



Sustaining a
**TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN
ANTI-CORRUPTION
ADVOCACY AND MOBILIZATION**
Platform in Nigeria



MacArthur
Foundation

Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation
August 2024



THE YAR'ADUA FOUNDATION

The Shehu Musa Yar'Adua was established to honour the legacy of one's of Nigeria's foremost contemporary leaders. Through its facilities and programmes, the Foundation endeavours to further the ideals of Shehu Yar'Adua; his commitment to national unity, good governance and to building a just and democratic society for all Nigerians. The Foundation's Public Policy Initiative encourages the formulation and implementation of sustainable public policy to foster a more prosperous and inclusive nation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Yar'Adua Foundation has led a comprehensive initiative to strengthen democratic governance by fostering a culture of accountability in Nigeria. Our work has cultivated a growing community of practice among anti-corruption actors across the country, primarily through the collaborative Partners United (PU) portal.

At the core of these efforts is the Foundation's leadership in the Joinbodi Cohort, a coalition of over 20 civil society organizations committed to enhancing accountability, promoting transparency, and empowering marginalized groups. This has significantly bolstered the understanding of political accountability, ensured compliance with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, and established community watchdog groups, all contributing to a strengthened accountability ecosystem supported by the MacArthur Foundation's ON Nigeria program.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) has been integral to the Foundation's approach, empowering women and persons with disabilities (PWDs) with advocacy tools and platforms to engage in policy dialogue and amplify their calls for government responsiveness. The Partners United Community Advocates (PUCA) program, piloted in three states, has empowered young advocates, including PWDs, with the knowledge and tools necessary to tackle corruption and demand transparency in their communities.

Through policy forums and roundtables, the Foundation has brought together experts, stakeholders, and underrepresented groups to drive public engagement, particularly focusing on reengineering social norms that perpetuate corruption. Collaborative efforts have yielded tangible results, such as the Swiss Embassy's inauguration of a solar-powered water project in the Karonmajiji community, improving access to clean water for PWDs.

The Foundation has also collaborated with Google to launch tools that enhance electoral accountability, including a whistleblowing form and a polling unit locator. These efforts, coupled with increased awareness of whistleblower protection, are driving momentum towards establishing a comprehensive whistleblower protection framework in Nigeria.

The Foundation's use of storytelling and new media has challenged and changed social norms that sustain a culture of corruption, influencing citizen attitudes as reflected in the widespread engagement with video vignettes and other digital content. These initiatives are fostering a collective responsibility and promoting the integration of PWDs, aligning with the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018.

The Yar'Adua Foundation's initiatives have strengthened the accountability framework in Nigeria and empowered citizens and marginalized groups to play an active role in governance, ensuring that the demand for accountability is sustained across the nation.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation and a major economic power, but has long contended with pervasive corruption. Government has passed legislation to implement various reforms that strengthen due process and enhance transparency, including the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) in 2000 and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2003. Despite these initiatives, corruption remains a significant challenge, undermining trust in public institutions, hindering equitable resource distribution, and threatening Nigeria's stability and development.

Beginning in 2011, an encouraging trend emerged in Nigeria: a surge¹ in citizen-led activism against corruption, marked by a significant rise in protests and campaigns demanding government transparency and accountability. This wave of activism culminated in an historic election that unseated the ruling party for the first time. The election of President Buhari, who campaigned on an anti-corruption platform, brought renewed hope. Yet, reports of public corruption persisted throughout his administration.

The depth of the issue is underscored by data. In 2016, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime revealed² that only one in five Nigerians refuse to pay bribes, and nearly half of bribes are paid to expedite administrative processes. Further, a 2019 Afrobarometer report³ identified public institutions, including the police, parliament, and judiciary, as epicentres of corruption. These findings highlighted the widespread acceptance of corruption, underscoring challenges on the path to transparency.

In response to the persistent lack of political will, the Foundation strategically focused on galvanizing and sustaining citizen-led demands for accountability. In 2019, the Yar'Adua Foundation released a powerful advocacy video that amplified the voices of young Nigerians calling for an end to police brutality, particularly abuses perpetrated by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). The video featured first-hand accounts from celebrities and citizens who had experienced police brutality, effectively framing the issue as a critical matter of accountability. It also encouraged young people to speak out, emphasizing that the fight against corruption is one that can be won. Within a year, the #EndSARS protest movement erupted across the country, with thousands of young Nigerians organizing marches in major cities, demanding the disbandment of SARS and signaling the emergence of a powerful movement for accountability and reform.

Coalitions of civil society organizations continue to play a pivotal role in sustaining advocacy for greater transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement. The Foundation leads and coordinates one such coalition, the Joinbodi Cohort, a group of civil society organizations (CSOs) working together under the MacArthur Foundation's ON Nigeria program to sustain demand for accountability. By leveraging the heightened demand for accountability and good governance among citizens, cohort members have improved the public's understanding of anti-corruption laws,

¹ United States Institute Of Peace, Special Report (October, 2018) <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/sr433-nigerias-movement-for-transparency-and-accountability-bringing-the-pieces-together.pdf>

² UNODC Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and Trends (December, 2019) Research Report https://www.unodc.org/conig/uploads/documents/Corruption_Survey_2019.pdf

³ Transparency Internation and Afrobarometer, Citizens' Views and Experiences of Corruption (2019). Research Report <https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/GCB-Africa-2019-Full-report-WEB.pdf>

Introduction cont'd.

increased compliance with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, established community watchdog groups, and galvanized collective action against corruption.⁴ Additionally, the coalition has seized opportunities to promote transparency and open government practices, while supporting groups to amplify investigative reports and use technology to monitor public funds. This has transformed the accountability landscape.

Research indicates that effective anti-corruption efforts must consider the social beliefs and expectations that support such practices. The Yar'Adua Foundation has been instrumental in addressing societal norms that perpetuate corruption. Our digital campaigns, including the viral *Children Have No Filter* video,⁵ have reached millions of Nigerians, sparking critical conversations about the behavioural aspects of corruption. The establishment and growth of the Partners United online community of practice (Partners United Community Advocates) exemplifies the Foundation's commitment to supporting civic actors with technology and collaborative tools to enhance the effectiveness of their efforts.

While government-led accountability and transparency efforts remain insufficient, the Foundation has played a key role in sustaining citizen demand. Signs of progress are evident; Nigeria recently improved its ranking in Transparency International's 2023 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), moving up five places to 145 out of 180 countries. This modest improvement has been attributed to the combined efforts of citizen activism and the work of CSOs like the Yar'Adua Foundation, whose initiatives increase the demand for good governance and help set the agenda for government accountability.

Objectives

The Sustaining a Technology-Driven Anti-Corruption Advocacy and Mobilization Platform in Nigeria project focused on collaborative anti-corruption efforts and sought to:

- Increase citizen demand for government accountability.
- Empower pro-accountability stakeholders (including ON Nigeria grantees) to be more effective in their demand for accountability.
- Establish a growing community of practice that sustains the culture of accountability in Nigeria.

Approach

- Strengthening collaborative anti-corruption activism among civil society actors to broaden demand for accountability and transparency in Nigeria.
- Engaging and mobilizing public interest in accountability.
- Supporting social inclusion for people with disabilities, the elderly and those without access to the internet or television.

⁴ Joinbodi Cohort Report: Advancing Civic Engagement and Accountability in Nigeria. BudGIT Foundation.

⁵ Hoffmann, L. K., & Patel, R. N. (2017). Collective action on corruption in Nigeria: A social norms approach to connecting society and institutions. Chatham House. Africa Programme

⁶ Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation. (2023). Children Have No Filter [Video]. Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/SMYFoundation/videos/1591655684976784/>

⁷ Corruption Perceptions Index Nigeria (2023) <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/nigeria>

MESSAGE AND CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Changing attitudes towards corruption and engaging the public in the fight for accountability requires a strategic and effective advocacy campaign. The Foundation harnessed the power of storytelling and captivating imagery to craft messages aimed at influencing social norms. Our objectives were to raise awareness, spark discussions, and create pathways for action. By leveraging digital and new media, we successfully achieved the following:

- Developed and disseminated compelling messages to highlight the detrimental effects of corruption and underscore the importance of accountability in Nigeria.
- Created a digital platform to stimulate meaningful conversations among Nigerians about corruption and accountability, encouraging citizens to critically reflect on societal norms and behaviors that perpetuate corruption.
- Mobilized individuals and communities to take action against corruption and advocate for transparent governance practices.

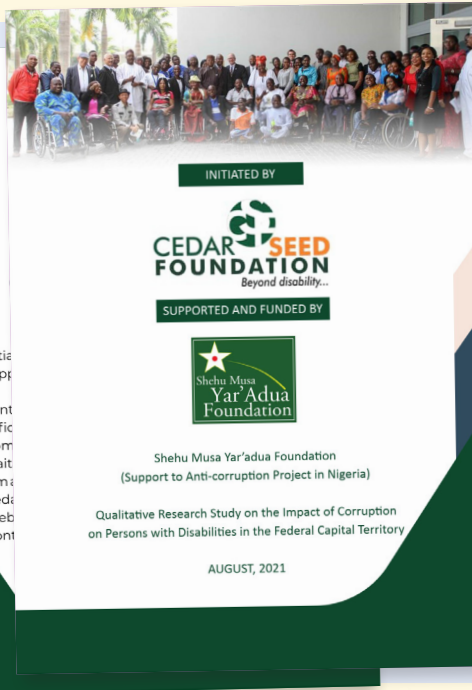
Over the past three years, the Foundation has produced and published seven flashcards, four explainer videos, and six video vignettes. Our messaging has centered on key issues such as corruption, the inclusion of persons with disabilities, and the various ways citizens can engage in the demand for government accountability.

Accountability Content Research

Data gathered by the Centre for Policy Research and Development Solutions (CPRDS) revealed that greater access to government data and information is critical to citizen-led demands for accountability. To this end, the Yar'Adua Foundation engaged CPRDS to conduct comprehensive research, both online and offline, to identify and compile a wide range of documentation relevant to accountability in Nigeria. This extensive effort sought to gather essential knowledge content including reports, whitepapers, articles, journals, and other relevant materials that highlight and support transparency and accountability initiatives across national and subnational levels.

Numerous accountability documents were meticulously collated and uploaded to the Partners United (PU) portal. These included crucial public procurement documents, project information, federal and state budgets, and key policies and acts such as the Public Procurement Act and the Petroleum Industry Act. Additionally, the portal hosts vital reports from various institutions, ensuring that stakeholders and the public have access to comprehensive data necessary to hold government accountable. The portal houses federal budgets, 72.5% of state budgets and detailed project information for Osun, Taraba, Kano and Kaduna states.

The Foundation engaged Cedar Seed Foundation to conduct comprehensive qualitative research on the impact of corruption on PWDs in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The study revealed that PWDs in Abuja are significantly impacted by corruption, which exacerbates their social and economic exclusion. Key findings indicated that funds meant for disability services are often misappropriated, and there is a lack of transparency in resource allocation. Additionally, the research found that bribery and favouritism are common in accessing disability-related services, discouraging many PWDs from seeking the help they need. The inadequate enforcement of disability rights legislation further compounds these issues, leaving many PWDs marginalized.



To address these challenges, the study recommended stringent enforcement of existing disability rights laws and implementation of transparent mechanisms for resource allocation. Public awareness campaigns were recommended to educate both the public and government officials about the rights and needs of PWDs. Establishing independent monitoring bodies to oversee the distribution and utilization of funds for disability services was also recommended to ensure that resources reach their intended beneficiaries.

Advocacy Content

Flashcards

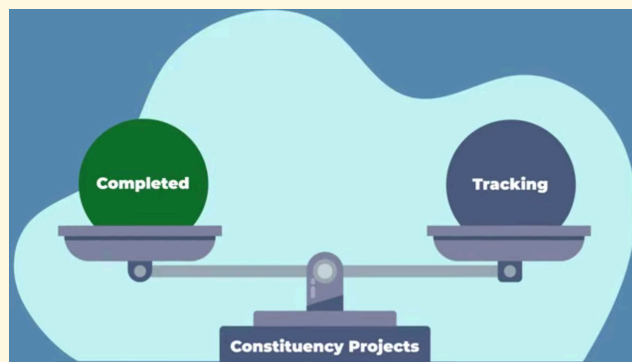
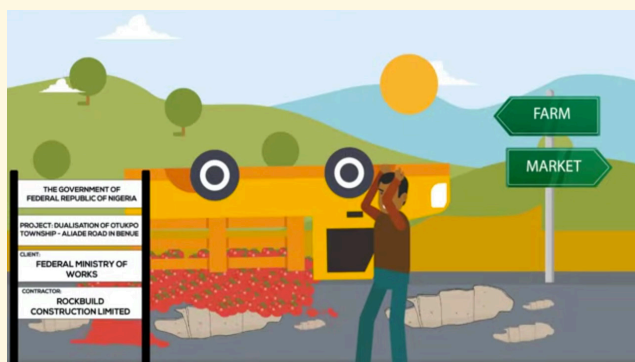
The Foundation promoted powerful advocacy messages regarding social inclusion for persons with disabilities. The flashcards were designed to convey key messages in a simple and engaging way, raising awareness and encouraging positive attitudes towards inclusivity. These visual aids successfully educated and inspired action towards inclusivity within communities.



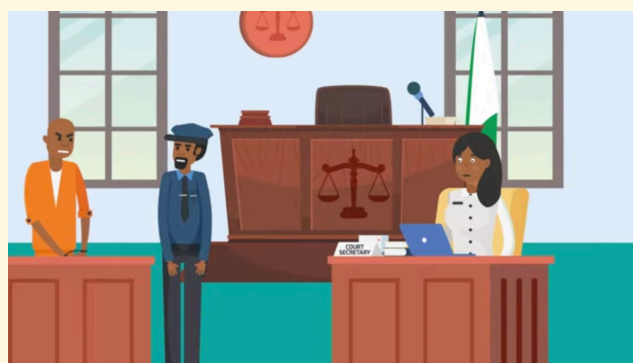
Explainer Videos

The Foundation created four explainer videos to empower citizens with practical guidance on how to use tools and knowledge produced by the Joinbodi Cohort to promote accountability and inclusion. The videos encouraged active participation in monitoring federal projects, guided citizens on whistleblowing against corruption and making FOI requests, and advocated for the inclusion of persons with disabilities by highlighting the importance of accessible environments and adherence to the Disability Act.

- **Project Tracking:** Advocates for active citizen participation monitored and reported on federal constituency projects for grassroots development. Promotion of the use of the ***ifollowthemoney.org*** and ***Partners United portal***, encouraged citizens to track project progress, report deficiencies, and share experiences with other advocates on the community forum of the portal.⁸



- **How to blow the whistle on corruption:** Citizens learned how to blow the whistle on corruption using the CORA tool, a web-based platform⁹ developed by the African Centre for Media & Information Literacy (AFRICMIL).¹⁰

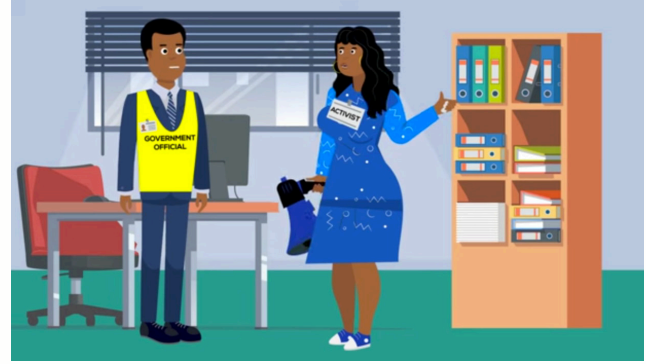


⁸ Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-yQOnJHC_M

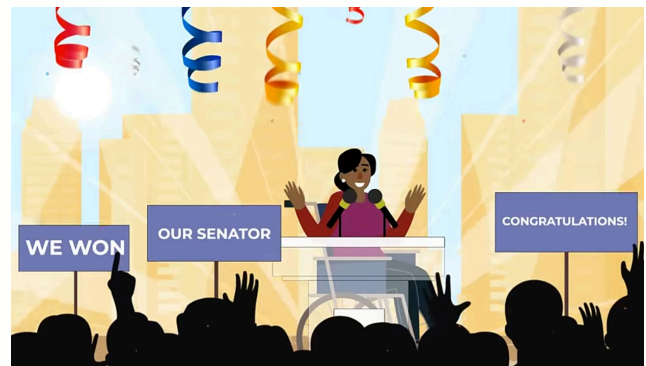
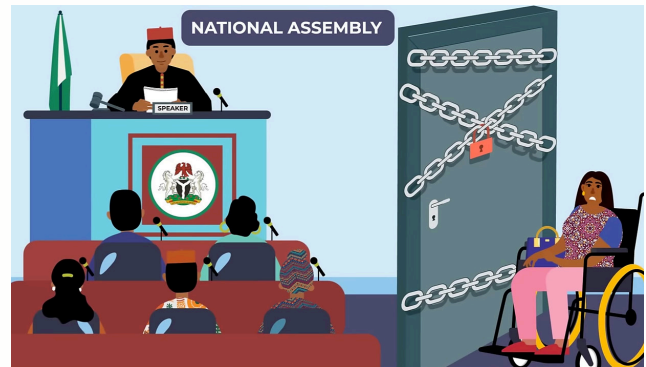
⁹ Partners United Whistleblowing tool. <https://partnersunited.org/whistleblowing>

¹⁰ Explainer Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQ_TeBmuAWc

- **How to make an FOI request:** The video emphasized the importance of transparency in governance and guided citizens to leverage the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) to hold government agencies accountable. It outlines steps for requesting information from both the public and private sectors using the Partners United portal FOI form.¹¹



- **Uniting Voices for Inclusive Futures:** The video shines a spotlight on the exclusion of persons with disabilities in Nigerian society, drawing attention to their underrepresentation in government and insufficient funding. The video stresses the importance of confronting biases, establishing accessible environments, and advocating for equal opportunities to nurture inclusivity. As a reminder, it stresses the urgent need for accountability in adhering to Disability Act accessibility requirements, especially as the 5-year grace period has elapsed.¹²

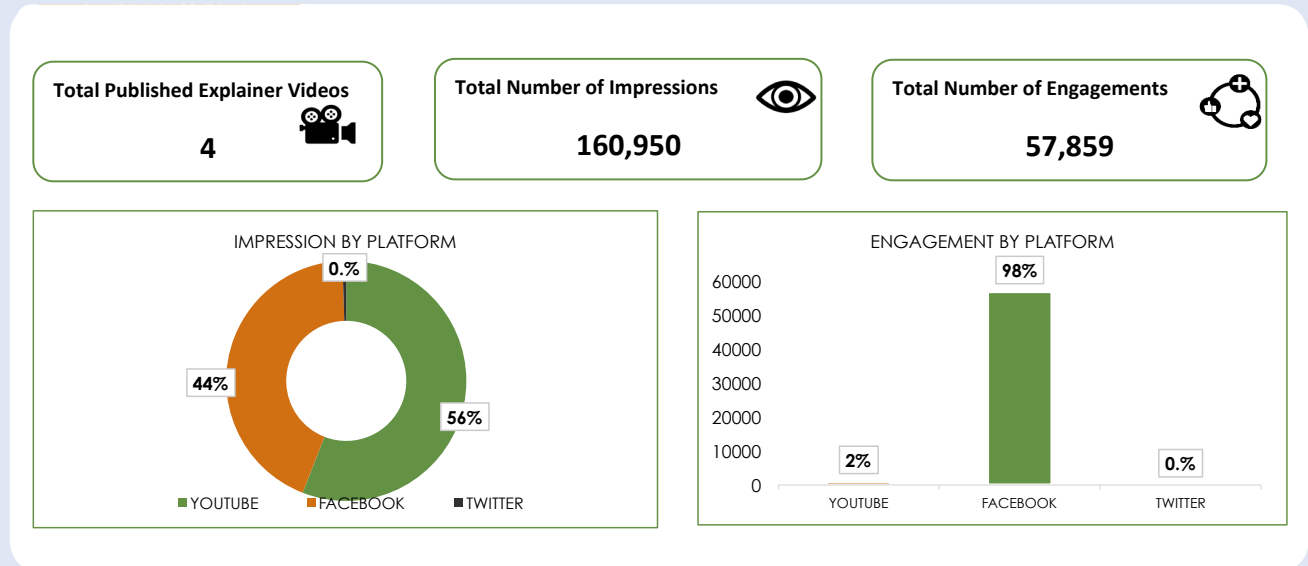


¹¹ Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Val8uNPiwQg>

¹² Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJual6iVaxM>

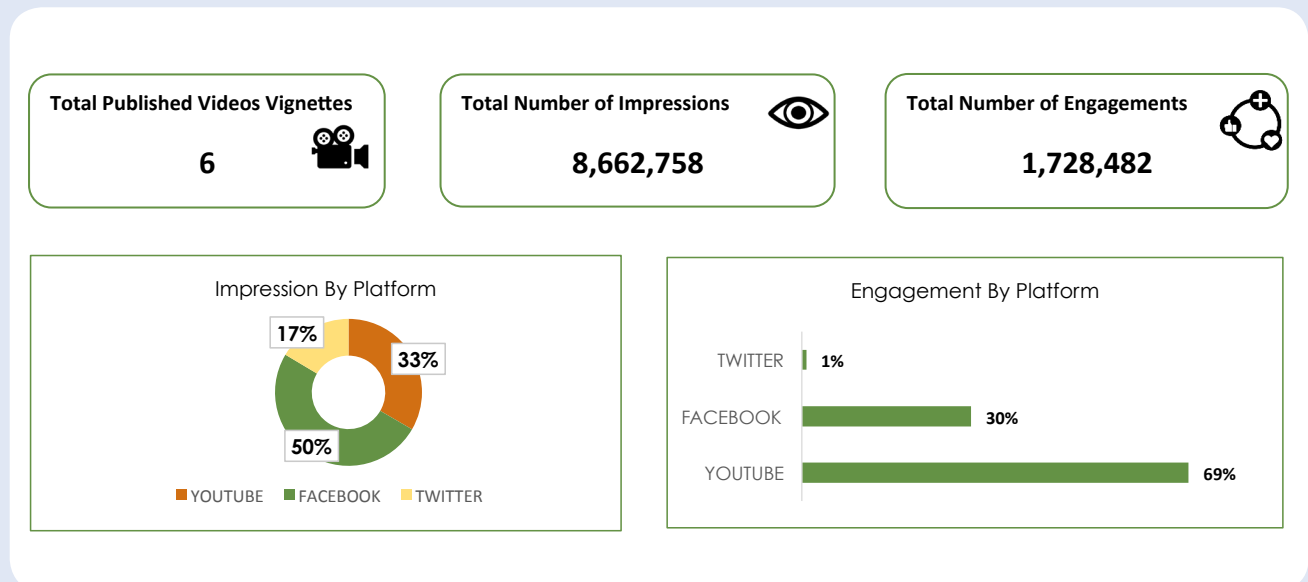
Reach and Engagement

The four explainer videos reached over 160,000 users on Facebook and YouTube, with approximately 37% of viewers engaging with the content through likes, shares, and comments.



Video Vignettes

The Foundation produced six video vignettes with the overall objective of shifting social norms around corruption in Nigeria. A number of these videos offered a less personal and, therefore, less threatening way to discourage behaviors that drive or enable corruption. Others highlighted positive deviants as examples of desirable behavior in the effort to promote accountability.



Exposing Systemic Corruption at the Ikoyi Registry



Synopsis: Investigative reporter Taiwo Adebuku from The Cable News exposed systemic corruption at a Nigerian marriage registry, where couples faced extortionate fees, irregular procedures, and extra charges for basic services.¹³ The exposé highlighted the damaging effects of corruption on public trust in government services and advocated for comprehensive reforms, staff restructuring, and improvements to online application processes. The video amplified the report and its impact.¹⁴

Audience Engagement:

The video reached 160,000 users across Facebook and YouTube.

Selected Comments

This is terrible. Another I think needs more light is that of obtaining a passport. That still ranks as my worst experience with Nigerian corruption.
[@chikedonaldibewuike4867](#)

Well done Mr. Taiwo Adebuku. However, the same thing happens Passport Offices (Immigration Services). In fact, it is worse there.
[@oladokunsunday3321](#)

Wait o, must you use registry? Can't you just do white wedding? trad and be done with it?
[@godspowerugadu54](#)

Funny enough it's not just in Ikoyi, come here to Benin, they do same things over here.
[@faithodigie5202](#)

This feels like the story of Nigeria, not just the Registry. Of course, change is needed.
[@TheGeorgegenesis](#)

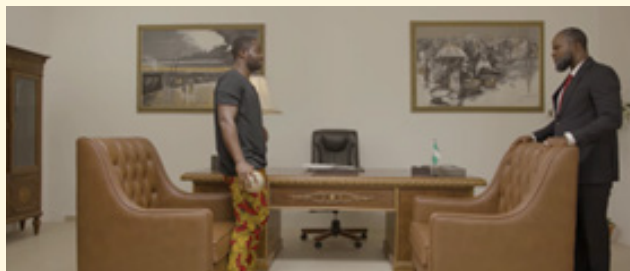
Resonance with Target Audience:

The video resonated strongly with viewers by highlighting the pervasive corruption in Nigeria's government services, with many connecting the marriage registry issues to broader systemic problems. Taiwo Adebuku's investigative efforts were widely praised, with viewers commending his courage in exposing corruption and advocating for reform. Some called for further investigations into other corrupt practices, like those at passport offices, reflecting a broader frustration with the status quo. While a few viewers were skeptical, most recognized the need for change, seeing Taiwo's work as a critical step toward accountability and systemic reform in Nigeria.

¹³ Investigation: Extortion, inflated costs... the Nigerian marriage registry where fraud is a norm (July 1, 2021) Article. <https://www.thecable.ng/investigation-extortion-inflated-costs-the-nigerian-marriage-registry-where-fraud-is-a-norm/>

¹⁴ Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJr0qvE38q8>

Minister Hakeem's Dilemma



Synopsis: Set during an election, the video explored Minister Hakeem's dilemma after securing approval for 80 billion naira to build six major hospitals. The dilemma, depicted through a spirited argument between Minister Hakeem and a younger, less ethical version of himself, has the minister pondering whether to use the funds as intended or divert them to his governorship campaign. The video challenges viewers to reflect on the political incentives our society creates for corruption.¹⁵

Audience Engagement:

The video reached 119,400 users across Facebook and YouTube.

Selected Comments

Change begins with me
[@victorosegbue3363](#)

We have a long way to go
in this country!
[@toluibitomi2331](#)

What we need in Nigeria
is a total system overhaul
to help the nation find the
change it needs, without
this, good men like Minister
Hakeem will continue to
be enticed over to the bad
side.

[@becomingblacksuperman](#)

This was sad to watch.
[@umehiamkosmic9366](#)

He gave in. It indeed takes
more than one person to
fight corruption.
[@nelosoloved](#)

Resonance with Target Audience:

The video exploring Minister Hakeem's dilemma resonated strongly with the audience, eliciting a mix of frustration, understanding, and calls for systemic reform. Many viewers empathized with the minister's struggle, recognizing the immense pressures within Nigeria's deeply flawed system that often leads well-intentioned individuals to compromise. The depiction of the internal conflict between ethical duty and political ambition struck a chord, highlighting the harsh reality that without a total system overhaul, even those with good intentions are vulnerable to corruption. The video effectively challenged viewers to reflect on the societal and political incentives that perpetuate corruption, sparking discussions about the need for comprehensive change to prevent such dilemmas from arising.

¹⁵ Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4rTT1pEc8I>

This is Not Normal



Synopsis: The video opens with a distressing scene in a hospital where a pregnant woman is denied emergency medical care due to her inability to pay unethical charges. An older, concerned bystander steps in, reprimanding the hospital staff for exploiting vulnerable patients and undermining ethical standards in the nursing profession. Her intervention compels the staff to adjust their behavior and provide the necessary care to the distressed patient. The video prompted viewers to reflect on the critical issue of professional accountability in the provision of healthcare services.¹⁶

Audience Engagement:

The video reached 923,878 users across Facebook, X and YouTube, with 243,794 viewers engaging with it through likes, shares, and comments.

Selected Comments

We are the problem in this country and not the government
[@dre06769](#)

Sometimes i wonder if they never gave birth, as the way the treat pregnant women is really scary and inhuman
[@ifitumichenemi](#)

I know this are "auxiliary" so called nurse hand work. I'm a nurse and happy to be one of the registered
[@shukuratopeyemi5882](#)

I remember my experience. The hospital and lots of staff there were top notch but a certain senior nurse in charge of the maternity ward showed me shege.
[@ekipfelix6613](#)

So what do we do? How do we stop it? cause even I have seen it happen.
[@Tebony2](#)

Resonance with Target Audience:

The video resonated deeply with viewers, prompting significant engagement across social media. Many commenters reflected on personal experiences with unethical practices in healthcare, echoing the video's depiction of corruption and mistreatment. Viewers praised the bystander's intervention, recognizing the importance of holding healthcare professionals accountable. Some expressed frustration and sought solutions to these systemic issues, while others acknowledged that such behavior is widespread in Nigeria. The video effectively prompted reflection on professional accountability and reinforced the Foundation's goal of encouraging bystander action to demand ethical standards in critical services.

¹⁶ Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GijgpvHM5Rc>

The New Hire



Audience Engagement:

The video reached over 814,341 users on Facebook, X and YouTube, with 295,166 of viewers engaging with it through likes, shares, and comments.

Selected Comments

I must say it's really lovely. Congratulations a thousand times to you all.

[@anselmoseghale4420](#)

This had me in tears. Give people who are worth it the chance to do what they love not minding or judging them by their physical disabilities.

[@Adannayaa](#)

Thanks a lot for the enlightenment. This video needs to be pushed more.

[@ericotrips](#)

I hope office spaces and public buildings make it important for people living with disability to gain access.

[@ericotrips](#)

This made me so emotional

[@stellaj4719](#)

Synopsis: This video features an organization that hires a new Human Resources Manager, unaware of her accessibility needs as a wheelchair user. On her first day, tension mounts as management realizes she cannot access her office due to the lack of ramps at the entrance and the disrepair of the building's elevator. The video highlights the importance of corporate compliance and collective accountability under the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018.¹⁷

Resonance with Target Audience:

Viewers found the story touching and inspiring, praising its message of inclusivity and the importance of providing equal opportunity for people with disabilities. Commenters expressed strong emotional responses, with some calling for increased awareness and improvements in accessibility in workplaces and public buildings. The video effectively underscored the need for corporate compliance with disability rights, aligning with the Foundation's strategy of highlighting positive examples that promote inclusivity and collective accountability.

¹⁵ Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNKzHfEiPUk&t=11s>

Children Have No Filter



Synopsis: The vignette depicts children expressing aspirations for careers including policing, government, law, medicine, and banking, but with troubling intentions. They are motivated by corruption, embezzlement, abuse of power, and exploitation. The teacher intervenes to emphasize the importance of integrity in professions, highlighting the concerning attitudes and potential societal implications of the children's aspirations. The video employs a satirical approach to highlight corruption's real but unintended consequences on the next generation.¹⁸

Audience Engagement:

The viral video reached 1,480,301 users across Facebook, X and YouTube, with 329,068 viewers engaging with it through likes, shares, and comments.

Selected Comments

This should be aired on NTA Network News, AIT, TVC, Channels TV and other TV stations across the country.

[@Al-amin Shuayb](#)

This is it! How do we expect them to be something different from what we see in our society. Children learn faster than the adults.

[@Maryann Chinyere](#)

Funny but true

[@Safiya Yusuf](#)

Lol, shock the teacher, that is the example their parents are showing, God will help us all

[@Stella Chikaeze](#)

God help us!

[@Chidimma Utuagba](#)

Resonance with Target Audience:

Children Have No Filter resonated deeply with viewers, sparking a mix of emotions ranging from humor to concern. Many comments highlighted how the children's aspirations, influenced by societal corruption, reflect the broader issues in Nigeria. Viewers appreciated the satirical approach, with some calling for the video to be widely broadcast to raise awareness. Others expressed worry about the future, emphasizing the need for parents and leaders to model better behavior for the next generation. The video effectively underscored the Foundation's goal of revealing how everyday behaviors can contribute to the amplification of corruption, prompting viewers to reflect on their role in shaping a more ethical society.

¹⁸ Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3hrJGySLg>

A Friend Indeed



Synopsis: The video highlights sexual harassment in tertiary educational institutions and the duty of bystanders to respond. It tells a victim's encounter with a perpetrator, showing power dynamics, skepticism towards reporting, and systemic challenges faced by victims seeking justice and support. It serves as a call to action for tertiary institution authorities to prioritize the safety and well-being of all women on university campuses, ensuring that no one suffers in silence.

Audience Engagement:

The viral video reached 2,462,912 users across Facebook, X and YouTube, with 302,429 viewers engaging with it through likes, shares, and comments.

Resonance with Target Audience:

A Friend Indeed deeply resonated with viewers, evoking a mix of emotions ranging from support to discomfort. Many appreciated the candid portrayal of a victim's experience, highlighting the power dynamics and systemic challenges that make it difficult for victims to seek justice. Viewers praised the video for shedding light on an issue that is often overlooked, with several calling for more awareness campaigns to encourage action from authorities in educational institutions.

Some viewers expressed unease about the portrayal of such a sensitive topic, reflecting the broader skepticism that exists around issues of sexual harassment and reporting. The video effectively aligned with the Foundation's goal of promoting accountability and encouraging bystanders to take action, pushing viewers to reflect on their role in creating safer environments for young women.

Selected Comments

This short video just displayed how we are so engrossed in ourselves without noticing the pains of others. We can only fight these ills if we care for not just ourselves. If we get rid of this "e no concern me" attitude because at last it will concern all of us.

[@Maryjoe Okoro](#)

Lesson!

We should always break the silence and report all cases of GBV n harassment

[@Helen Inyang Ekpo Peter](#)

These set of people are mostly found at d corridors of power where they believe no one can question their evil deeds.

[#breaksilence#](#)
[@Ajiboye Sarah](#)

[Dammylolar](#)

I hope is that this will not be like Nollywood at the end it won't go anywhere. In Nijia nothing work no justice for the poor thank you for sharing.

[@Christ Love Chioma](#)

PARTNERS UNITED PORTAL

The Partners United portal is a dedicated online community of practice for pro-accountability actors in Nigeria. Developed by the Yar'Adua Foundation in partnership with Reboot and Griot Studios, and with support from the MacArthur Foundation, this dynamic and inclusive platform fosters a sustainable community of individuals and organizations committed to advancing accountability in Nigeria. It seeks to strengthen cohesion and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and policy learning among members of the advocacy coalition working to promote public accountability.

Designed with a streamlined interface tailored for CSOs, academics, development practitioners, and citizens, the portal offers high-level resources, tools, and a community forum for social interaction and discussions among like-minded individuals. This helps cultivate a sustainable and diverse ecosystem focused on accountability, transparency, and good governance in Nigeria.

Partners United has undergone several upgrades to enhance inclusion, continuous knowledge exchange, and learning on the platform. The first two upgrades (versions 2.0 and 3.0) introduced features such as an improved user interface, a podcast section, an email alert feature, accountability tools (including a Freedom of Information request form and a whistleblowing form), a new request page, and a document library.

In collaboration with Griot Studios (GS) and Behavioural Insights (BI), the Foundation conducted a review of the platform's user interface and experience to assess its overall accessibility, design, and user-friendliness. The review also explored ways to further enhance the platform's value to users and accountability actors.

Following this review, the platform was upgraded to version 4.0, which incorporated refined and redesigned features. These included an enhanced user interface, expanded knowledge resources (such as a blog, badges, and verified accounts capabilities), new accountability tools (Election Whistleblowing Form, Petition Form, and Develop Niger Delta resources page), a new request page, and an updated document library.

Partners United

Home About Us Resources Toolkits Events Community Search Sign In Sign Up

SHEHU MUSA YAR ADUA CENTRE, ABUJA
MONDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2023 5:30PM

Welcome to Partners United

Partners United is a dedicated online community of practice around Nigeria's accountability sector.

[Access Community Page](#)

Browse Latest Posts

[Access Library](#) →

News

Center, NIALS Explore Opportunities To Leverage Research And Data To Promote Good Governance

News

Center, NIALS Explore Opportunities To Leverage Research And Data To Promote Good Governance

News

Post IACC Engagement: MacArthur Foundation Criminal Justice Cohort Reflects On Outcomes, Wants

Press Release

Oronsaye Report, Creation of New Ministry of Livestock and Soaring Cost of Governance

The Foundation also conducted a user experience survey to gather insights as to how the portal serves the personal and organizational goals of its users. The survey specifically explored how the platform can continue to add value to user interactions and accountability work. Feedback from the survey informed the Foundation's approach to developing accountability content and marketing strategies.

To further refine the portal's functionality, experience, and accessibility, the Foundation hosted a two-day user testing session. The session engaged a diverse group of users, including On-Nigeria grantees, CSOs, and visually impaired PWDs, leading to the development of version 5.0, which features a streamlined document library and a more intuitive, modern interface.



Establishment of A Community of Practice and Institutional Capacities Around the Partners United Platform

Civic Technologies: Capacity Building in the Niger Delta

In partnership with Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN) and the Ken Saro-Wiwa Innovation Hub, the Foundation supported 29 young civic tech developers in the Niger Delta through a capacity-building initiative to contribute to the development of the Partners United (PU) portal. As a result, in February 2022, significant upgrades were integrated into the PU portal, and a thriving community of developers was established in the Niger Delta. This community is now equipped to deliver accessible and inclusive tech-driven solutions that strengthen accountability across the region.

Partners United Pilot Project

In collaboration with Connected Development (CODE), Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ), The Budget Foundation (BudgIT), and the African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL), the Foundation launched a three-month pilot project aimed at cultivating a dynamic community of young pro-accountability advocates through the Partners United portal.

The Foundation brought together 27 young individuals, including women, men, and persons with disabilities, aged 20 to 35, who were selected as community advocates. Their mission was to monitor government projects in their local communities and contribute detailed reports to the Partners United knowledge-sharing platform. By doing so, they played an active role in holding public institutions accountable.

To ensure that these advocates were well-prepared for their roles, the Foundation conducted focus group sessions that identified areas of interest and content preferences. This tailored approach ensured that training was relevant and impactful, equipping advocates with the skills and knowledge required to engage effectively.

The project's impact extended beyond immediate capacity building. As part of its efforts to recognize and incentivize participation, the Foundation awarded certificates to all volunteers and selected two

exceptional advocates—one male and one female—for a one-year paid internship. This opportunity acknowledged their outstanding contributions and provided them a platform to further develop their leadership skills within the civic engagement sector.

By facilitating skill development, fostering knowledge exchange, and providing incentives for continued engagement, the pilot project significantly contributed to building a sustainable community of practice around accountability in Nigeria. The young advocates, now equipped with the necessary tools and resources, are well-positioned to lead future efforts to promote transparency and good governance across the country.



Partners United Community of Practice – Advocates (PUCA)

Building on the success of the Partners United Pilot Project, the Foundation launched the Partners United Community of Practice – Advocates (PUCA), a transformative four-month online initiative aimed at empowering young advocates, aged 18 to 35, to combat corruption, promote transparency, and actively monitor publicly funded projects in Lagos, Abuja, and Anambra States.

Advocates were equipped with essential knowledge and practical tools, including a Freedom of Information (FOI) form integrated into the Partners United (PU) portal. This empowered them to effectively challenge corruption and demand greater transparency within their communities. The project fostered a robust network of young accountability champions dedicated to increasing public awareness and engagement with accountability issues.

The advocates undertook critical investigations into high-profile projects, including the Millennium Tower and Cultural Centre in Abuja, where they uncovered significant discrepancies and delays due to administrative changes. In response, they leveraged FOI instruments to bring attention to these issues at the Federal Capital Development Agency (FCDA). In Anambra, the focus was on tracking water-related projects, specifically the development and commissioning of a water project in Awka-North and South by Senator Victor Umeh. Meanwhile, in Lagos, advocates monitored the rehabilitation of Fred William Street in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA, ensuring transparency in its execution.

Throughout the project, advocates collaborated closely via the Partners United platform, where they shared insights, progress updates, and strategies. This continuous exchange of information enhanced their morale and kept the entire community informed about the ongoing accountability and transparency challenges in the pilot states.

The PUCA initiative significantly advanced the development of a grassroots community of practice. This network of committed individuals is now better prepared to drive transparency and accountability efforts across Nigeria, fostering a culture of civic engagement and public oversight.

PODCAST SERIES

The Foundation produced seven episodes of its podcast series to drive critical conversations that promote inclusiveness, accountability, and social justice. Podcasts featured curated conversations with national and international experts and thought leaders regarding emerging societal issues and how stakeholders can initiate and sustain a collective demand for accountability.



Culture of Silence

Mrs. Kemi Okenyedo, Omowunmi Ogunrotimi, and Lewa Ejila discussed how Nigeria's culture of silence enables sexual and gender-based violence. They explored solutions to break the culture of silence using technology.



Inclusiveness in Accountability Efforts

Mr. Olarenwaju Suraju and Professor Issah Sadiq Radha discussed the roles of various government bodies in the fight against corruption and how their efforts can be more inclusive.



Why Civil Society is Critical in Nigeria

Zainab Ibrahim and Efua Elens-Edeh explored the role of Nigeria's civil society as a bridge between government and citizens and discussed how the shrinking civic space is impeding the work of civil society in Nigeria.



Effects of Corruption on the Lives of People with Disabilities

Zainab Ibrahim and Emmanuel Ayogu discussed the effects of corruption and its impact on the growing population of Persons with Disabilities. They also explored how discrimination against Persons with Disabilities in Nigeria makes them vulnerable to corruption.



Protecting Nigerian Online Civic Spaces

Nafisa Atiku-Adejuwon and Chioma Agwuegbo shared insights into the realities of the Nigerian civic space, identified and addressed concerns, and explored solutions to safeguard the online civic space.



The Importance of Whistleblowing in Nigeria

Zainab Ibrahim and Godwin Onyecholem discussed the concept of whistleblowing and its implementation in the Nigerian context. They explored ways to safeguard whistleblowers and described how to blow the whistle anonymously using the CORA whistleblowing tool.



Disability Inclusion in Nigeria and the MacArthur Foundation Intervention

John Palfrey, President of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, highlighted the Foundation's 30-year commitment to justice, peace, and development in Nigeria. He emphasized the Foundation's work toward gender equity and social inclusion, sharing impactful stories, including indigenous community empowerment.

¹⁹ Audio link: <https://partnersunited.org/podcasts/culture-of-silence>

²⁰ Audio link: <https://partnersunited.org/podcasts/inclusiveness-in-accountability-efforts>

²¹ Audio link: <https://partnersunited.org/podcasts/why-civil-society-is-critical-in-nigeria>

²² Audio link: <https://partnersunited.org/podcasts/the-effects-of-corruption-on-the-lives-of-people-with-disabilities>

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Total Number of Stakeholder Engaged



582

Total PWDS Engaged



35

Total Number of Female



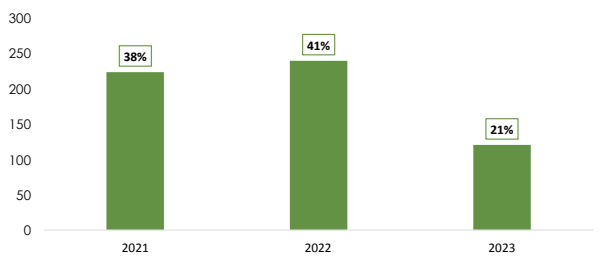
246

Total Number of Males

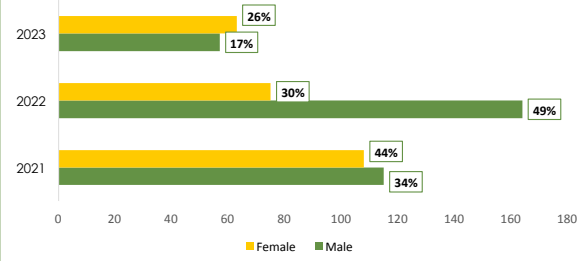


336

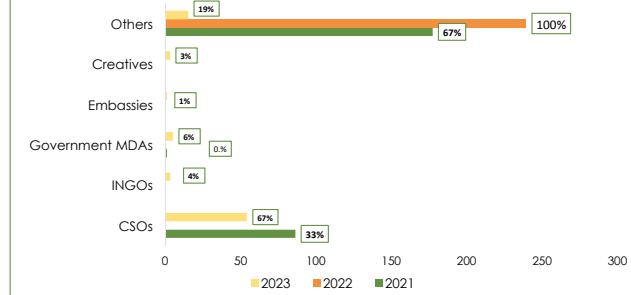
Total Number of Stakeholders Engaged



Gender of Stakeholders Disaggregated by Year



Sector Disaggregation of Stakeholders



Roundtable Events

Partners United Workshops: Fostering a Virtual Community of Practice

The Partners United Platform has been instrumental in connecting civil society organizations (CSOs), stakeholders, and citizens in a collaborative effort to promote transparency and accountability across the country.

To enhance the platform's effectiveness, the Foundation hosted a workshop that introduced new features of the Partners United portal to CSO partners and key stakeholders. The workshop, attended by 58 partner organizations, included comprehensive system functionality training to ensure that participants were equipped to fully utilize the platform's capabilities. By familiarizing partners with these new tools, the workshop strengthened their ability to engage in accountability efforts, deepening the collaborative nature of the Partners United community.

In addition to the workshop, the Foundation facilitated monthly virtual meetings via Zoom from June to December 2021. These meetings played a crucial role in fostering continuous engagement and collaboration among Partners United users. Each session brought together CSO partners, users, and citizens to engage in discussions centered around accountability. Meetings featured presentations from key contributors on relevant and trending topics, which spurred rich discussions and knowledge sharing.

Participants had the opportunity to relate their experiences and insights on various aspects of their accountability work, contributing to a dynamic and evolving community of practice. These virtual meetings not only enhanced the collective knowledge base but also strengthened relationships among diverse participants, fostering a sense of shared purpose and commitment to accountability in Nigeria.

Promoting Accountability Through Creative Storytelling

Creative individuals play a pivotal role in shaping the narrative around accountability in Nigeria. Recognizing their influence, the Foundation partnered with Griot Studios to host a forum that explored the power of creative storytelling, particularly through film, as a tool to address corruption and drive social change. The event engaged creatives as critical stakeholders in the accountability movement, leveraging their unique ability to shift societal norms and attitudes toward corruption.

The forum featured a screening of *4th Republic*, a film that critically examines political corruption in Nigeria's electoral system over the past two decades. This was followed by a plenary session, an interactive Q&A with the audience, and a powerful poetic rendition of *Corruption*. The event brought together a diverse group of participants, including creatives, civil society organizations (CSOs), professionals, academics, students, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members, and citizens, all united by a shared interest in harnessing storytelling for social impact.

The panel discussion was a highlight of the forum, providing a platform for the exchange of ideas and perspectives on using creative storytelling to promote accountability in Nigeria.

SPEAKERS



Ishaya Bako, Director, Griot Studios

Mr. Bako shared insights into his inspiration for the film. He said that *4th Republic* stemmed from his observations of election petition tribunals and violence following the 2015 general elections. He discussed the challenges faced by filmmakers in Nigeria, including funding difficulties, skill gaps, and censorship, which hinder the creation of films that tackle social issues.



Kate Henshaw, Actor

Kate Henshaw, an actor whose personal political experiences mirrored those of her character in *4th Republic*, highlighted the systemic barriers faced by women and youth in politics. She emphasized the importance of addressing these issues through storytelling, using her role as a platform to raise awareness and advocate for change.



Yemisi Nathaniel, Director of Programmes Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative, WRAPA

Ms. Nathaniel emphasized the power of storytelling to evoke empathy and challenge societal norms. She discussed how films like *4th Republic* can either reinforce or dismantle harmful stereotypes and urged more inclusive and balanced narratives that collaborate with CSOs focused on gender equality.

SPEAKERS cont'd.



Kingsley Agu, *Director of Community Engagement, Connected Development*

Mr. Agu underscored the critical role of filmmakers in portraying societal issues authentically. He advocated for strategic partnerships between filmmakers and CSOs to ensure that films like *4th Republic* are grounded in real-world insights that can enhance their social impact.



Ijapari Ben-Hirki, *Actor*

Ms. Ben-Hirki, an actor who uses her roles to address issues including early marriage and sexual violence, encouraged young creatives to find their niche and remain dedicated to creating content that resonates with audiences and drives social change.



Engaging Young Creatives in Advocacy

Building on its commitment to harness the power of creative storytelling for social change, the Foundation partnered with Naila Media to host a two-day workshop in Abuja, specifically designed for female creatives. This workshop tapped into the talents of young women, empowering them to become influential advocates for social justice and governance reform. By providing these creatives with the necessary tools and platforms, the workshop sought to inspire the creation of impactful narratives that raise awareness and drive transformative change in social accountability.

Twenty female creatives, each bringing unique perspectives and diverse talents, participated in the workshop. Over the course of two days, they explored how their creativity could be channelled into powerful advocacy tools. The sessions focused on equipping these young women with the skills to craft compelling stories that resonate with their audiences and highlight critical issues in governance and social justice.

As a direct outcome of this collaborative effort, participants developed five advocacy video scripts, including *Children Have No Filter*. This particular video has since generated significant engagement and reflection on social media in Nigeria, resonating deeply with audiences across the country. The video's impact has extended even beyond Nigeria's borders, as it is now being used as a tool to promote civic engagement and accountability in other African countries. This success exemplifies the potential of creative storytelling to spark meaningful dialogue and influence positive change across the continent.

The initiative not only empowered a new generation of female creatives to take an active role in advocacy but also contributed to the growing community of practice centered around using creative storytelling as a catalyst for social change in Nigeria and beyond.



Institutionalizing Whistleblowing as an Anti-Corruption Response

In collaboration with the African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL), the Foundation has taken significant strides to promote whistleblowing as a key strategy in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Recognizing the critical role of whistleblowers in exposing corrupt practices, the Foundation convened a series of strategic roundtables aimed at institutionalizing whistleblowing within the country's anti-corruption framework.

As a follow-up to the launch of the Corruption Anonymous (CORA) platform, the Foundation and AFRICMIL hosted a Policy Roundtable that brought together key stakeholders, including strategic partners, non-state actors, and citizens. The roundtable focused on empowering these groups to

take proactive steps in preventing, investigating, and seeking redress for corruption through the establishment of effective policies, legislation, regulations, and adjudication processes. Additionally, the roundtable fostered collaboration among civil society organizations and investigative journalists, amplifying the impact and effectiveness of whistleblowing efforts across the country.

Towards a Whistle-blower Protection Law in Nigeria

Building on these discussions, the Foundation and AFRICMIL hosted another crucial roundtable to address the pressing need for a whistle-blower protection law in Nigeria. Despite the vital role that whistle-blowers play in uncovering corruption, the absence of a legal framework leaves them vulnerable to reprisal. The roundtable gathered stakeholders from civil society organizations, government bodies, the national assembly, and anti-corruption agencies to discuss challenges and potential solutions for establishing such a law.

During the event, participants reviewed the proposed whistle-blower protection bill and provided constructive feedback to the Ministry of Justice. Discussions underscored the importance of creating a robust legal framework that guarantees the safety and security of whistle-blowers, thereby encouraging more individuals to come forward with information about corrupt activities.

Through these roundtables, the Foundation has advanced the dialogue on institutionalizing whistleblowing as an anti-corruption response and actively contributed to the development of a comprehensive legal and policy framework that supports and protects whistle-blowers in Nigeria. These efforts are essential to ensure that whistleblowing becomes an effective and sustainable tool in the fight against corruption.



Public Policy Forums

Forgotten Citizens: A Decade of Inclusion

In partnership with Inclusive Friends Association (IFA), the Foundation hosted a public policy forum that raised awareness and mobilized support for the social inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). The event featured the screening of *The Forgotten Citizens, Karonmajiji—The Disabled Colony*, a documentary by filmmaker Amy Limor that vividly portrays the deplorable living conditions and neglect of PWDs in a government-sanctioned community for over a decade. The forum included high-profile speakers including John Palfrey, President of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and Senator Irete Kingibe, FCT Senator, who addressed the urgent need for action to improve the lives of PWDs in Nigeria.

PUBLIC POLICY FORUM

The Forgotten Citizens A Decade of Inclusion

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

MONDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2023
SHEHU MUSA YAR'ADUA CENTRE, ABUJA

 Batholomew Suwa Board Chairman Inclusive Friends Association (IFA)	 Senator Irete Heebah Kingibe Senator, Federal Capital Territory	 John Palfrey President John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation	 Ekaete Umoh Country Director CBM Global
 Grace Jerry Executive Director Inclusive Friends Association (IFA)	 Dr. Kole Shettima Africa Director MacArthur Foundation	 Amara Nwankpa Director, Public Policy Initiative, Yar'Adua Foundation	 Senami Ohiomokhare Event Moderator



Following the forum, the Swiss Embassy in Nigeria offered support for a vital water project in the Karonmajiji community, ensuring that PWDs now have access to clean and safe water. This project was successfully implemented by the South Saharan Social Development Organization (SSDO), marking a significant step toward improving the well-being of this marginalized community.



Standing L to R:
Amara Nwankpa, Director,
Partnerships and Development,
Yar'Adua Foundation, **Alhaji
Suleiman Muhammad Katsina**,
Chief of Karonmajiji Disabled
Community, **Lukas Schiferle**,
Deputy Head of Mission, Swiss
Embassy, and **Abdumalik Alhaji
Musa**, Yar'Adua Foundation

Making Education Spaces Safer: Promoting Survivor-Centred Response

In collaboration with Eden Venture Group and WRTHY, the Foundation convened a mini-forum focused on enhancing safety in educational spaces by promoting a survivor-centered response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) on university campuses. The forum brought together key stakeholders from tertiary institutions, the judiciary, civil society organizations, and the security sector to discuss strategies for reforming university policies that ensure the protection of students, hold perpetrators accountable, and foster a culture of safety. Additionally, the mini-forum provided a platform for influential young voices to engage in discussions at the intersection of accountability and gender justice, further enriching the dialogue with diverse perspectives and innovative ideas.

SPEAKERS



Hon. Justice Njideka Iheme, *Judge, Federal High Court, FCT*

Justice Iheme highlighted the severe impact of SGBV in educational settings and underscored the need for stringent enforcement of protective laws. She discussed the establishment of a dedicated SGBV court by the High Court of the FCT, which, in partnership with government agencies and NGOs, has introduced protective measures such as shields and private testimony for victims during trial.



Minoe Duamwan, *Senior Programme Officer, Gender & Social Inclusion, Neem Foundation*

Ms. Duamwan emphasized the importance of clear policies regarding confidentiality to safeguard SGBV survivors, advocating the creation of designated safe spaces that ensure privacy and support. She called for regular updates to sexual harassment policies to maintain their effectiveness in protecting and empowering survivors.



Dr. Chisom Egemba, *Social Media Influencer*

Dr. Egemba advocated for compulsory trauma-informed training for healthcare providers supporting SGBV survivors. He emphasized the need for designated budgetary allowances to fund survivor support services, ensuring compassionate and effective care tailored to the needs of survivors.



Halima Mohamed, *Gender Justice Advocate, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation*

Ms. Mohamed called for intentional awareness campaigns that include male survivors of SGBV. She stressed the importance of establishing student-led initiatives as safe spaces for victims and emphasized the need to prosecute perpetrators to encourage more survivors to report incidents.

SPEAKERS cont'd.



Titilola Vivour-Adeniyi, *Executive Secretary, Lagos State Domestic Violence Agency*

Ms. Vivour-Adeniyi underscored the necessity of increased institutional ownership of sexual harassment policies, advocating proactive implementation and enforcement. She highlighted the importance of creating safe reporting mechanisms and holding perpetrators accountable to break the culture of silence around sexual harassment.



Jola Ayeye, *Co Host 'I Said What I Said Podcast'*

Ms. Ayeye emphasized the need for sensitivity training for media professionals to handle survivor stories of gender-based violence responsibly. She advocated empowering student bodies to take proactive roles in addressing GBV on campuses, fostering awareness, and creating safe environments.



Dr. Antoinette Lecky, *Founder, Live Wire Project*

Dr. Lecky proposed leveraging creative projects to raise awareness of SGBV, emphasizing the power of visual content to enhance understanding and drive change. She suggested collaborative initiatives with educational institutions to empower survivors through targeted programs that harness creative expression.





MacArthur
Foundation



PUBLIC POLICY FORUM

SOCIAL INCLUSION: NIGERIAN ACCOUNTABILITY CONVERSATIONS

SHEHU MUSA YAR'ADUA CENTRE, ABUJA
TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2022 • 10:00AM



Apolmida Haruna Tsammani
Federal Ministry of Justice

Chris Obiora Agbo
Disability Inclusion Expert

Crystal Chigbu
Executive Director, The Irede Foundation

Comrade Joe Ajaero
President, Nigeria Labour Congress

Cynthia Onyinyechi Ukachi
Network for Women with Disabilities

Edwin Iguodala
The Irede Foundation



James David Lulu
Executive Secretary, National Commission for Persons with Disability

Lois Auta Udonkanta
Executive Director, Cedar Seed Foundation

Paschal Chigozie Onyeocha
ISmileBecause YouSmile

Ella Onyebe
Potters Gallery Art Exhibition

Amara Nwankpa
Director, Public Policy Initiative, Yar'Adua Foundation

Dr. Kole Shettima
Country Director, MacArthur Foundation

Social Inclusion: Nigerian Accountability Conversations

In partnership with Cedar Seed Foundation, the Foundation hosted a public policy forum to address the pervasive discrimination faced by Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in Nigeria. The forum focused on the negative mindsets, cultural norms, and social attitudes that perpetuate this discrimination, as well as the role of corruption in limiting PWD access to opportunities, healthcare, and essential services. A panel discussion, moderated by Edwin Iguodala of the Irede Foundation, featured insights from experts who explored the challenges encountered by PWDs, including the lack of accurate data, limited employment opportunities, and significant economic barriers.

Action Points/ Policy Recommendations

For Government

- Advocate aggressively for an inclusive transport system, including the installation of electronic display systems in buses to benefit individuals with hearing impairments.
- Incorporate inclusive practices and education at the secondary school level to foster a more inclusive society from an early age.

For CSOs

- Intensify awareness campaigns about the specific needs of different PWD clusters to enhance understanding and support.

For Media

- Ensure inclusivity in reporting by using clearly transcribed texts. For example, during the collation of election results, the interpreter was incorrectly positioned, causing those with hearing impairments to miss critical information. The media must be intentional in making information accessible to PWDs, particularly the deaf community, to ensure they can fully understand the content.
- Educate the public through various media channels on the importance of focusing on the abilities of PWDs rather than their disabilities.

For Society

- Promote a collective call for empathy, not sympathy, and encourage respect for the contributions that PWDs can bring to society.
- Address and overcome biases that negatively impact interactions with PWDs in the workplace and other social settings.



Partners United: Collaborating for Greater Accountability

The forum addressed barriers to effective technology-driven accountability, emphasizing the critical role of multi-stakeholder collaboration in overcoming these challenges and driving meaningful change on the ground.

This hybrid event brought together over 300 participants, including representatives from the media, civil society organizations, and other key stakeholders, to discuss emerging societal issues and explore the collaborative potential of technology-driven solutions for enhancing accountability. The event featured distinguished speakers, including Mr. Kingsley Agu from CODE, Ms. Amaka Okafor from PTCIJ, Mr. Olanrewaju Suraj from HEDA, Mrs. Agianpe Onyema from PLAC, Ms. Cynthia Mbamalu from YIAGA Africa, and Dr. Amina Salisu from the MacArthur Foundation.

SPEAKERS



Mr. Kingsley Agu, *Connected Development (CODE)*

Kingsley Agu highlighted the power of grassroots engagement in promoting accountability through technology. He shared the impactful story of a *Follow the Money* champion in Kaduna, who used the platform to expose and address critical issues in a poorly funded school project. This case exemplified how local communities, empowered with the right tools and training, can leverage technology to bring about real change. Agu emphasized the importance of expanding collaboration beyond civil society organizations to include government platforms, thereby enhancing the scope and effectiveness of accountability efforts.



Ms. Amaka Okafor, *Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ)*

Amaka Okafor provided insights into how PTCIJ's UDEME platform has harnessed technology to hold government accountable for budget management. She discussed the platform's role in disseminating critical information across various media channels, enabling citizens to access real-time data related to their communities. Okafor stressed the importance of strategic partnerships with tech companies, media, legal professionals, and the younger generation, particularly the Gen-Z demographic, to ensure that accountability initiatives are inclusive and far-reaching.

SPEAKERS cont'd.



Mr. Olanrewaju Suraj, *Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA) Resource Centre*

Olanrewaju Suraj discussed the evolving landscape of technology in accountability efforts, crediting increased collaboration among civil society organizations and media with support from entities like the MacArthur Foundation. He shared examples of how technology has been used to track illicit assets owned by Nigerian politicians abroad, underscoring the potential of technology to uncover and combat corruption. Suraj emphasized the need for continuous capacity building and the creation of platforms that connect investigative efforts with law enforcement agencies to ensure accountability.



Ms. Cynthia Mbamalu, *YIAGA Africa*

Cynthia Mbamalu highlighted YIAGA Africa's use of technology to promote election accountability and financial transparency at the local level. She discussed how technology empowers electoral observers to report real-time issues during elections and helps local leaders conduct social audits. Mbamalu underscored the significance of collaboration within civil society and the importance of engaging the Gen-Z demographic, whose innovative use of technology during movements such as EndSARS demonstrated their crucial role in driving socio-political change.



Mrs. Agianpe Onyema, *Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) (Virtual Discussant)*

Speaking on the intersection of technology and accountability, Agianpe Onyema shared how PLAC's Situation Room has advocated for the use of technology to enhance electoral integrity. She emphasized the importance of real-time information sharing through mobile and online platforms during elections, which improves transparency and citizen engagement. Onyema also highlighted the need for continued collaboration among civil society organizations, public officials, and the media to ensure accurate information dissemination and foster greater accountability.

SPEAKERS cont'd.



Dr. Amina Salihu, Senior Program Officer, MacArthur Foundation









Dr. Amina Salihu reflected on the MacArthur Foundation’s long-standing commitment to supporting accountability initiatives in Nigeria. She discussed the Foundation’s strategic focus on fostering effective institutions and reducing impunity through collaboration with civil society and media partners. Dr. Salihu emphasized the importance of leveraging technology to connect grassroots movements with broader accountability efforts and the necessity of transgenerational approaches that engage the younger generation in leadership roles. She concluded by underscoring the value of partnerships in achieving sustainable impact and driving systemic change.




**COLLABORATING for
GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY**

Providing access to tools and vital resources to enable accountability partners to tackle key societal issues, while encouraging and engaging citizens and civil society stakeholders to galvanize collective action against corruption.

Friday, May 21, 2021 | 9:30am – 11:30am
Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre, FCT Abuja

 Charles Uche Connected Development	 Amaka Okafor Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism	 Olanrewaju Suraj HEDA Resource Center
 Agianpe Onyema Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre	 Cynthia Mbamalu YAGA Africa	 Dr. Amina Salihu Senior Program Officer MacArthur Foundation
 Dr. Kole Shettima Director, Africa Office MacArthur Foundation	 Amara Nwankpa Director Public Policy Initiative Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation	

 **MacArthur Foundation**

Civic Space and Accountability

The Public Policy Forum on Civic Space and Accountability convened key stakeholders from civil society organizations, government agencies, and advocacy groups to address the critical issue of Nigeria’s shrinking civic space. The forum, supported by the MacArthur Foundation, provided a platform for participants to explore challenges facing pro-accountability actors in an increasingly repressive environment. Through insightful discussions and shared experiences, the event underscored the urgent need for collective action to safeguard civil liberties, promote transparency, and ensure that the voices of all Nigerians, particularly marginalized groups, are heard and respected in the democratic process. The event was attended by over 500 participants (offline and online) including activists, citizens and civil society organizations.

Welcome Remarks



Amara Nwankpa, *Director, Public Policy Initiative, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation*

Amara highlighted concerns about the shrinking civic space in Nigeria, which undermines the fight against corruption by forcing journalists and activists to self-censor. He emphasized the need for collective action among civic actors to sustain their effectiveness in this repressive environment and stressed the importance of the civic space in empowering citizens to influence policy.

Opening Remarks



Anthony Ojukwu, *Executive Secretary, National Human Rights Commission*

Mr. Ojukwu discussed the stifling of basic freedoms, exacerbated by COVID-19 and insecurity. He highlighted the challenges faced by the NHRC in monitoring human rights violations during the pandemic and the use of technology to overcome these obstacles. Mr. Ojukwu also pointed out the increase in sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) during the lockdown and the NHRC's response, including the launch of the UNSUB platform for reporting SGBV.

Keynote Address



Hajia Saudatu Mahdi, *Secretary-General, Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Association*

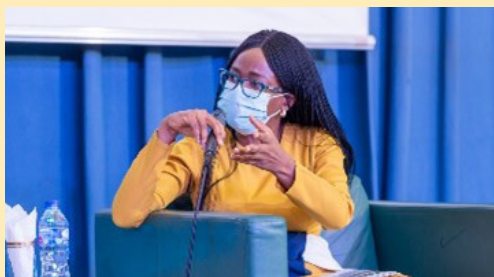
Hajia Saudatu focused on the role of social and cultural norms in shaping Nigeria's civic space. She explained how deeply ingrained practices—such as the culture of silence, blind reverence to leaders, and identity-driven dynamics—often justify and perpetuate corruption. Hajia Saudatu argued that these norms make Nigeria's civic space particularly vulnerable to repression, as they discourage citizens from holding corrupt individuals accountable. She proposed leveraging traditional and informal settings, such as village square discussions and cultural events, to foster collective responsibility and promote accountability. Hajia Saudatu emphasized that social norms are not static and can be adapted to support positive change, urging pro-accountability actors to work within these contexts to galvanize community-driven efforts against civic repression.

Panel Discussion



Osai Ojigho, *Amnesty International Nigeria*

Ms. Ojigho shared an experience where Amnesty International faced backlash for reporting on violent clashes in Nigeria. She emphasized the dangers faced by human rights defenders and the need for continuous support from international communities to mitigate these risks.



Abiodun Baiyew, *Global Rights*

Ms. Baiyew described the difficulties in engaging with government and media due to the repressive civic space. She provided an example of a protest that was heavily restricted by authorities, illustrating the ongoing repression of freedom of expression and association in Nigeria.



Chioma Agwegbo, *TECHHerNG*

Ms. Agwegbo spoke about the increasing distrust and disunity among citizens due to the shrinking civic space. She shared a story of a woman who faced assault while seeking political support, highlighting the erosion of public trust in justice systems and the rise of self-administered justice.



Richmond Iheme, *National Human Rights Commission*

Mr. Iheme compared the current state of our civic space with the past, noting improvements in the NHRC's legal framework that now allows for greater independence. He recounted incidents where civic freedoms were violated by law enforcement, emphasizing the importance of respecting fundamental rights in a democracy.

Closing Remarks



Ene Obi, Convener, Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room
Ms. Obi commended efforts to protect the civic space and emphasized the importance of civil society in a democracy. She called for unity and social mobilization to address the shrinking civic space and urged civil society organizations to remain resolute in their work despite the challenges.



Launch of Corruption Anonymous (CORA) Whistleblowing Platform

The high-profile event launched the Corruption Anonymous (CORA) Whistleblowing Platform in collaboration with AFRICMIL. CORA is an anti-corruption advocacy initiative designed to reduce retail corruption by raising citizen awareness of the importance of whistleblowing. The CORA initiative emphasizes working with stakeholders to ensure efficient management of the policy and effective protection of whistle-blowers. A panel of key stakeholders discussed practical approaches and best practices to incentivize whistleblowing in Nigeria

The forum featured Mr. Abiodun Ayodeji Aikomo, Special Assistant, Office of the Attorney General of the Federation & Minister of Justice; Mr. Johnson Oluwadare, Assistant Director, the Presidential Initiative on Continuous Audit (PICA); Mrs. Anne Otelafu Odey, Honourable Member, Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); Alhaji Shehu Aliyu Shinkafi, Permanent Secretary, Special Duties, Ministry of Finance; Mr. Paul Odenyi, Spokesman, National Orientation Agency (NOA); and Wilson Uwujaren, Spokesman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Welcome Remarks



Amara Nwankpa, *Director, Public Policy Initiative, Shehu Yar'Adua Foundation*

Amara Nwankpa highlighted the importance of whistleblowing as a critical tool to curb corruption in Nigeria. He reflected on the initial success of the whistleblowing policy, which led to significant recoveries of stolen funds but noted a decline in public participation due to challenges such as the lack of legal protection for whistleblowers and bureaucratic bottlenecks. He emphasized the need to revive the momentum for whistleblowing through use of the CORA platform and stressed the Yar'Adua Foundation's commitment to promoting good governance and accountability.



Dr. Chido Onumah, *Coordinator, AFRICMIL*

Dr. Chido Onumah discussed AFRICMIL's efforts to promote whistleblowing as a tool for fighting corruption, emphasizing the need for public engagement and protection of whistleblowers. He highlighted the success of the Corruption Anonymous (CORA) project in raising awareness and building public confidence in whistleblowing. However, he pointed out declining public interest due to concerns over protection and incentives, and introduced the CORA platform as a solution to provide a safer and more accessible channel for citizens to report corruption

Special Remarks



Mr. Paul Odenyi, National Orientation Agency

Mr. Paul Odenyi, representing the National Orientation Agency, underscored the agency's role in promoting anti-corruption narratives across Nigeria. He lamented the rise of transactional behaviors that undermine the political process and called for the use of whistleblowing, particularly the CORA platform, to combat electoral corruption. Mr. Odenyi reaffirmed NOA's commitment to partnering with other organizations to strengthen the fight against corruption through public education and awareness.



Wilson Uwujaren, EFCC, Media and Publicity

Wilson Uwujaren commended the launch of the CORA platform, noting its potential to enhance the fight against corruption by providing an additional avenue for whistleblowers. He acknowledged that while the EFCC does not rely solely on whistle-blower information, such tips have significantly contributed to numerous investigations. Uwujaren called on civil society to continue advocating for whistleblowing, emphasizing that public participation is not just crucial, but also valued and integral for the policy's success.



Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye, Chairman, ICPC, represented by Mrs. Anne Otelafu Odey

Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye emphasized the critical role of whistleblowing in tackling corruption and enhancing transparency in Nigeria. He discussed the ICPC's reliance on whistle-blower reports for investigations and highlighted the robust legal protections in place for informants, ensuring their safety and security. Prof. Owasanoye called for continuous public enlightenment and improved accessibility to whistleblowing platforms to ensure the policy's effectiveness and sustainability.



Mr. Abubakar Malami, Attorney General of the Federation, represented by Mr. Abiodun Ayodeji

Mr. Malami reiterated the government's commitment to fighting corruption through strategic policies, including the whistleblowing policy. He acknowledged challenges in implementing the policy, such as inadequate protection for whistleblowers and the need for legal backing. Mr. Malami urged citizens to embrace the whistleblowing initiative as a patriotic duty and called for greater collaboration among government agencies, civil society, and the public to ensure the policy's success.

Keynote Address



Dr. Zainab Ahmed, *Hon. Minister of Finance, Budget & National Planning*, represented by **Aliyu Shehu**

Dr. Zainab Ahmed praised the CORA platform as a timely initiative to bolster Nigeria's whistleblowing policy amidst dwindling government revenues. She highlighted the significant recoveries made possible through the policy but acknowledged declining public interest. Dr. Ahmed emphasized the government's ongoing efforts to revive and promote the policy through public awareness campaigns and zonal conferences, encouraging citizens to actively participate in combating corruption.

SPEAKERS



Oke Epia, *Orderpaper Advocacy Centre*

Oke Epia underscored the importance of accountability following whistleblowing efforts. He pointed out that while policies exist, the challenge lies in their implementation. He stressed that the public's confidence in whistleblowing is eroded when there is a lack of transparency and accountability in handling recovered funds. Mr. Epia advocated for more substantial government commitment to existing policies and the passing of relevant laws to protect whistle-blowers to ensure that whistleblowing can effectively combat corruption.



Johnson Oluwadare, *Presidential Initiative on Continuous Audit*

Johnson Oluwadare highlighted the scepticism surrounding the whistleblowing policy due to mistrust between the government and citizens. Despite this, he noted that public interest grew as significant recoveries were made. He detailed the incentive structure for whistle-blowers, emphasizing the need for legal backing to sustain the policy across different administrations. Mr. Oluwadare also called for citizens to maintain confidence in the system and continue participating in whistleblowing efforts.



Azuka Ogugua, *Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC)*

Azuka Ogugua discussed the broader context of whistleblowing beyond financial crimes, advocating the inclusion of social issues such as sexual harassment and rape. She highlighted cultural barriers and fear of reprisal as significant disincentives to whistleblowing. Ms. Ogugua emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach that includes better public education and legal protections to encourage more citizens to come forward with reports of wrongdoing.



Amanambu Chidinma, EFCC Academy

Amanambu Chidinma stressed the necessity of legal backing for the whistleblowing policy to ensure its longevity and effectiveness. She discussed various reporting mechanisms available through the EFCC, including the Eagle Eye App, which allows for anonymous whistleblowing. Chidinma highlighted the importance of financial incentives but also underscored the need for robust protections for whistleblowers to prevent retaliation from within anti-corruption agencies themselves.



Closing Remarks



Dr. Amina Salihu, Senior Program Officer, MacArthur Foundation

Dr. Amina Salihu praised the collaboration between AFRICMIL, the Yar'Adua Foundation, and other stakeholders in the fight against corruption. She emphasized the importance of both financial and social incentives for whistleblowers, drawing on international examples. Dr. Salihu highlighted the need for continuous evaluation and follow-up on whistleblower reports to maintain momentum and urged all Nigerians to view anti-corruption efforts as a collective responsibility, stressing that making the country work is worth the effort.

THE JOINBODI COHORT

Yar'Adua Foundation leadership has played a pivotal role in advancing the efforts of the MacArthur Foundation's ON Nigeria Joinbodi Cohort, comprising over twenty civil society organizations dedicated to enhancing accountability and combating corruption in Nigeria. Member organizations empowered communities to understand and leverage anti-corruption laws, supported media and journalism to amplify accountability efforts. Significant milestones achieved include increased citizen awareness and engagement with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, improved institutional transparency, and the promotion of inclusive participation for women and persons with disabilities. The cohort's efforts have also contributed to the approval of key policies including the Whistleblowing Protection Bill (2022)²⁶ and the National Gender Policy (2022).²⁷

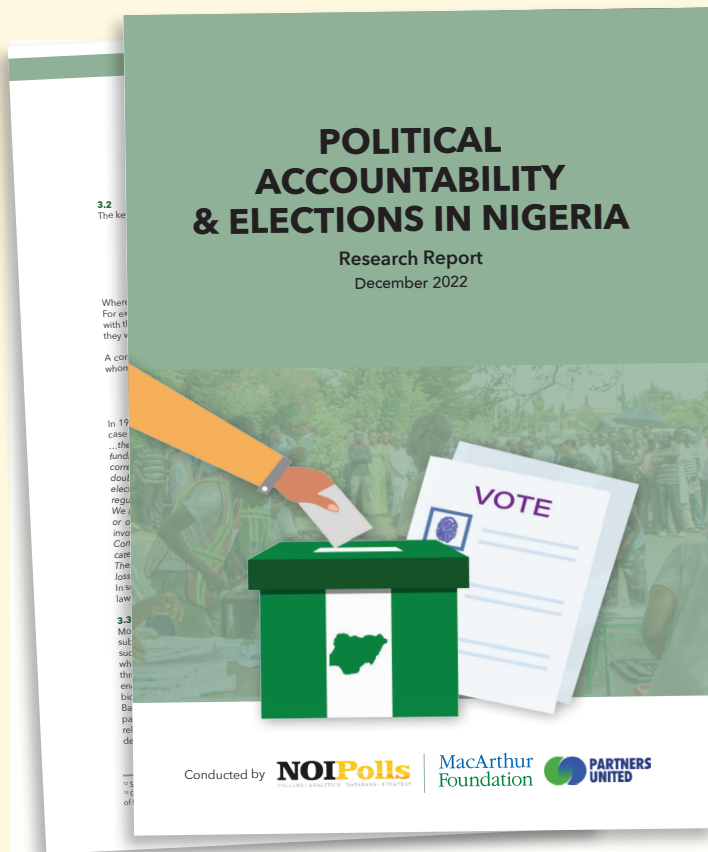
Joinbodi Side Event at OGP Global Summit

At the OGP Global Summit in Tallinn, Estonia, the Foundation co-facilitated a Joinbodi Side Event with Connected Development (CODE), that successfully highlighted the impactful achievements of Joinbodi cohort members in Nigeria under the MacArthur Foundation's ON Nigeria programme. The event, attended by leaders of prominent Civil Society Organizations, government representatives, and members of the OGP community, showcased the cohort's efforts to sustain the accountability ecosystem and combat corruption. Key outcomes include increased demand for accountability, enhanced citizen knowledge, and the empowerment of marginalized groups. The event also underscored the legacy of the cohort in improving social inclusion, developing advocacy tools, and establishing Community Transparency and Accountability Groups. Cohort members committed to creating a Nigerian Network of OGP and fostering deeper collaboration between government and civil society.



²⁶ Witness Protection and Management Act (2022) <https://www.pplaa.org/country/nigeria.html>

²⁷ Business Day (March, 2022) FEC approves new National Gender Policy 2021 – 2026. Article <https://businessday.ng/news/article/fec-approves-new-national-gender-policy-2021-2026/>



Political Accountability in Nigeria

The Yar'Adua Foundation, in collaboration with members of the Joinbodi Cohort, implemented a research project to address the transactional nature of politics in Nigeria, particularly in the context of the 2023 general elections. The project capitalized on the heightened demand for improved electoral processes and inclusive governance among Nigerians.

The resulting 51-page report examined key political accountability issues in Nigeria and provided insight into underlying factors driving the monetization of the country's political processes. It specifically highlights laws governing political financing in Nigeria, identifying gaps and weaknesses that may be exploited by unscrupulous politicians. The study is a crucial contribution to the ongoing effort to create a political system in Nigeria that prioritizes transparency and accountability.

The report was launched at a high-level conference that brought together key stakeholders, including representatives from the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), security agencies, political parties, and civil society organizations. The conference facilitated discussions on the findings and recommendations from the research, offering guidance to stakeholders on understanding and enforcing existing laws and regulations. Ultimately, this event fostered honest dialogue and collective action towards enhancing electoral accountability in Nigeria.

Members of the Joinbodi Cohort include:

- African Centre for Leadership, Strategy & Development
- Africa Centre for Media & Information Literacy
- Arewa Research & Development Project
- Social Development Integrated Centre
- HEDA Resource
- BudgIT
- Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP)
- Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation
- Connected Development Initiative
- Community Life Project
- Resource Centre for Human Rights and Civic Education
- Public and Private Development Centre
- Brookings Institution's Africa Growth Initiative
- Agora Policy Foundation
- Joy Incredible Limited
- Paradigm Leadership Support Initiative
- Civil Society Legislative & Advocacy Centre
- Policy & Legal Advocacy Centre
- Women's Rights Advancement & Protection Alternative
- Centre for Information Technology & Development
- Initiative for Research, Innovation, and Advocacy in Development
- Peering Advocacy and Advancement Centre in Africa (PAACA)

²⁸ MacArthur Foundation. (2023, April 28). Joinbodi on political accountability in Nigeria's 2023 election. MacArthur Foundation. <https://www.macfound.org/press/grantee-publications/joinbodi-on-political-accountability-in-nigeria%E2%80%99s-2023-election>

²⁹ Joinbodi Cohort. (2023). Political accountability and elections in Nigeria. Research Report. <https://www.macfound.org/press/grantee-publications/joinbodi-on-political-accountability-in-nigeria%E2%80%99s-2023-election>

RESULTS

- **Expanding the Partners United Community:** The Partners United (PU) portal has made significant strides to foster accountability, promote transparency, and advocate for marginalized communities in Nigeria. The community has grown to include 636 individuals, 58 civil society organizations, 24 private entities, and 4 government ministries, departments, and agencies, reflecting diverse engagement that enhances citizen demand for accountability.
- **Empowering Young Activists:** The PU Community Advocates (PUCA) program has successfully empowered 205 new young accountability activists over two years. These advocates have effectively raised public awareness about neglected public-funded projects, highlighting the critical role of grassroots activism in sustaining a culture of accountability.
- **Advocating for Marginalized Communities:** Advocacy efforts have amplified the voices of marginalized communities, particularly Persons with Disabilities (PWD). By raising awareness of PWD challenges in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), the initiative has secured vital support to advance their rights. Grassroots advocates in Anambra and Abuja, equipped with the Freedom of Information toolkit, have effectively used legal means to pursue accountability, demonstrating the growing impact of pro-accountability stakeholders.
- **Innovative Storytelling to Combat Corruption:** The Foundation has strategically utilized storytelling and new media to challenge social norms that perpetuate corruption. Through video vignettes and digital platforms, the initiative has shifted public attitudes towards corruption, sparking meaningful conversations and driving behavioral change. This approach has significantly contributed to the growth of a community of practice that sustains accountability in Nigeria.
- **Engaging Creatives in Accountability:** Previously unengaged actors, particularly creatives, are increasingly taking responsibility for combating corruption. More creatives are now using their talent and platforms to challenge norms of corruption and promote accountability.
- **Strengthening Collaboration:** Regular cohort meetings have strengthened collaboration among On Nigeria grantees, enhancing their collective effectiveness in advocating for accountability and achieving shared goals.
- **Enhancing the PUAC Portal:** Growing interest from CSOs has necessitated additional features on the PUAC portal, leading to its redesign and upgrade to support the expanding community of practice better.
- **Impactful Public Policy Forums:** The Public Policy Forum has proven to be an effective platform for engaging wider audiences on the social costs of corruption, driving significant behavioral change, and reinforcing the culture of accountability.
- **Widespread Adoption of Advocacy Tools:** Advocacy tools developed by the Foundation have been widely adopted and amplified by CSO partners, celebrities, influencers, and national TV stations, amplifying their impact and supporting sustained demand for accountability.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Strategic Collaboration:** The success of the PU initiative has underscored the importance of collaboration among diverse partners, including On Nigeria grantees and other organizations. These strategic partnerships have been instrumental in achieving broader impact and incorporating a range of perspectives. By fostering these alliances, PU has effectively amplified its advocacy efforts and engaged a wider audience.
- **Youth Empowerment as a Catalyst for Change:** The PUCA initiative has highlighted the critical role of youth empowerment in driving social change. Nurturing young accountability activists and equipping them with the necessary tools and resources has proven essential to advocating for transparency and accountability. Harnessing the energy and enthusiasm of young people has enabled PU to mobilize grassroots activism and raise public awareness on key issues.
- **Tailored Advocacy for Marginalized Groups:** Effective advocacy for marginalized groups, such as Persons with Disabilities, requires tailored approaches and strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders. By amplifying the voices of these communities and addressing their unique needs, PU has advanced the agenda of inclusivity and social justice. This experience underscores the importance of intersectional advocacy to ensure that all voices are heard and represented.
- **Continuous Learning and Adaptation:** The ongoing success of any advocacy initiative depends on continuous learning and the ability to adapt. Regular evaluations and collaborative efforts among stakeholders have enhanced the program's effectiveness, allowing PU to adjust to evolving needs and challenges. By remaining flexible and responsive to feedback, PU has refined its strategies to maximize its impact on promoting transparency, accountability, and social justice in Nigeria.
- **Effective Use of Recognizable Personalities in Media:** Short videos featuring personalities who resonate with Nigerians have proven highly effective in sparking conversations and shifting social norms. This approach demonstrates the power of leveraging familiar figures to drive meaningful dialogue and cultural change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For Government:

- a. **Enhance Public Access to Data and Information:** Government entities at all levels should create transparent, user-friendly platforms that provide citizens with easy access to government data and information. This will better enable citizens to hold government accountable and actively participate in governance.
- b. **Implement Inclusive Governance Policies:** Strengthen policies that ensure the inclusion of youth and marginalized groups, such as Persons with Disabilities, in decision-making processes. This includes mandating accessibility features in public infrastructure and incorporating inclusivity principles into governance frameworks.
- c. **Support Accountability Education and Awareness:** Integrate accountability education into national and sub-national curricula, and launch public campaigns that inform citizens about their rights and responsibilities in holding the government accountable. These efforts should be supported by ongoing civic education programs.

For Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):

- a. **Strengthen Collaborative Advocacy Efforts:** CSOs should foster strategic partnerships with other organizations, including youth-focused networks, to enhance the effectiveness of collective advocacy campaigns. Regular coordination and knowledge-sharing sessions should be prioritized to align strategies and amplify impact.
- b. **Empower Youth and Marginalized Communities:** Focus on empowering youth and marginalized communities by providing them with the tools, training, and resources necessary for effective advocacy. CSOs should support these groups in using government data and information to demand accountability.
- c. **Promote Intersectional Advocacy:** Ensure that advocacy efforts address the specific challenges faced by diverse groups, including PWDs, by adopting intersectional approaches that consider various forms of marginalization and exclusion.

For Media:

- a. **Adopt Inclusive Reporting Practices:** Media organizations should implement inclusive reporting practices that ensure accessibility for all, including clear transcriptions and the use of interpreters for the hearing impaired. Media outlets should also highlight the achievements and potential of marginalized communities to foster a more inclusive narrative.
- b. **Amplify Accountability Campaigns:** Media should actively support and amplify campaigns that educate the public on their rights and the importance of holding government accountable. This includes partnering with CSOs to disseminate information on transparency and governance issues.
- c. **Challenge Socio-Cultural Norms:** Media campaigns should challenge and transform socio-cultural norms that hinder participation in governance. This includes creating content that encourages a culture of accountability and transparency as a societal value.

Recommendations cont'd.

For Donors:

- a. **Support Capacity Building for Accountability:** Donors should invest in capacity-building programs for CSOs, youth-focused organizations, and marginalized communities to enhance their advocacy efforts. This includes funding training programs, providing technical assistance, and supporting the development of advocacy tools.
- b. **Promote Collaborative Platforms:** Donors should support the expansion and sustainability of platforms like Partners United that facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing among accountability actors. Funding should focus on ensuring these platforms are accessible, inclusive, and able to drive continuous learning and coordinated action.
- c. **Incentivize Innovation in Advocacy:** Encourage and fund innovative approaches to advocacy that leverage digital media, storytelling, and data-driven strategies. Donors should prioritize projects that challenge socio-cultural norms and promote inclusive governance, ensuring that funded initiatives have a measurable impact on accountability.

OUR PARTNERS

In addition to the Joinbodi cohort, the Yar'Adua Foundation is proud to have collaborated with the following partners for this initiative:

- **Centre for Policy Research and Development Solutions (CPRDS):** Carried out extensive research to identify and collate accountability content that feeds into the Partners United platform.
- **Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN)**
 - Collaborated with Ken Saro-Wiwa Innovation Hub to support 29 young civic tech developers in the Niger Delta.
 - Collaborated to deploy DevelopND on the Partners United platform.
- **Cedar Seed Foundation:**
 - Conducted qualitative research on the impact of corruption on Persons with Disabilities in the FCT.
 - Collaborated to host a public policy forum to amplify key issues of persons with disabilities in Nigeria.
- **Africa Economic Development Policy Initiative (AEDPI):** Facilitated youth-focused dialogue sessions on electoral accountability through the School of Politics, Policy and Governance (SPPG).
- **Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ):** Co-hosted a focus group discussion on FOI Requests.
- **Global Rights:** Collaborated to produce a podcast episode on protecting civic space.

Our Partners cont'd.

- **Chatham House:** Developed an anti-corruption toolkit, available on the Partners United platform, to shed light on informal rules and shared beliefs that make corruption easier to engage in.
- **The National Orientation Agency (NOA):** Collaborated to create an election whistleblowing form in partnership with AFRICMIL and the Nigeria Police Force. The tool is jointly managed by the Yar'Adua Foundation and AFRICMIL and is hosted on the Partners United platform.
- **Google Inc:** Partnered to launch a polling unit locator tool and a webform to report election malpractices ahead of the general elections.
- **Griot Studios**
 - Co-created a user-testing and facilitation guide used by the Foundation to conduct user testing to curate feedback for the upgrade of the Partners United portal.
 - Co-hosted a roundtable on Promoting Accountability Through Creative Storytelling.
- **Inclusive Friends Association (IFA):** Co-hosted a public policy forum on disability rights in Nigeria, with a special focus on PWDs of Karonmajiji community, FCT, that galvanized relevant stakeholders to comply with the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2019.
- **Eden Venture Group and WRTHY:** Co-convened a meeting with university students, young female activists, creative professionals, sexual assault referral centres, the Judiciary, international development partners, survivor support organizations, and relevant stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to share insights and perspectives on a survivor-centred response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), with a particular focus on accountability issues that arise in the administration of gender justice.
- **Naila Media:** Co-hosted a two-day creative workshop to leverage the talents of young women as potent instruments for social justice advocacy and empowered them with platforms to craft impactful narratives that spark awareness and drive transformative change in governance.



CONCLUSION

The Yar'Adua Foundation's sustained efforts to promote accountability and transparency in Nigeria have proven that persistent advocacy, strategic collaboration, and innovative approaches can lead to meaningful progress. Through initiatives like the Partners United Community Advocates and impactful digital campaigns, the Foundation has successfully galvanized citizens to demand greater accountability from their leaders. This work has contributed to Nigeria's modest improvement on the Corruption Perception Index, reflecting the growing influence of citizen-led activism in shaping governance.

But the journey towards a Nigeria where corruption is the exception rather than the norm requires continuous and multifaceted efforts. Accountability must extend beyond economic corruption to include moral and administrative dimensions, ensuring that all forms of corruption are addressed. The Foundation's work has laid a strong foundation and it is imperative that these efforts are maintained and expanded.

As we move forward, it is essential to enhance mechanisms for accountability, engage more citizens in the fight against corruption, and continue to build a robust community of practice that sustains the momentum for change. By uniting our efforts and maintaining a steadfast commitment to transparency and good governance, we can restore trust in public institutions and build a more just and democratic society for all Nigerians.



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