



The Perspective

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HUMAN RIGHTS, OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN COUNTERTERRORISM; THE NAIROBI EXPERIENCE



GCTF

GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM
FORUM



Participants during the Conference on Human Rights, Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms in Counter-Terrorism in Nairobi Kenya. On 26th February 2024.

The Perspective



Bridging the gaps in Human Rights Education and Advocacy

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HUMAN RIGHTS AND OVERSIGHT IN COUNTERTERRORISM; THE NAIROBI EXPERIENCE

By: Idris Miliki Abdul

Introduction

Acts of terrorism pose a threat to society and as a result significant executive powers are delegated to counterterrorism practitioners and policymakers. In many States, police and other law enforcement agencies play a critical role in the prevention of terrorist acts. A robust, intelligence-led law enforcement capacity assists in the identification and disruption of terrorist threats.

A number of legislative, operational and institutional measures and an appropriate structure need to be in place to prevent the commission of terrorist acts. These include a high-level strategy setting out the respective roles and responsibilities of the various agencies with counterterrorism responsibilities, forensic and intelligence capabilities, specialized counterterrorism units, clear command and control, and access to national and international counterterrorism databases.

Among the operational measures required are independent and effective oversight mechanisms. These mechanisms ensure the lawful use of powers, prevent the misuse of authority



Idris Miliki Abdul

or abuse of discretion, and ensure that recourse to special investigative techniques or exceptional powers are guided by the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, and non-discrimination.

The existence of independent and effective oversight and accountability mechanisms should build trust and confidence in law enforcement and other agencies with counterterrorism responsibilities; they assist in ensuring the professionalism and competence of officers charged with preventing and responding to terrorism. Effective oversight and accountability mechanisms should also assist in the facilitation of international cooperation by enhancing the trust of prosecutors



Idris Miliki Abdul, ED of CHRRCR, and Barr. Charbord from France, during the Conference on Human Rights, Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms in Counter-Terrorism in Nairobi Kenya.

Organized by Global Counter Terrorism Forum GCTF in partnership with International Institute for Justice and the Rules of Law IIJ. On 26th and 27th February 2024.

and judges in the criminal justice systems of States requesting their assistance.

A key issue is striking the right balance between promoting the operational integrity of counterterrorism operations while preserving oversight and accountability and complying with applicable international law, including international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law.

This non-binding, practical and publicly available good practices document, fully grounded in and reflective of international law obligations, including human rights law, focuses on how oversight and accountability mechanisms play a crucial role at the national, regional, and international

levels in promoting and ensuring compliance with legislative mandates, regulations and policy directives, professional standards, codes of conduct, rules of ethics, and the rule of law, including human rights and other applicable international laws. These mechanisms are essential to ensuring that agencies/entities with counterterrorism responsibilities achieve high professional standards to deliver on their mandates, while guarding against misuse

of powers, addressing human rights violations, and safeguarding civic space in the context of preventing and countering terrorism.

GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES.

Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRRCR) was invited to Nairobi Kenya, in June 2023 for a regional workshop, as a participant by International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law (IIJ) in partnership with the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) on Human Rights, Oversight in Counterterrorism, four(4) participant were invited from Nigeria, and CHRRCR was the only NGO from Nigeria, while the remaining three (3) were staff of Federal Ministry of Justice.



Idris Miliki Abdul, ED of CHRCR, and other participants, during the Conference on Human Rights, Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms in Counter-Terrorism in Nairobi Kenya. Organized by Global Counter Terrorism Forum GCTF in partnership with International Institute for Justice and the Rules of Law IJL. On 26th and 27th February 2024.

As a follow-up to the Regional workshop that was organized in June 2023, a follow-up conference was organized also in Nairobi Kenya in February 2024, comprising of 150 delegates from four region of the world, selected from previous four regional workshops organized in 2023. And CHRCR was the only delegate invited from Nigeria.

ISSUED DISCUSSED WERE GOOD PRACTICES AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL,

- such as, the ability to appeal decisions, recommendations or findings made by oversight and accountability mechanisms to judicial authorities
- Human rights and regulatory compliance by oversight and accountability mechanisms.
- Inclusion of oversight and accountability mechanisms in

national counterterrorism strategy

- Transparency Practices and public awareness
- Training on professional codes of conduct and Human Rights
- Training on Professional codes of conduct and Human Rights for Law enforcement agencies.
- Public Complains mechanisms
- Protection from reprisals
- Systematic Follow-up
- Access to Facilities
- Access to witness
- Legislative oversight
- Oversight over the gathering and use of classified intelligence materials in counterterrorism.
- Access to regular records
- Access to classified records
- Technological resources
- Adequate infrastructural Coverage
- Adequate budget allocation

- Continuous training of oversight and accountability mechanisms
 - Budgetary independence
 - Political Independence
 - Ability to initiate reviews or investigations proprio motu
 - Adequate resources and technical capability
 - Independent of Oversight and Accountability mechanisms
 - International and regional oversight
 - Post-conflict transitional justice mechanisms
 - Ad hoc Commissions of enquiry/fact finding commissions
 - Actors involved in/assisting and supporting victims of terrorism
 - Actors involved in preventing / countering violent extremism
 - Judicial/Quasi-Judicial oversight
 - Public oversight
 - Parliamentary oversight

The above were properly scrutinized and recommendations were made during the breakout sections across the four regions

of the world.

In Conclusion

The Nairobi experience is a global concept that need local and national application in all ramification. addressing counter-terrorism is a local issue that affect both national and sub-national level, addressing it need local concept with local languages, the need for media engagement is very crucial. as the role of the Media can not be over emphasize in this global tragedy that is ravaging the world currently. Local, National and Global partnership is necessary as witnessed during the Nairobi conference.

Appreciation

on behalf the Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution, I wish to sincerely appreciate **International Institute for Justice and the Rules of Law (IJ)** and **Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF)** for this history opportunity.



Group Picture during the Conference on Human Rights, Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms in Counter-Terrorism in Nairobi Kenya.

Organized by Global Counter Terrorism Forum GCTF in partnership with International Institute for Justice and the Rules of Law IJ. On 26th and 27th February 2024.

REPORT OF THE 1-DAY POST 2023 GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION REVIEW MEETING FOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN KOGI STATE ORGANIZED BY CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) LOKOJA HELD AT HALIMS HOTELS ON THURSDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2023

BACKGROUND:

The 11th November 2023 Kogi State Governorship elections was organized by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), with 18 political parties and their candidates participating. At the end of the collation of results, the All Progressive Congress (APC) and their Candidate was declared winner and returned elected with 446,237 votes. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) and their Candidate came second with 259,052 votes while The People's Democratic Party and its Candidate came 3rd with 46,362 votes.

With the conclusion of the elections, and presentation of Certificates of Return to the winners, the focus has now shifted to post election issues, with the SDP filing an Election Petition against the declaration of the winner. This however has did not prevent incidences of violence and destruction allegedly by supporters of both political parties. The tension generated during pre-election period has spilled over into post-election, thereby calling into question the attitude of Political parties and their supporters towards elections in Kogi State. These is despite the engagements before and during the elections.

REMARKS:

The meeting began at 9.55 am with self-introduction by participants

The Executive Director, Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR), Idris Miliki Abdul, welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked them for coming



Idris Miliki Abdul, Executive Director of CHRCR, making the Welcome Address, Objectives of the Meeting, during the One Day Post 2023 Governorship Election Review Meeting for Political Parties in Kogi State. Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF. On Thursday 14th December, 2023 at Halims Hotel, Lokoja, Kogi State.

despite the yuletide season.

He opened the conversation with a plenary on the roles participants played during the November 11th 2023 Governorship elections. Many of the Party representatives admitted to voting and “campaigning and mobilizing” for their respective Political parties. The Media participants responded that they mainly covered and observed the elections.

The ED CHRCR explained that the session was to raise the conscientiousness of the participants specifically on the roles of different stakeholders on election day. He



Participants during the One Day Post 2023 Governorship Election Review Meeting for Political Parties in Kogi State Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF. On Thursday 14th December, 2023 at Halims Hotel, Lokoja, Kogi State.

further explained that these stakeholders all work within the environment coordinated by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), who had made available the Time table for the 11th November 2023 Governorship elections in Kogi State on 11th November 2022.

Idris Miliki stated that these roles were within the rules and regulation set out by both the 1999 Constitution and the INEC Election guidelines. The rules he stated are meant to guide the conduct of all stakeholders.

On availability of Policies on Youths by Political parties, the ED observed that many parties do not have functional policies that encourage young persons and women in participating in party activities. This he stated has caused disaffection and disillusionment among the young persons in the INEC recognized political parties, and is focal in the reasons for the poor participation of young persons.

PRESENTATION ON RATIONALE AND GOAL OF PROJECT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHRCR, IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL

The Goal of the project is improvement in the participation of young persons in governance

and leadership in Kogi State

The objectives include:

To ensure necessary political commitment to deepen and spread youth participation in governance and leadership positions

To build the capacity of young persons in promoting good governance

Approaches:

- Advocacy
- Community mobilization
- Media engagement
- Publications/Research
- Capacity building
- Institutional strengthening

PLENARY SESSION:

- Turnout of Youths and Women was impressive during the elections
- Elections was largely peaceful, with visible presence of security
- Vote buying was however wide spread and went mostly unchecked despite pre-election efforts at sensitization by stakeholders
- Overall, there was voter apathy in majority of the polling Units especially in the East and Western Senatorial

- The trend of women voters casting their ballots for male candidates was still observed despite the presence of a female candidate

- Many of the party representatives condemned the culture of vote buying despite the fact that their agents were active participants of the phenomenon on election day
- There has not been commensurate value for women in the elections despite their numerical strength in voting

SURVEY ON SCORECARD FOR YOUTH IN LEADERSHIP

The presentation was conducted by the Executive Director, Initiative for Grassroot Advancement in Nigeria (INGRA), Hamza Aliyu.

He facilitated the filling of the Data collection tool.

CLOSING

Idris Miliki Abdul, the Executive Director, Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution thank the participants for their frank exchange of ideas as regarding the conduct and outcome of the 11th November 2023 Governorship elections in Kogi State as regards the participation of young persons.

He emphasized that the role of political parties in changing the narrative is crucial and this must be sustained.

There was a group photography and the meeting ended.



Group Picture during the One Day Post 2023 Governorship Election Review Meeting for Political Parties in Kogi State. Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF, On Thursday 14th December, 2023 at Halims Hotel, Lokoja, Kogi State.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE 1-DAY POST 2023 GOVERNORSHIP ELECTION REVIEW MEETING FOR POLITICAL PARTIES IN KOGI STATE, ORGANIZED BY THE CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) AT HALIMS HOTEL, GANAJA JUNCTION, LOKOJA ON FRIDAY 24TH NOVEMBER 2023 IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WOMEN TRUST FUND NIGERIA WITH SUPPORT FROM MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

BACKGROUND:

The Review meeting was aimed at assessing the roles of young persons in political parties in the just concluded 11th November 2023 in Kogi State and to synergize towards increasing the effective participation of youth and young persons in governance and leadership at State level. It also had in attendance representatives of registered political parties and selected Media practitioners.

There were paper presentations on Inspiring Youths for Leadership and Anti-Corruption and Accountability by Executive Director, Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) Idris Miliki Abdul and the Review of the off-cycle election and post-election activities as observed in the State since the elections were concluded, Challenges of Youth in Attaining Leadership position and the way forward by Executive Director, Initiative for Grassroot Advancement in Nigeria (INGRA), Hamza Aliyu

OBSERVATIONS:

- Availability of functional Youth policies in all Political parties is a major set back in fostering effective leadership positions in Party politics
- The post-election crisis witnessed after the 11th November 2023 Governorship election in Kogi State is regrettable, unacceptable and condemnable, taking into cognizance the level of engagement and mobilization by various Civil Society Organizations with political parties before and during the elections
- The constitutional restriction on the age for contesting elections is discriminatory and disenfranchises a large percentage of young persons
- The roles of political parties in demanding for the conduct of Local Government Council elections in Kogi state, is disappointing looking at the importance of political parties in governance as they are the only institution mandated by the constitution to contest election in Nigeria as provided in the Constitution and Electoral Laws in Nigeria
- There is no budgetline item for the Kogi State Youth Development Commission in the 2024 proposed Budget for the State and this is unacceptable
- The Legislature are critical stakeholders in ensuring accountability and transparency in governance through legislative process
- Inter Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) representing registered political parties, has not effectively played its role in accountability and transparency in governance
- The results of votes of the 2020 Local Government Councils elections has not been declared and no opposition political party has demanded for it.
- The tenure of the current Local Government Councils ended on December 14th 2023 and there is no machinery put in place by the State Government for democratic governance at that level currently, despite being a tier of Government. There is no Budgetary provision in the 2024 proposed State Budget for the conduct of the Local Government Councils election, despite the out going Governor being a product of the democratic process through elections.

This is worrisome as the Governor took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

- The 11th November 2023 Governorship elections was the most divisive in the history of elections in the state, dividing the citizens/electorates along ethnic and religious lines

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The meeting made the following recommendations:

- That Political parties must do more to include young persons in their internal party activities through effective specific policies that encourage youth in party leadership positions
- That the current attitude of opposition parties in Kogi State where parties seem weak to challenge the policies of government, is detrimental to forging a vibrant democracy and good governance
- **There must be a deliberate effort by the incoming administration in the State to convene a State Conference to re-establish bonds within the citizens taking into consideration the level of distrust and disunity within 6 months of its inauguration**
- The State House of Assembly must ensure that the Youth Commission and the Ministry of Youths and Sports and other youth focused institutions have adequate funding to carryout activities aimed at improving the development of youths in the State
- Constitutional amendments to remove the age restriction for contesting election must be in the front burner of the current National Assembly, by amending the various sections that provide for the right of young persons at 18 years but can not vote at that age. We proposed that the Constitution should read **“any citizen of Nigeria that has attained the age of 18 years, can vote and be voted for”**.
- We call on The Nigerian Police to as a matter of urgency, conclude its investigations into the post-election violence that has characterized the aftermath of the 11th November 2023 Governorship elections in Kogi State, and make the outcome of such investigation public as soon as possible.
- Political parties must be held accountable for the violent actions of their supporters before, during and especially after the elections in Kogi State.
- The Kogi State House of Assembly must immediately appropriate funds for the conduct of Local Government Councils elections in the State as it is the level of government that provides the most effective platform for young persons to participate in democratic governance particularly at grassroot
- The Inter Party Advisory Council must re-invigorate its responses and actions towards holding the government accountable

The Review meeting commended the Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) for its untiring efforts at improving youth involvement in leadership in Kogi State. It also appreciated The Nigeria Women Trust Fund and MacArthur Foundation for their support and partnership.

Signed:

IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL

Executive Director

CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR)

LOKOJA, KOGI STATE

REPORT OF THE 1-DAY TOWNHALL MEETING AT COMMUNITY LEVEL ON INSPIRING YOUTH FOR LEADERSHIP FOR KOGI WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT ORGANIZED BY THE CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) AT CHARVID HOTEL, AIYETORO GBEDE, IJUMU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON WEDNESDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2023. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NIGERIAN WOMEN TRUST FUND NIGERIA AND SUPPORT OF MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

REMARKS

The meeting began at 10:55 am with self-introductions by participants.

The Executive Director of Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) Idris Miliki Abdul, welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked them for honouring the invitation.

There was a plenary discussion on the role each participant played during the recently concluded November 11th 2023 Governorship elections in Kogi State,

Some of the roles included:

- Voting
- Election observation

On observations by participants during the election, some participants stated that vote buying was prominent and this had implications for governance

Idris Miliki stated that it was very important for youths to build their capacity at effectively participate in governance and participation election period was a vital component.

On who is a leader, the Executive Director inquired what qualities are required for leadership. Some of the responses by participants included

- Courage
- Honesty
- Strength of character

He further explained that leadership by example was key to influencing people



Idris Miliki Abdul, Executive Director of CHRCR, making the Welcome Address, Objectives of the Meeting and Presentation on Inspiring Youth for Leadership during the One Day Town Hall Meeting at Community Level on Inspiring Youth for Leadership for Kogi West Senatorial District. Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF. On Wednesday 20th December, 2023 at Chavid Hotel, Ijumu, Kogi State.

especially for young persons.

Due to the poor effect of governance in Nigeria, young persons have lost hope and are leaving the country in numbers (JAPA).

PRESENTATION ON RATIONALE AND GOAL OF PROJECT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHRCR, IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL

The Goal of the project is improvement in the participation of young persons in governance and leadership in Kogi State

The objectives include:

- To ensure necessary political commitment to deepen and spread youth participation in governance and leadership positions
- To build the capacity of young persons in promoting good governance

Idris Miliki stated that despite 18 years being

the age of voting by the Nigerian Constitution, the age to contest elective positions in Nigeria is 25 years. This is discriminatory, and a major reason for the disillusionment of young persons.

On issue of corruption, the ED stated that this was prevalent in all facets of community life including religious, professional and community circles.

Approaches:

- Advocacy
- Community mobilization
- Media engagement
- Publications/Research
- Capacity building
- Institutional strengthening

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION:

- A participant raised the issue of the independence of INEC and the Judiciary in terms of their roles and responsibilities in the electoral process.
- Idris Miliki explained that these entities had statutory roles in elections according to the Constitution and the Electoral Act. These roles are mostly around conduct of elections and interpretation of the rules and guidelines. Substantial compliance is the standard for measuring the level of

compliance.

- The main role of the Judiciary is to interpret laws and rules
- Another participants spoke on the issue of mentoring for young persons and what care givers should do.
- The ED explained that mentoring was key in building the capacity of young persons and it was the responsibility of the parents and care givers to ensure this.

PRESENTATION ON CHALLENGES OF YOUTHS IN ATTAINING LEADERSHIP

The presentation was conducted by the Executive Director, Initiative for Grassroot Advancement in Nigeria (INGRA), Hamza Aliyu. He began by definition of terminologies including who a youth is.

He gave a brief overview of youth data and information in leadership in Nigeria, including population, mean age, etc.

Other issues he raised in his presentation includes

Challenges with youth participation and recommendations including the issue of mentorship.

YOUTH IMPACT SCORECARD

Ibukun Ajayi, IT Programme Officer, CHRRCR, led participants in filling the scorecard

CLOSING



Group Picture during the One Day Town Hall Meeting at Community Level on Inspiring Youth for Leadership for Kogi West Senatorial District. Organized by CHRRCR in partnership with the NWTFF. On Wednesday 20th December, 2023 at Chavid Hotel, Aiyetoto Gbede Ijumu, Kogi State.

Photo News



Idris Miliki Abdul and other Participants during the Aiyegunle Gbede Day 2023 on 26th December, 2023



Idris Miliki Abdul, Executive Director of CHRCR, the only Participant from Nigeria, with other participants from different countries and four continents, during the Conference on Human Rights, Oversight and Accountability Mechanisms in Counter-Terrorism in Nairobi Kenya.

Organized by Global Counter Terrorism Forum GCTF in partnership with International Institute for Justice and the Rules of Law IJ. On 26th and 27th February 2024.

Photo News



Wedding Ceremony
Gift & her husband Philips
on their wedding day and other well wisher
On Saturday 23rd March, 2024

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE 1-DAY TOWNHALL MEETING AT COMMUNITY LEVEL ON INSPIRING YOUTH FOR LEADERSHIP FOR KOGI WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT ORGANIZED BY THE CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) AT CHARVID HOTEL , AIYETORO GBEDE, IJUMU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON WEDNESDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2023. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NIGERIAN WOMEN TRUST FUND NIGERIA AND SUPPORT OF MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

The meeting had in attendance representatives of Hunter Associations, Market women Community leaders, and Traditional leaders.

There was paper presentations on Inspiring Youths for Leadership by Executive Director, Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) Idris Miliki Abdul, Challenges of Youth in Attaining Leadership position and the way forward by Executive Director, Initiative for Grassroot Advancement in Nigeria (INGRA), Hamza Aliyu, plenary session, Question and Answer session and Communique development and dissemination.

OBSERVATIONS:

- The act of voting, especially for young persons, is a crucial role in participation in leadership at community level
- That Vote Buying (financial or in kind) was prominent between political party agents and electorates during the 11th November 2023 Governorship elections at grassroots levels
- There was crisis and intimidation by some party members and candidates supporters at some polling units due to late arrival of election materials
- The elections was generally peaceful
- The implication for vote buying and selling is corruption that leads to poor governance that affects the community persons more
- The electorates are also guilty of supporting vote buying by actively “selling” their votes during the elections particularly at grassroots levels
- Effective representation should be a good quality for youths in leadership
- Young persons have lost hope in governance in Nigeria and are leaving the country in numbers (JAPA phenomenon) due to lack of satisfaction on the outcome of the 2023 elections
- There was no young persons that obtained party nominations and became candidates in the 11th November 2023 which is a worrisome development
- That despite 18 years being the age of voting by the Nigerian Constitution, the age to contest elective positions in Nigeria is 25 years. This is discriminatory
- The “Not Too Young To Run” Law has made attempt at addressing this discrimination. But there are still gaps
- There is a wide gap in awareness of community persons on the existence of the Youth Development Commission Law and the Not Too Young To Run Act, which has a significant implication on youth for leadership in Kogi State.

- There is corruption and Accountability issues in all areas of our community life including religious, professional and community circles, which has significant negative impact on youths

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The meeting made the following recommendations:

- INEC and the Security Agencies need to address the negative phenomenon of vote buying and selling
- Political parties must do more to ensure that young persons have leadership roles in the management of the party at all levels
- there is need for citizens to fight corruption and encourage Accountability in all spheres of life
- the constitutional requirement on the age of contest must be amended
- citizens must desist from participating in vote buying as it disenfranchises them of their right to select those who should lead them and affects development and good governance
- INEC must make concise efforts at monitoring the activities of political parties to ensure financial transparency and accountability
- Government through its agencies such as the National Orientation Agency, and other agencies must make concerted efforts at raising awareness of community persons, especially young persons, on the laws that particularly affect them such as Youth Development Commission Law and the Not Too Young To Run Act

The Town-Hall meeting commended the Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) for its continuous efforts at improving youth involvement in democracy in Kogi State. It also appreciated The Nigeria Women Trust Fund and MacArthur Foundation for their support.

Signed:

IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL

Executive Director

Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR)

Lokoja, Kogi State



REPORT OF THE 1-DAY TOWNHALL MEETING AT COMMUNITY LEVEL ON INSPIRING YOUTH FOR LEADERSHIP FOR KOGI CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT ORGANIZED BY THE CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) AT AFIMS HOTEL, OKENE, OKENE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY 2024. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NIGERIAN WOMEN TRUST FUND NIGERIA AND SUPPORT OF MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

REMARKS

The meeting began at 10:20 am with self-introductions by participants.

The Executive Director of Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) Idris Miliki Abdul, welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked them for honouring the invitation.

There was a plenary discussion on the role each participant played during the recently concluded November 11th 2023 Governorship elections in Kogi State.

From the responses, the following roles were identified

- Voting
- Election observation
- No role due to lack of PVC or under aged as at the time of voting

On observations by participants during the election, some participants stated that vote buying was prominent and this had implications for governance

Idris Miliki stated that it was very important for youths to build their capacity at effectively participate in governance and participation election period was a vital component.

On who is a leader, the Executive Director inquired what qualities are required for leadership. Some of the responses by participants included

- Courage
- Honesty
- Strength of character

He further explained that leadership by example was key to influencing people especially for young persons.

Due to the poor effect of governance in Nigeria, young persons have lost hope and are leaving the country in numbers (JAPA).



Participants during the One Day Town Hall Meeting at Community Level on Inspiring Youth for Leadership for Kogi Central Senatorial District. Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF. On Thursday 11th January, 2024 at Afims Hotels, Okene, Kogi State.

PRESENTATION ON RATIONALE AND GOAL OF PROJECT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHRCR, IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL

The Goal of the project is improvement in the participation of young persons in governance and leadership in Kogi State

The objectives include:

- To ensure necessary political commitment to deepen and spread youth participation in governance and leadership positions

- To build the capacity of young persons in promoting good governance

Idris Miliki stated that despite 18 years being the age of voting by the Nigerian Constitution, the age to contest elective positions in Nigeria is 25 years. This is discriminatory, and a major reason for the disillusionment of young persons.

On issue of corruption, the ED stated that this was prevalent in all facets of community life including religious, professional and community circles.

Approaches:

- Advocacy
- Community mobilization
- Media engagement
- Publications/Research
- Capacity building
- Institutional strengthening

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION:

- A participant appreciated CHRCR for their role in promoting youth leadership. He also stated that the Adavi Care Taker Chairman was the youngest among the 21 Chairmen sworn in
- Miliki stated that despite the fact that the Care taker Chairman was a young person, it was unconstitutional as it goes against Section 7 of the Constitution.

Kogi State Government has violated this section and any law enacted by any House of Assembly that is not in line with the constitution is null and void

- Miliki also stated that the issue was not peculiar to Kogi State but is a national issue
- He concluded by calling on the State Government to within the shortest time, conduct elections into the Local Government Council

PRESENTATION ON CHALLENGES OF YOUTHS IN ATTAINING LEADERSHIP

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He gave a brief overview of youth data and information in leadership in Nigeria, including population, mean age, etc.

Other issues he raised in his presentation includes

Challenges with youth participation and recommendations including the issue of mentorship.

YOUTH IMPACT SCORECARD

Ibukun Ajayi, IT Programme Officer, CHRCR, led participants in filling the scorecard

CLOSING



Group Picture during the One Day Town Hall Meeting at Community Level on Inspiring Youth for Leadership for Kogi Central Senatorial District. Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF. On Thursday 11th January, 2024 at Afims Hotels, Okene, Kogi State.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE 1-DAY TOWNHALL MEETING AT COMMUNITY LEVEL ON INSPIRING YOUTH FOR LEADERSHIP FOR KOGI CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT ORGANIZED BY THE CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) AT AFIMS HOTEL, OKENE, OKENE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY 2024. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NIGERIAN WOMEN TRUST FUND NIGERIA AND SUPPORT OF MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

The meeting had in attendance representatives of Youth leaders, Media Practitioners, Persons with Disabilities, Community leaders, and Traditional leaders.

There were paper presentations on Inspiring Youth for Leadership by Executive Director, Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) Idris Miliki Abdul, Challenges of Youth in Attaining Leadership position and the way forward by Executive Director, Initiative for Grassroot Advancement in Nigeria (INGRA), Hamza Aliyu, plenary session, Question and Answer session and Communique development and dissemination.

OBSERVATIONS:

- The November 11th 2023 Governorship election witnessed some level of disenfranchisement of electorates (especially youths) due to non-availability of Permanent Voters Cards in some offices of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the central senatorial district.
- That Vote Buying is still a strong influence in elections at state level
- Violence during the November 11th Governorship elections was still prevalent in some parts of the Central senatorial district, particularly at some polling units
- There is a visible improvement in the youth participation and leadership at all levels
- The “Not too young to run” campaign has increased awareness on the political participation rights of young persons. However, there is still room for improvement.
- That the Nigerian Constitution discriminates against young persons in terms of **age of voting** and **age to be voted** for.
- The signing into law of the Youth Development Commission Law and its establishment in Kogi State by the Alhaji Yahaya Bello Administration is a welcome development that is aimed at promoting the importance of youths in Kogi State. However, there has not been any budgetary allocation to the Youth Development Commission since its creation, which has continually affected its development.
- A major challenge to youth participation in leadership is corruption and Accountability issues which has spread in all areas of our community life including religious, professional and community circles.
- Youth participation in political party leadership is still a major challenge as the only position available to youth most times is the position of Youth leader.
- The number of young persons that sought the Nomination of their political party in the November 2023 Governorship election, was very low.
- The failure of the Yahaya Bello Administration to conduct Local Government Council elections at the end of the elected councils and the unconstitutional imposition of

CareTaker leadership, is regrettable, condemnable and unacceptable. This has denied young persons from participating in political governance at local levels, and this contravenes the provision of Section 7(1) of the 1999 Constitution as Amended.

- Despite the illegality of the Care Taker administration at local government Council level, , the appointments were not women and youth sensitive.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The meeting made the following recommendations:

- The Kogi State Government must through the Budgetary provisions, fund the Youth Development Commission adequately, to ensure that they perform their statutory role of improving youth living standard.
- Youth must demand for Accountability from elected/appointed leaders to improve their standard of living and skills in leadership to improve good governance
- All stakeholders in elections, need to address the negative phenomenon of vote buying and selling
- Government must always ensure equity in the appointment into public offices, particular to young persons, to improve their leadership development.
- There is need for political parties to ensure that young persons have the opportunity to lead at all levels of the party
- there is need for citizens to fight corruption and encourage Accountability in all spheres of life, particularly the Nigerian youth as it can affect their development and future.
- Amendment of the 1999 Constitution to address the issue of age of contesting for political offices, will address the discrimination of young persons across Nigeria and improve youth in leadership position.
- **The Kogi State House of Assembly must reverse the amendment of the Local Government Administration Law, that empowers the State Governor to appoint Caretaker leadership as it is inconsistent with the provisions of the 1999 Constitution and to that extent of its inconsistency, it is null and void**
- The Kogi State Government must as a matter of urgency, conduct elections into Local Government Councils as soon as possible within 6 months, through budgetary allocation in a Supplementary Budget as the current 2024 Kogi State Budget does not make such provision.

The meeting thanked the Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) for the ongoing sensitization campaign towards improving youth involvement in leadership at state level in Kogi State. It also appreciated The Nigeria Women Trust Fund and the continuous support of MacArthur Foundation.

Signed:

IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL

Executive Director

Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR)

Lokoja, Kogi State.

REPORT OF THE 1-DAY TOWN HALL MEETING AT COMMUNITY LEVEL ON INSPIRING YOUTH FOR LEADERSHIP FOR KOGI EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT ORGANIZED BY CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) AT WISDOM HOME HOTEL, ANYINGBA, ANYINGBA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON FRIDAY 26TH JANUARY 2024, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NIGERIAN WOMEN TRUST FUND NIGERIA AND SUPPORT OF MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

REMARKS

The meeting began at 20:35am with self-introduction by participants the executive director of conscience for human rights and conflict resolution (CHRCR) Idris Miliki Abdul, welcomed participants to the meeting and thanked them for honouring the invitation.

There was a plenary discussion on the awareness of **NOT TOO YOUNG TO RUN** law and which role did each participants played during the recently concluded November 11th 2023 governorship election in Kogi State from the response the following roles were identified:

- 1 voting
- 2 election observation
- 3 lack of election malpractice

Idris Miliki stated that it is very important for youth to build their capacity at effectively participate in governance and participation election period was a vital components

PRESENTATION ON RATIONAL AND GOAL OF PROJECT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHRCR, IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL

The goal of projects is improvement in the participation of young person in governance and leadership in kogi state

THE OBSERVATION includes



Idris Miliki Abdul, Executive Director of CHRCR, making the Welcome Address, Objectives of the Meeting and Presentation on Inspiring Youth for Leadership during the One Day Town Hall Meeting at Community Level on Inspiring Youth for Leadership for Kogi East Senatorial District. Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF. On Friday 26th January, 2024 at Wisdom Home Hotel, Anyigba, Kogi State.

- 1 to build the capacity of young persons in promoting good governance.
- 2 the establishment of youth development commission.
- 3 to develop and disseminate youth focused and media engagement through strategic media engagement.

On issue of corruption, the ED stated that this was prevalent in all facts of community life including religious, professional and community Circe's

APPROACHES

- Advocacy
- Community mobilization
- Media engagement
- Publication/research
- Capacity building
- Institutional strengthening

ON-GOING MEDIA ACTIVITIES

1. Media engagement (traditional and social

media) To include weekly phone-in live program, production of IEC (stickers) and social media campaign (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp).

2. Production and distribution of monthly magazines (the perspective magazines)

The ED continued by showing the activities done so far (pictures) organized by (CHRCR).

PROJECT INDICATORS

* Number of youth organization participating in project activities

* Number of Young persons reached with project messages and participating in activities

* Media reportage on youth related activities in Kogi state

* Number of online Hits and likes on youth related messages through websites, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

* Number of community activities conducted.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- A participant appreciated CHRCR for their role in promoting youth leadership. He made a suggestion that the activities done during the program should be made in PDF and that there should be a phone-in number which they call from in the radio program.

- Miliki stated that the PDF cannot be made and that the radio has their phone number which they

can phone in themselves

- Another participant asked why 60% of the YOUTH are unemployed and is the solution
- Idris Miliki stated that because of the government and that the youth can be self-employed if they like and it depends on the kind of job they want and that the youth can be employed depending on the job they can do

PRESENTATION BY INGRA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The presentation was conducted by ED initiative of grassroots advancement in Nigeria (INGRA), Hamza Aliyu

He started with defining the terminologies including who a youth is. He continued by saying the challenges in participation in political leadership

He gave a brief overview of youth data and information in leadership in Nigeria including population, mean, age etc

YOUTH IMPACT SCORECARDS

Ibukun Ajayi, IT programme officer CHRCR led participants in filling the scorecard



Group Picture during the One Day Town Hall Meeting at Community Level on Inspiring Youth for Leadership for Kogi East Senatorial District. Organized by CHRCR in partnership with the NWTF. On Friday 26th January, 2024 at Wisdom Home Hotel, Anyigba, Kogi State.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE 1-DAY TOWNHALL MEETING AT COMMUNITY LEVEL ON INSPIRING YOUTH FOR LEADERSHIP FOR KOGI EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT ORGANIZED BY THE CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR) AT WISDOM HOTEL , AIYIGBA, DEKINA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA ON FRIDAY 26TH JANUARY 2024 IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NIGERIAN WOMEN TRUST FUND WITH THE SUPPORT OF MACARTHUR FOUNDATION.

The 1-Day town-hall meeting is in furtherance of the senatorial engagement on Youth in leadership campaign at State level in Kogi State.

In attendance were leaders from Youth groups, Women groups, Student from Kogi State University Anyigba, and Media practitioners.

The activities included presentations and sessions on:

- Inspiring Youths for Leadership by Executive Director, Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) Idris Miliki Abdul,
- Challenges of Youth in Attaining Leadership position and the way forward by Executive Director, Initiative for Grassroots Advancement in Nigeria (INGRA), Hamza Aliyu,
- plenary session,
- Questions and Contributions
- Communique development and dissemination.

OBSERVATIONS:

- There is limited knowledge and understanding of leadership processes by Young persons
- That despite 18 years being the age of voting by the Nigerian Constitution, the age to contest elective positions in Nigeria is 25 years. This is discriminatory
- There was noticeable youth apathy during the last 11th November 2023 Governorship elections due to several factors including lack of confidence in the system, non-availability of Permanent Voters Cards
- The 11th November 2023 Governorship elections was generally peaceful in Kogi East Senatorial District
- The awareness on constitutional instruments and guidelines on elections, such as The 1999 Constitution, The Electoral Act 2022, INEC Guidelines, etc, is low among young persons
- The "JAPA" syndrome is a reflection of the lack of confidence in the system of leadership and governance in Nigeria by young persons
- Vote Buying and Selling was observed by participants during the Governorship elections
- Young person's make up a large portion of registered voters in Nigeria but this advantage has not translated to elective positions for the youths
- There is concerted efforts by the present administration in Kogi State to involve young persons in leadership through appointments but there is little efforts at towards improving elective position for youth. There is evident in the recent unconstitutional

imposition of Caretakership at Local Government levels.

- There is low level of mentorship for young persons at state level in Kogi state
- The act of voting, especially for young persons, is a crucial role in participation in leadership at community level
- Engagement of young persons with political office contestants during elections is mostly limited to tokenism and thuggery
- Vote buying reduces young persons to commodities during elections
- Leadership and governance are two concepts that are mostly not understood by young persons and other stakeholders
- Economic empowerment of young persons is key for leadership
- **It is noticed that youths are a contributing to the insecurity through their engagement in violent extremism leading to terrorism**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The meeting made the following recommendations:

- The Government through the National Orientation Agency (NOA), Ministry of Information, Kogi State Youth Development Commission, etc, must build knowledge and improve awareness of young persons on leadership and its various processes.
- The in-coming Government in Kogi State to as a matter of urgency put machinery in place to conduct Local Government elections as soon as possible in line with the provisions of the 1999 Constitution as Amended that will encourage youth participation in leadership at that level
- Young persons must make efforts to build their self-knowledge and motivation on the process for leadership
- The constitutional requirement on the age of contest must be amended to remove the Constitutional challenge to young person's involvement in elections leading to good governance
- Citizens must desist from participating in vote buying and selling as it disenfranchises them of their right to select those who should lead them and affects development and good governance and it is also a criminal offence
- The concept of mentorship for young persons in leadership must be taken seriously by both State and Non State Actors
- There must be a conscious effort at youth empowerment by government and other stakeholders to encourage youths towards leadership positions
- **There is need to positively engage young persons in the counter terrorism efforts of government at both national and sub national levels.**

The townhall meeting commended the Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) for its untiring efforts at improving youth involvement in leadership at state level in Kogi State.

They also appreciated the collaboration of The Nigeria Women Trust Fund and the continuous support of MacArthur Foundation.

IDRIS MILIKI ABDUL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR)
LOKOJA, KOGI STATE

AYEGUNLE GBEDE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

IJUMU LGA, KOGI STATE

Date: 6th December, 2023.

Mr. Idris Abdul Miliki,
Executive Director,
Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution.

Dear Sir,

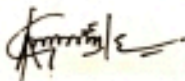
HEARTFELT APPRECIATION FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

On behalf of the Chief Imam and entire Ayegunle Gbede Muslim Community, I extend my deepest gratitude for your remarkable generosity in providing for us the much needed public address system for our central mosque. Your thoughtful contribution has greatly enhanced our ability to spread the teachings and messages during our sermons, fostering a stronger sense of unity and connection within our community.

Your selfless act is a testament to your kindness and commitment to the well-being of our community. May Allah continue to bless you abundantly for your generosity, continue to be with you and your family, and may your life be filled with joy, prosperity, and sound health.

Once again, thank you, Mr. Miliki, for your benevolence. Your support has made a significant impact, and we are truly grateful for your continued service, friendship and dedication to the well-being of the entire Muslim community of Ayegunle Gbede.

Warm regards,



Khalifah Abdulrasheed Saidu Arekemase, mni, MDP, FMA
Chief Imam of Ayegunle Gbede.

Tel: 08033791405, 08076653514



RC: 1582014

CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR)

Whereas, the majority of the Nigerian Society suffering various forms of violence, conflict and indignity to their person? Realizing the need to campaign for the promotion of human rights and peaceful co-existence. The Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRCR) based in Lokoja, Kogi State now replace the formal Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution as part of our growth and status the need to make expansion, the Conscience now replace the Centre. The Conscience for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution is incorporated Limited by Guarantee RC: 1582014 on 6th May, 2019.

NETWORKS

We are members of the following networks of organizations;

Electoral Reform Network (ERN), Freedom of Information Coalition (FOI), Network on Community Radio (NCR), Citizen Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR), Citizen Wealth Platform (CWP), National Coalition on Affirmative Action (NCAA), Partners Against Violent Extremism (PAVE), Civil Society Network against Corruption (CSNAC), Budget Monitoring and Advocacy Group (BMAG), PLAC/Situation Room, Global Network on Investigative Journalism (GNIJ), The International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ), Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN), bases on our current project intervention in Kogi State. Part of the outcome/fallout of the engagement on Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability. Network on Anti-corruption, Transparency and Accountability (NATA) was created for the purpose sustainability, information sharing and capacity building of stakeholders in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, Inspiring Youth for Leadership Network (IYLN) and The Civil Society Leaders Forum on Social Protection and Sustainable Development.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Our activities includes the following;

- Peace and conflict resolution,
- Elections monitoring/observation,
- Gender advocacy,
- Voters education,
- Legislative lobbying and engagement,
- Budget Advocacy,
- Security and counter terrorism advocacy: Currently National Steering Committee Member, National Action plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE), domiciled in the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA)

Our major instrument of advocacy is through the media engagement which include both print and electronic. We conduct training, facilitation and we network with various organizations which includes but not limited to NGO/CSO, Labour Union, Women Groups, Youth Association and Community Based Organizations. We also partner with National and International Agencies.

PAST INTERVENTIONS

- Between 2009 – 2014, we introduce to the Kogi State Assembly GENDER AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY BILLS which was passed in March 2014 into Law after rigorous lobbying. The Bill was the first in the Northern Nigeria and also the third in the Federation as part of the effort to domesticate Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations against Women (CEDAW).
- We also led the process that culminated in the passage of FREEDOM OF INFORMATION BILL (FOI) which was also passed into law in 2013 to enhance transparency and accountability in governance, the first of its kind in Nigeria at State level.
- We co-ordinated Voters Registration Observations in the entire 21 Local Governments of the Kogi State in 2011 in partnership with Alliance for Credible Elections (ACE).
- We also co-ordinated for Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), it Anti-Corruption Revolution Anchor in the North Central.
- We work on Countering Violence Extremism (CVE)
- We coordinated VOTE NOT FIGHT, ELECTION NO BE WAR, a voter's education programme targeting the youths and their influential against electoral violence in Kogi State during the 2015 General elections supported by National Democratic Institute (NDI).
- We facilitated for Foreign Observers for IRI in Kogi State during the Presidential and National Assembly elections.
- Implemented a Project on Anti-corruption, Transparency and Accountability in Elections in Kogi State. In partnership with Yar'Adua Foundation with the support of MacArthur Foundation.
- Working on Open Government Partnership (OGP) in Kogi State in partnership with Centre LSD.

PUBLICATIONS

- We research and published a book on the plight of widows in the Northern Nigeria titled WAILING WIDOWS.
- Monthly publication of THE PERSPECTIVES Magazine since January 2016 till date.
- Annual Budget Pull-Out of selected MDAs in Kogi State since 2016 till date.
- A Weekly live Phone-in Radio Programme
- We also produce and air jingles on Elections, Good Governance, Anti-Corruption, Transparency, Accountability, Electoral Violence and COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Compendium of Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability Intervention in Kogi State, Volume One. 2019

PARTNERS

We partners with the following organizations/Institutions; International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), UNDP/DGD, Alliance for Credible Elections (ACE), Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CSLAC), Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolutions (IPCR), Kogi State House of Assembly, European Union Technical Assistance to Nigeria's Evolving Security Challenges (EUTANS), Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), International Centre on Counter terrorism (ICCT), Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC)/Situation Room, Citizen Wealth Platform (CWP), Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), Yar'Adua Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, African Centre for Leadership Strategy and Development (Centre-LSD), Peace Initiative Network (PIN), Yiaga Africa, The Nigeria Women Trust Fund (NWTf) and The International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law (IIJ)

OUR GOAL

Our goal is to institutionalise Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability in Nigeria by ensuring necessary political commitment to deepen and spread Anti-Corruption, Transparency and Accountability.

SECRETARIAT ADDRESS:

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Facebook: CHRCRPerspective Twitter: @CHRCRPerspectiv D-U-N-S No: 561346357 TIN No.: 23826782-0001

CALL TO ACTION

On Anti-corruption Transparency and Accountability

OUR GOAL

Our goal is to institutionalise Anti-corruption, Transparency and Accountability in Nigeria by ensuring necessary political commitment to deepen and spread Anti-corruption Transparency and Accountability.

LITTLE THINGS MATTER

Corruption does not seem harmful until it is too late

It is often easy to ignore impacts of petty corruption when they appear to be little more than inconveniences. But collective permissiveness of minor graft creates an enabling environment for corruption to fester, resulting in a problem far more difficult to solve.

Stop tolerating petty corruption. Pay attention to the smallest signs of retail corruption in public service delivery and be prepared to demand accountability from government service providers.

FATALISM IS PARALYSING

Anti-corruption strategies are less likely to be successful when entrenched practices are considered impossible to overcome

Decades of unchecked corruption in Nigeria's public institutions and a history of inept leadership have destroyed public faith in governance and created a sense of fatalism. Citizens are unlikely to be motivated to combat corruption because experience suggests that nothing will change.

The fight against corruption can be won. New approaches must be adopted to create social incentives for collective action against corruption. Leaders must inspire faith in anti-corruption efforts by implementing tangible reforms in public institutions. Civil society and community leaders must develop and promote a national social contract that rewards accountability and enforces social sanctions for unacceptable behaviour.

CHANGING OUR APPROACH TO ANTI-CORRUPTION MESSAGING

Sensational messaging desensitizes the public to corruption

Traditional approaches to anti-corruption messaging in Nigeria have been characterized by sensational reporting of corruption cases involving huge amounts of money or the use of extreme language to eliminate undesirable behaviour. These kinds of messages risk inducing apathy in citizens by reinforcing their sense of powerlessness in the face of rampant corruption.

Anti-corruption messages must be carefully framed to effectively communicate the negative impacts of corrupt behaviour while empowering targeted audiences to take practical and effective action. Pro-accountability actors must avoid the one-size-fits-all approach to anti-corruption messaging and ensure that messages are assessed for effectiveness before dissemination.

LITTLE ONES MATTER

Education can help prevent corruption by fostering a culture of integrity

An effective way to tackle corruption is to teach children to recognize it, reject it and condemn those who tolerate it.

School curriculums must incorporate ethics and civic education in the curriculum. Parents, teachers and school administrators must recognize their responsibility to shape the values of the next generation by exhibiting high standards of integrity, honesty and transparency in their actions.

REDESIGNING GOVERNMENT PROCESS TO MAKE CORRUPTION AVOIDANCE PRACTICAL

Doing the wrong thing becomes a rational choice if doing the right thing is too difficult

In Nigeria, avoiding corruption may not be the most practical option. Governance processes are not designed to be citizen-friendly. It is easy to fall afoul of regulations because procedures are needlessly complicated and poorly documented.

Complying with penalties for relatively minor violations is unnecessarily difficult and creates incentives for extortion by law enforcement agencies.

Government must rethink and redesign routine procedures for providing public services to ensure they are citizen and business friendly. Options for complying with penalties for minor violations should include online platforms where citizens can lodge complaints, dispute imposed penalties and report instances of solicitation or extortion.

POLITICISING CORRUPTION CAN DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD

Political bias in the fight against corruption undermines public faith in anti-corruption efforts

In Nigeria, fighting corruption can be an excuse to persecute political opponents. Government and its anti-graft agencies are often accused of abusing their power and being biased in choosing which allegations of corruption to investigate or prosecute. In several cases, court rulings are disregarded.

Fighting corruption is already a difficult mission. The abuse of state power compounds Nigeria's accountability challenge. The government must be seen to be fair in applying sanctions and anti-corruption agencies must operate independently and within the scope of the law.

COURTESY



CONSCIENCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS & CONFLICT RESOLUTION (CHRCR)
FOR RIGHTS PROTECTION & PEACE BUILDING

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