5.3. Ministry Of Business, Trade, and Cooperatives (MBTC)

5.3.1. Mandate and Focus of the Ministry:

MBTC in Edo State has a mandate to make policies that promote business development and trade in the state. Their focus includes providing business advisory services, creating a conducive business environment, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), promoting made-in-Edo products, and advising the government on revenue generation.

5.3.2. Support for Businesses and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) post-subsidy removal:

The Ministry, in collaboration with the Bank of Industry (BOI), offers opportunities for businesses, including those owned or employing persons with disabilities. These opportunities include loans at single-digit interest rates, which are available to all, including PWDs. The Ministry does not discriminate in providing support. However, specific data on the number of PWDs who have benefited from these opportunities was not provided.

5.3.3. Financial Assistance Programs or Incentives for Businesses linked to PWDs:

Currently, apart from the opportunities provided through the Bank of Industry, there are no specific financial assistance programs or incentives implemented by the Ministry to ease the economic impact on businesses directly linked to PWDs following the subsidy removal. The Ministry mentioned that the year 2024 is still in its early stages, and adjustments can be made to specifically include persons with disabilities in their activities.

5.3.4. Dissemination of Information to PWDs:

Efforts are being made by the Ministry to increase awareness and ensure that information about available support reaches persons with disabilities effectively. The Ministry collaborates with other relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Ministry of Physical Planning, to ensure a holistic approach. These collaborations help address infrastructure provision, creation of hubs for PWDs, and the overall coordination of activities.

5.3.5. Collaborations with Organizations and Stakeholders:

The Ministry collaborates with other ministries, including the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Ministry of Physical Planning, to enhance the impact of their plans. By working together, they aim to provide a comprehensive approach to supporting businesses, including those catering to the needs of persons with disabilities.

5.3.6. Trade Policies for Businesses Benefiting PWDs:

The Ministry provides a platform for businesses, including SMEs, to advertise their goods and services. They have a trade policies department that can be approached to ensure that the interests of businesses focusing on products or services benefiting persons with disabilities are safeguarded. However, no specific details were provided on the policies in place.

5.3.7. Capacity Building Programs for Businesses Catering to PWDs:

Currently, the Ministry does not have specific plans for capacity-building programs to enhance the skills and resilience of businesses catering to the needs of persons with disabilities. However, with the suggestion made during the interview, the Ministry acknowledged the potential need to segment their programs and provide special attention to programs for PWDs.

5.3.8. Advice for Persons with Disabilities:

The Ministry advises persons with disabilities to speak out and not remain silent, as their voices need to be heard. By advocating for their needs and concerns, PWDs can help ensure that their interests are taken into account and addressed effectively.

5.4. Edo State Social Investment Program (EDSIPO)

5.4.1. Lack of Specific Grants for PWDs:

The program acknowledges that there are no specific grants designated for PWDs. Instead, it highlights general projects aimed at intervening for poor and vulnerable persons. Notably, the federal government's vulnerable grant program, initiated in 2022, has benefited thousands across the state, including PWDs.

5.4.2. Absence of Direct Programs for Subsidy Removal:

The program reveals that, post-subsidy removal, there haven't been any specific projects or interventions in place to directly mitigate the effects on PWDs. Plans for GEEP 2.0 and a vulnerable grant program are on hold, awaiting approval from the federal government.

5.4.3. Collaboration with NAPVID in Policy Development:

The program actively collaborates with NAPVID in the development of the Edo State Social Protection Policy. This policy aims to address the challenges faced by PWDs, specifically emphasizing measures and objectives related to children with disabilities.

5.4.4. Inclusion in Employment Opportunities:

The program advocates for the inclusion of PWDs in various initiatives, including NPower programs, training, startup programs, and GEEP programs. The focus is on raising awareness and collaborating with local disability organizations like NAPVID and JONAPWD.

5.4.5. Skill Development and Education for Youths with Disabilities:

While there isn't a specific program for youths with disabilities, the program expresses a willingness to explore partnerships with NAPVID for future initiatives focusing on skill development and education.

5.4.6. Effectiveness Assessment and Feedback Mechanism:

The program admits a lack of structured mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of its initiatives in mitigating the effects of subsidy removal on PWDs. While a feedback mechanism exists, it primarily involves keeping lines of communication open for PWDs to reach out.

5.4.7. Sustainable Support for PWDs:

The program emphasizes a preference for sustainable support rather than one-off interventions. The intention is to explore additional ways to assist PWDs, considering their unique needs and challenges.

5.4.8. Policy Review and Potential Future Initiatives:

The program expresses hope that in 2024, there might be a review of existing policies or the introduction of new policies to address the challenges faced by PWDs in the context of subsidy removal.

5.5. Ministry Of Health (MOH)

5.5.1. Removal of Fuel Subsidy and Adverse Impact on Health and Well-being:

According to respondent the removal of fuel subsidy has had adverse effects on the health and well-being of Edo residents. The increased cost of living, resulting from the removal of subsidy,

has created challenges for many individuals. Fuel plays a crucial role in various aspects of life, and its impact is being felt by everyone.

5.5.2. Healthcare Services for PWDs and Changes in Accessibility:

The state government has introduced a health insurance scheme that is available to everyone, including PWDs. The scheme aims to ensure that healthcare services are accessible to all residents. Additionally, there is a package available for individuals who are unable to afford the minimum cost of the scheme, ensuring that healthcare remains accessible to all.

5.5.3. Addressing Transportation Costs for PWDs:

The Ministry of Health does not have direct measures in place to address the increase in transportation costs for PWDs to access medication and medical supplies. This responsibility lies with other ministries that are more concerned with economic challenges arising from the subsidy removal.

5.5.4. Availability and Affordability of Essential Medications and Medical Equipment:

The governor's administration has prioritized healthcare and primary healthcare services. The government has made efforts to bring healthcare closer to the people, ensuring consistent availability and affordability of essential medications and medical equipment as long as individuals are enrolled in the health insurance scheme.

5.5.5. Targeted Health Education for PWDs:

General awareness campaigns are conducted through various channels such as media, Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, and disease-specific educational materials. However, the Health Promotion Unit would be better suited to provide detailed information on the specific initiatives undertaken to educate PWDs about changes in healthcare accessibility and available support services.

5.5.6. Collaboration with Disability Organizations and Advocacy Groups:

The Ministry of Health has collaborated with disability organizations and advocacy groups, including the blind association, Albinism group, and other associations representing PWDs. These collaborations aim to understand and address the unique health challenges faced by PWDs.

5.5.7. Collaborations to Support PWDs in Coping with Economic Challenges:

Currently, there are no specific collaborations with other government agencies, non-governmental organizations, or private entities to support PWDs in coping with the economic challenges resulting from the subsidy removal.

5.5.8. Telehealth Services and Digital Solutions:

Telemedicine services are ongoing in the state and are a project of the governor. While progress has been made, there is still room for expansion and further implementation of telehealth services to facilitate remote healthcare consultations for PWDs.

5.5.9. Informational Campaigns for PWDs:

Informational campaigns are conducted, but the respondent emphasized the need for more collaboration and stated that the health education officer would have better insights into the extent of engagement with PWDs and the specific initiatives being undertaken.

5.5.10. Financial Assistance Programs or Subsidies:

The health insurance scheme is the primary means to access healthcare services. While there are no specific financial assistance programs or subsidies for PWDs to cope with increased healthcare-related expenses resulting from the fuel subsidy removal, the respondent advised exploring the health insurance scheme as the surest way to access healthcare.

5.5.11. Data Collection on Health Outcomes of PWDs:

Currently, there is no data collection specifically focused on the health outcomes of PWDs in relation to the subsidy removal.

5.5.12. Future Plans for Ensuring Continued Access to Healthcare for PWDs:

The advocacy is for everyone, including PWDs, to enroll in the health insurance scheme to ensure continued access to healthcare. The Ministry of Health aims to prioritize and strengthen healthcare services for PWDs in the future.

5.6. Edo City Transport Service (ECTS)

5.6.1. Overview of Fuel Subsidy Removal and Impact on Transportation Costs:

The removal of fuel subsidy since May 29th, 2023, has significantly affected transportation costs. Both intracity and intercity transportation costs have increased. For intercity routes, the cost has jumped from a thousand Naira to #2,500. This increase has had a severe impact on the populace, as their sources of income remain the same.

5.6.2. Perception of Challenges Faced by PWDs:

The agency acknowledges the challenges faced by PWDs in light of the subsidy removal. While the respondent has not been to the terminal recently, it has been observed that some PWDs patronize the free bus routes in the city, especially those going to special schools.

5.6.3. Assessments on Accessibility and Affordability for PWDs:

The agency has not conducted any assessments specifically on the accessibility and affordability of transportation for PWDs post-subsidy removal. No specific challenges have been identified for PWDs in accessing affordable transportation at this time.

5.6.4. Specialized Transportation Services for PWDs:

The agency has made buses available for the general public, including PWDs. However, a major setback is the lack of provision for ramps on the buses. The agency has future plans to make the buses more accessible by adding ramps and other accessibility features.

5.6.5. Specialized Transportation Services for PWDs:

Since the introduction of the free ride bus, the agency has also provided transportation services for students, including PWDs. PWDs are given preferential treatment, and the agency's workers and drivers are well informed on how to assist PWDs in various ways.

5.6.6. Future Plans and Initiatives to Address PWD Challenges:

Currently, the agency does not have any specific plans or initiatives to address the challenges faced by PWDs in the current economic climate. The respondent mentioned that the era of fuel

subsidy is gone, indicating that there may not be immediate measures planned to address the challenges arising from the subsidy removal.

6. Findings from Desk Review

- 6.1. Edo State is among the league of states that have a disability right law assented to by the Governor of Edo State, on the 28 of July 2022, and gazetted on the 16 of February 2023.
- 6.2. The Discrimination Against Persons with Disability Prohibition Law, makes extensive provision prohibiting discrimination, harmful, cruel and inhuman treatment against Persons with Disability. The Law guarantees access to public buildings, infrastructures, and services for PWDS, as well as right to free education and free healthcare.
- 6.3. Section 15 provides for right to first consideration in situations of risks and humanitarian emergencies for PWDs.
- 6.4. The Law is conspicuously silent on the issue of employment for PWDs, as no provision of employment was made for Persons with Disabilities.
- 6.5. The Edo State Persons with Disability Commission, provided for by section 25 of the law, has not been established. The commission is to drive the implementation and the enforcement of the law.
- 6.6. Edo State has a draft policy known as “Edo State Social Protection Policy (EDSSPP)”. This draft policy that is a product of stakeholders’ consultation in public and private sectors at the state and local government levels, and derived from statewide consultations and consensus, and enriched by inputs from an array of professional and technical experts and institutions, has not been ratified for implementation. This policy, which was introduced in April 2022, was intended to manage increasing vulnerabilities, upsurge of inequality and inequity and high poverty in the population and to guarantee inclusion of PWDs in social protection floors.
- 6.7. Urgent steps need to be taken to establish the Edo State Persons with Disability Commission, as provided for by the Edo State Persons with Disability Law 2022. Also, the State social protection policy need to be ratified by the Edo State Governor to enhance social protection initiatives for people with disabilities in Edo State.

7. Recommendations to address the impact of fuel subsidy removal on persons with disabilities (PWDs):

- 7.1. Implement a subsidized transportation program specifically for PWDs to alleviate increased transportation costs. This could include discounted fares, dedicated accessible transportation services, and incentives for transport operators to cater to the needs of PWDs without discrimination.
- 7.2. Take measures to stabilize the prices of basic items, especially food, making them more affordable for PWDs. This could involve targeted subsidies or price regulation to ensure essential goods remain within reach.
- 7.3. Establish or strengthen support systems for PWDs, such as social welfare programs, to provide financial assistance, necessities, and employment opportunities. Collaborate with NGOs and CBOs to enhance support for PWDs during economic hardship.
- 7.4. Improve accessibility in public transportation systems by providing ramps, lifts, and other necessary features. Conduct awareness campaigns to educate transport operators about the rights of PWDs and the importance of inclusivity.
- 7.5. Address the high cost of healthcare by exploring options such as subsidizing medical expenses for PWDs, improving access to health facilities and quality healthcare services, and ensuring health insurance plans adequately cover their specific needs.
- 7.6. Provide targeted support to PWDs engaged in agriculture, including access to affordable inputs, equipment, training, and agricultural subsidies.
- 7.7. Ensure inclusive social programs and events by providing accessible venues, transportation, and support services to enable the active participation of PWDs.
- 7.8. Conduct comprehensive awareness campaigns through various channels, including community meetings, social media, and collaboration with disability organizations, to inform PWDs about existing government support programs and accessibility initiatives.
- 7.9. Involve PWDs in decision-making processes and policy formulation to ensure their voices and concerns are heard and addressed, developing inclusive policies that prioritize their needs and rights.
- 7.10. Streamline the distribution of palliative items by involving PWDs in the process, reducing bureaucracy, and ensuring fair distribution practices.
- 7.11. Extend social security coverage to include parents of children with disabilities.
- 7.12. Include PWDs in committees addressing their concerns during emergencies.

- 7.13. Establish the Edo State Commission for Persons with Disabilities to drive the implementation of the Edo State Persons with Disabilities Law.
- 7.14. Take steps to amend the Edo State Disability Law to provide for the employment of PWDs, and to guarantee at least 5% job placement for persons with disability in the civil and public service.
- 7.15. Introduce a Special Disability allowance for PWDs employed in the state Civil and Public Service.
- 7.16. Ensure representation at the highest level of decision-making to ensure the inclusion of PWD perspectives.
- 7.17. Provide tax incentives for businesses owned by persons with disabilities or catering to the needs of persons with disabilities.

These recommendations aim to mitigate the economic, social, and healthcare challenges faced by PWDs due to fuel subsidy removal, prioritizing their inclusion and well-being in policy and program design.