

HOW TO READ A MANIFESTO

The quick read

Twenty minutes. Any manifesto. Any office, from President to State Assembly.

Pick the five biggest promises. Run each through the six questions and score the document 0, 1 or 2 on each. Then read its “first 100 days” page, and check whether it mentions debt at all.

BEFORE YOU OPEN IT · TWO MINUTES

1 Check it is real

Get it from the campaign’s own site or the party secretariat. Never score a forwarded screenshot.

2 Name your three issues

Write down what matters most to your household. Then see what each document says, and what it leaves out.

3 Know what you are holding

Party manifesto, candidate manifesto, rally promise or track record: four different things.

THE SIX QUESTIONS

THE QUESTION	✓ SCORE 2 WHEN...	✗ SCORE 0 WHEN...
1 Can it be checked?	It names what is counted, where it stands today, the target and the date.	It says “prioritise”, “ensure”, “reposition”, or “10 million jobs” with no starting figure and no date.
2 Is it this office’s job?	It is clear about what the office controls, and honest about whose cooperation it needs.	It promises what another tier delivers: a President running clinics, a legislator building roads.
3 What does it cost, and who pays?	A naira figure on the main promises, with a named source: a tax, a saving, a sale, a loan.	No figure at all, or the whole funding plan is “we will block leakages”.
4 Who loses?	It names who bears the cost, for how long, and what will cushion them.	Everyone gains and nobody pays. No position on subsidy removal or the exchange rate.
5 How will it happen?	It names the legal step (order, agency action, new law, constitutional change) with timing that fits it.	A constitutional change promised inside the first 100 days. No route named anywhere.
6 Where did it come from?	Sourced figures, numbers that agree across chapters, named authors, written for this election.	No sources, no named author, and paragraphs lifted from the 2019 or 2023 version.

Score 1 when the document sits between the two columns: the right kind of promise, missing a figure, a date or a route.

Scoring promise by promise? Give the document the mark most of its main promises earn: 2 if most score 2, 0 if most score 0, otherwise 1.

 Ask them AT A TOWN HALL, ON RADIO, UNDER A CAMPAIGN POST**1** “How will we know in 2031 whether you kept this promise?”**2** “Which part can you deliver alone, and whose cooperation do you need?”**3** “What will this cost, and where exactly will the money come from?”**4** “Who will pay for this, and what will you do for them?”**5** “If you cannot do it alone, who has to vote for it, and how long will that take?”**6** “Who wrote this plan, and where do your figures come from?”

ADD THE SIX SCORES · A TOTAL OUT OF 12

10–12**A plan for governing**

Rare. Verify the costings, but the candidate has accepted being checked.

7–9**Serious, with weak spots**

Look at which questions it failed. That is where the risk sits.

4–6**A positioning document**

Tells you what they want to be seen caring about, not what they will do.

0–3**A slogan sheet**

Judge the candidate on record, backers and team instead.

Three rules**Compare like with like.**

Governorship documents against other governorship documents, not a presidential one.

Compare against your ballot.

Not against perfection: no manifesto scores 12.

Score every office.

Senate, House and Assembly documents get the least scrutiny. Your attention counts most there.

**Score it on your phone**

The online scorecard adds up your marks as you go. The full guide goes deeper: weighted scores, legislative candidates and party constitutions.

simplefixnigeria.org/manifesto-scorecard

**Evidence.
Clarity.
Action.**