

SWIFT



Participants at the 2019 Kogi Youth Peace Camp organised by ActionAid Nigeria in partnership with PIBCID (Participation Initiative for Behavioural Change in Development), with funding from GCERF (Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund), during the camp exit parade.

What's New?

In the period under review, ActionAid Nigeria project teams collaboratively initiated the development of a framework on Local Governance Accountability in Nigeria. The framework is focusing on the governance structure and decision-making processes at the grassroots. It prioritises public finance

accountability, elections, advocating for issue-based campaigns and observations of the electoral processes at different levels, voices to women in politics, leadership empowerment and civic education across different levels.

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Participants bond and network during the 2019 Kogi youth peace camp.

As part of fostering peace and promoting social cohesion in communities prone to conflict in North Central Nigeria, ActionAid Nigeria established Community Action Response Teams (CARTs) in 24 communities in Kogi and Nasarawa States. The CART members are drawn from the communities and acts as community security watch group with linkage to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), while also advocating for relevant interventions for community development from government at local and state levels.

ActionAid Nigeria Board of Trustees held its 40th meeting. Highlight of the meeting was a visit to Vine Heritage Home (VHH) Kuje, a foundation which serves as a haven for children who would have been killed as a result of harmful cultural practices that forbids circumstances surrounding their birth. ActionAid Nigeria is partnering with VHH to Mobilising Action Towards the Abolition of Infanticide

(MATAI) in Nigeria's Federal Capital, Abuja.

In a bid to deepen community engagement in her anti-corruption campaign, #upright4nigeria, ActionAid Nigeria's continuous advocacy visit to Ilaje Otumara, Lagos, Nigeria, led to a pact signed publicly by religious and traditional leaders to jointly work together to stamp out corruption from their community and live by example.

Also, in the news, ActionAid Nigeria has completed an appraisal of two newly proposed Local Rights Partners in – Ekiti and Cross River states. After a decade of implementation in Kwara and Akwa-Ibom States, AAN is expanding its Local Rights Partnership interventions to the newly appraised States from 2020.

Welcome to another edition of SWIFT!

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#TogetherForPeace:

Restoring Peace Through Youth Centred Innovations

North Central Nigeria also referred to as Nigeria's Middle-Belt region consists of seven states situated geographically spanning from the west, around the confluence of the River Niger and the River Benue. The region itself is blessed with land and boasts of some of Nigeria's most exciting scenery, historical and colonial relics. Unfortunately, in recent times, the region has experienced increased instances of hostilities, including banditry, cattle rustling and kidnapping, and it was against this backdrop that ActionAid Nigeria began its peace and resilience building project in two of the states, Nasarawa and Kogi.

Over the years, there has been a sharp cultural divide among communal groups in Kogi and Nasarawa states. More so, the perceived marginalisation of minority groups has continued to strengthen acts of radicalisation and violent extremism. Unfortunately, the youths who are to play a pivotal role in nation building have been trapped into social vices, fuelled by unequal distribution of power, resources and perceived marginalisation of young people which has led to the recurrent conflicts and slowed development in the region, but the narrative is changing.

ActionAid Nigeria understands that without a deliberate engagement with these youths, it will be difficult to achieve de-radicalisation and peace. Hence, after consultations with youth groups, youth friendly de-radicalisation mediums such as peace camps, peace fiesta, peace walks, a social campaign [#together4peace](#) were conceived.

The Youth Peace Camp was a platform for reorientation on peaceful coexistence despite ethnic, religious and cultural differences. The 1023 participants also acquired livelihood skills in their area of interest such as photography, business start-ups and management, music production, social media marketing etc. An offshoot of the camp is the monthly Group for Peace meetings springing up in communities spreading the message of peaceful coexistence.

Ever since I returned home from the peace camp, my view about life have changed. I now understand how to handle conflicts within my community; the fact that dialogue is always a better option to radicalisation

Damilola Askiri, Kogi State.

The project also leveraged on influencers in Nigeria's entertainment industry to preach peace through a Peace Fiesta; a concert that combined talent hunt, music, comedy, dance and drama. With exactly 8,628 young persons in attendance, the peace fiesta kicked off with a peace walk in the morning in commemoration of the Global Peace Day with the theme "Climate Action For Peace"; calling the attention of government to take positive action on climate and also sensitise the people on how climate actions affect peace in their communities while creating awareness on mitigating radicalisation and violent extremism. Influencers such as Classic, T-Classic, Ozee, ActionAid Nigeria Brand Ambassadors, comedian Mark Angel and blogger Chris Kehinde Nwandu electrified the youths with their act and message on peace building in the local dialect.

The SARVE II project is an innovation of ActionAid Nigeria in partnership with Participation Initiative for Behavioural Change in Development (PIBCID) and Global Peace Development (GPD); funded by the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) to build social cohesion towards the prevention of violent extremism in Kogi and Nasarawa States.

SHIFTING POWER;

Advancing Women's Rights

Halima, a civil servant, and a member of one of the major political parties in Nigeria has tried multiple times to improve the plight of women in her state by representing her constituency in the state house of representatives for over 12 years. Despite the full support she provides to her male counterparts, her campaigns have met with staunch opposition from them with objections such as, “a woman cannot lead; women lack emotional intelligence; women should support men not lead them.” This narrative is changing as ActionAid Nigeria's newest project, Women's Voice and Leadership Nigeria (WVL Nigeria) will equip 100 feminist organisations with skills and funding to continue challenging the status quo, effectively advocate for implementation of policies, and ensure stakeholder accountability to enhance women political participation nationwide.

The long-awaited project is adding to the indelible marks ActionAid has consistently created in the sands of time. Fully funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC), the 5-year 2.6 billion Naira project will provide multi-year granting and institutional support to 100 Women's Rights Organisations and Networks in 6 states (Bauchi, Cross River, Enugu, Kebbi, Kwara, and Lagos) and at the National level to enhance the advancement of women's rights and gender equality in Nigeria.

This project is unique because it marks the first-time power is shifted to implementing Partners through autonomy of fund utilisation, that is, Local Women's Rights Organisations are responsible for project design and are in full control of how they spend their multi-year grant. Also, besides granting funds to LWROs focused on advancing political participation of women in appointed and elective positions, the project will also be providing multiyear grant to LWROs working in the areas of women empowerment and economic justice, women in conflict and Gender Based Violence (GBV).

One of the major feats achieved after the recent launch of the project is the inauguration of Project Steering Committee which constitutes key stakeholders from different sectors such as the Government, Academia, and Development Partners. The Director of Women and Gender Affairs at the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Mrs Funke Oladipo, have also been appointed to serve as a member of the committee.

Currently, the project has identified and generated a database of 127 functional Local Women's Rights Organisations (LWROs) and Networks in the 6 project States including the FCT through a comprehensive Mapping Exercise for assessment, and selected LWROs will be announced before the end of 2019.



Representative of Global Affairs Canada, DFID, MacArthur Foundation with ActionAid team during the launch of Women's Voices and Leadership – Nigeria project.

ActionAid Nigeria, Media Organisations Build Strong Partnership to Tackle Corruption, Poverty and Injustice.



Standing between Country Director and Director Org. Effectiveness AAN is the Director Business and Partnership Premium Times Abuja, Ifeyinwa Uzoka and his Board members.



Standing side by side with the Country Director is the Abuja Bureau Chief Vanguard Newspaper Abuja – Emma Ujah and his team.



Standing side by side with the Country Director AAN is the Chief Operating Officer (COO) Blueprint Newspaper, Mr. Salisu Umar and his board members alongside AAN staff.



General Manager Cool Fm, Wazobia Fm and Nigeria Info Abuja, Expensive, standing from the left with the Country Director AAN and her team.

If ActionAid Nigeria was a bride, the media will be her groom. Media partnership, visibility and publicity is important not only in attracting volunteers and donations but also in encouraging civic engagement, creating public trust, reaching out to potential institutional partners and most importantly amplifying the voices of vulnerable groups, which is at the heart of ActionAid. It was based on this understanding that the Management Team of AAN visited heads of media organisations to further strengthen her partnership with the media, particularly on the need to intensify the discourse on corruption, injustice, poverty, exclusion, domestic violence, gender imbalance in power, and child abuse. Reacting to the visit, the management of the nine media organisations made their commitments to collaborate with AAN in her quest for social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication in Nigeria.

“Corruption is a big problem and we must try to fight it with all the arsenals and resources we have. In our case, it is to keep reporting and showing the way and we are glad you are there to help make our work easy. We will support you and we are open to suggestions”

Mallam Mannir Dan Ali, Chief Executive Officer, Media Trust.

FULFIL DREAMS...



Zainab

ANSWER THE CALL FROM RINDIBE

Imagine resorting to eating onion leaves as a result of starvation due to displacement from the home you have always known? This was the experience of internally Displaced Persons in Rindibe-Shuwa IDP community of Galambi district, Bauchi state until ActionAid provided the 70 households food and non-food items.

Zainab is one of the children living in Rindebe IDP settlement. She relocated to the settlement with her family seeking for an opportunity to rebuild their lives after insurgent invasion in her community, Maffa, Borno State, originally rereferred to as the home of peace. She wishes for nothing more than to go to school and be able to speak English just like the NGO workers that visits her community. She would love to be a teacher in future,

however, the language barrier has halted her education. She speaks pure Fulani while the host community and school around them in Rindebe speak Hausa with very little English and she is afraid, her dream of becoming a teacher will never be realised.

ActionAid is supporting Rindebe in breaking barriers that hinder children especially girls from realising their full potential. PLEASE HELP put BOOKS IN THE HANDS OF RINDIBE CHILDREN, KNOWLEDGE IN THEIR HEADS AND HOPE IN THEIR FUTURES. Donate via www.actionaid-ng.org or via transfer to First Bank 2024080600 OR GTBank 0216379681 Account Name ActionAid Community Sponsorship.



Journalist Against Poverty members pose with the traditional council of Ilaje Otumara at the front of the palace after a meeting with the community members.

JAP: On a quest to

#SaveOtumara #TheSlumInaMegaCity

Thursday 5th September 2019 will remain indelible in the hearts of residents of Ilaje Otumara community as they played host to members of ActionAid Nigeria initiated Journalists Against Poverty (JAP) group. The Journalists movement as part of its annual meeting decided to embark on a community visit to a newly discovered slum to get first-hand assessment of the community and understand the plight of its estimated 850,000 residents.

The visit to Ilaje Otumara, Ebutte Metta, Lagos Nigeria revealed that besides the obvious marshy and unhealthy environment filled with heaps of refuse and defecation that residents live in, the community also lacks basic amenities such as water, affordable drugs and health personnel at the health centre, the only primary school in the area seems inadequate and there are no secondary schools nearby, thereby forcing children to travel over 8km to access secondary education. Parents also battle daily to protect their homes from the flood threatening them and turning their homes into a storehouse of rainwater thereby making life miserable for both adults and the young ones.

Members of JAP on seeing the situation of the community, jointly fundraised and

provided educational supplies for 300 children of Ilaje Otumara. Receiving the learning supplies the traditional leader, High Chief Festus Arowajolu expressed gratitude “Successive government only come here during elections and disappear after campaign despite the massive vote they get from here. We are grateful to JAP and ActionAid for the visit and the supplies, and we hope your coming will bring positive change to us”. With support from ActionAid Nigeria the group also committed to investigate the seemingly silence of duty bearers to the plight of Ilaje-Otumara community and other neglected slums. The Journalist commenced with a digital campaign tagged #SaveIlajeOtumara #SlumInMegaCity, and a town hall meeting that will bring duty bearers to dialogue with the people is being planned.

The two-day meeting climaxed with a training for the Journalists on advanced investigative journalism with varied topics such as using the freedom of information act, budget tracking, public service data architecture, using forensics and data journalism. The resolve of the group at the end of the meeting was to expand the movement to more States to raise a collective voice of Journalists fighting and speaking against Corruption and other forms of injustices in Nigeria.



ActionAid Nigeria's Ambassador, Mark Angel sensitising youths of Pasepa Community in the FCT on the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

#ICT4Dev:

Inclusive Information Technology for Sustainable Development

ActionAid Nigeria is bridging the digital divide in 14 excluded communities in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory. The Information Communication and Technology (ICT) pilot project is prioritising women and youths for inclusive Information Technology in 4 Area Councils. The communities include; Pasepa, Kuchi buyi, Guto in Bwari, Kilankwa, Leleyi Gwarri in Kwali, Gaube, Kayache, Tupechi in Kuje and Jiwa, Dakwa, Ungwar Gwalada, Tunga Nasara, Tunga Ashere and Gofidna communities in Abuja Municipal. The ICT project is an upshot of AAN's Local Rights Programme to attract and connect young people in rural communities to jointly address issues they face while also giving them a platform to learn global community driven solutions, learn income generating skills, mobilise and campaign offline and online for the development they desire, as they have been isolated for too long.

Yusuf Martha, from Gaube community is one of the 140 females benefiting from the ICT hub "I have never touched a computer before because I was afraid that they will be told I have spoilt something, and I have no money to repair it. I used to think that computer is bought with so much money and it is meant for only the rich. We don't have money to go to computer training, so this intervention helped us overcome that hurdle and now we are able to learn so much about what is going on not only in Nigeria but in other parts of the world. Indeed, our community is now exposed through computer literacy; now we can use Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and I can design logo and take photo. Basically, this is now an income generating venture. I thank ActionAid for

bringing this initiative to our door step". In total, the pilot is reaching 210 beneficiaries.

In August 2019, ActionAid Nigeria's Ambassador, social media sensation, Mark Angel with the objective of encouraging the youths also visited Pasepa ICT hub and shared his testimony on how he successfully used several ICT tools like the social media and multimedia services to tell stories and get global relevance. It was a fantastic experience for everyone in the community, especially the women and children, who were excited to see Mark Angel in their village as they learned about using social media as a medium for campaign.

Reacting to the visit, the Chief of Pasepa community, Sale Na'allah Gyazanyi thanked ActionAid Nigeria for the ICT Centre established in the community. He mentioned that it was as a result of the trainings on advocacy that the community had electricity and they recently got 10 million Naira (\$27,662) from the government to fix the bridge linking Pasepa community to other neighbouring communities. He promised that his community will continue to use their voices to strengthen their advocacy work. The setup of the 5 ICT hub was supported by ActionAid Partner, Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) and the communities through donation of land, chairs, with some community members volunteering as security watch group. Using lessons from the ICT hubs in the FCT, the pilot project will be scaled to 2 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Gombe state by 2020.



Turning Setbacks to Triumphs – **Ochu's Story.**

My perspective on sexual harassment changed a few years ago when I met a friend who was a member of Activista Nigeria, an ActionAid-supported group of young people who work to end violence and all form of injustice.


I became interested in joining the Activista group because of its offline and online campaigns on sexual harassment on university campuses – something I had experienced as a girl and several times when I was walking home from classes at night. The first campaign I took part in was the Safe Cities for Women campaign, prior to which we were trained on the concept of campaigning and advocacy as well as gender-based violence. As a cohort, we went to the school management and security units and demanded streetlights in the school, especially on the paths that led to the girls' hostels.

Our streetlight campaign was successful – the school created streetlights on the path and mounted a security post near the girls' hostels. Security would also go around

school for two to three hours in the evenings, to ensure women's safety. More so, the number of incidents of sexual harassment went down drastically and I felt so fulfilled that I made great impact and saved a lot of women from going through what I went through. I have since continued to actively advocate for safe cities for women and girls.

My first experience to gender based violence was as a girl at age 13. Then, I helped at my mum's shop after school, which meant that I met lots of different people every day. One day, a guy came to buy things from the shop and since he couldn't carry it all home, he asked for my help. My mum wasn't there, but I agreed to give him a hand as he was a regular customer. However, when I got to his house, he didn't let me leave. He started pulling me close and trying to raise my skirt. I wasn't sure what was about to happen, but I got really scared. I did not know where the strength came from, but I pushed him away and ran home as fast as I could, shaking. I was traumatised from the experience and I carried that burden for years and had more similar experiences I couldn't share with anyone until the Activista platform gave me the opportunity to do something about it by preventing as many girls and young females as possible from experiencing same. Indeed “our lives begin to end, the day we keep silent about the things that matter” – Martin Luther King Jnr.

Christie Ochu is one of the four women featured in ActionAid's #MyBodyIsMine global campaign. The campaign helps women and girls reclaim their bodies, speak out against any form of violence and proudly say My Body Is Mine without fear of retribution. Read more at ActionAid International website www.bit.ly/mybody_1




ActionAid Nigeria Board of Trustees plant a tree in Vines Heritage Home, Kuje, Abuja during her 40th board meeting.


one More Thing!

Would you rather keep complaining about climate change or do something about it? Instead of throwing plastic or refuse in drainage systems, use the recycling bin. Instead of cutting down trees to make charcoal or fire wood, plant a tree. Together, we can save mother earth. Share more climate friendly tips with us using [#ClimateAction](#).

act!onaid

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