

YOUTH DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT (YDE NIGERIA)

PROJECT REPORT 2021

Analysis of Federal Government's COVID-19 Intervention
Funds & Findings from Citizens' Data



DANIDA

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Acronym

AAN -	ActionAid Nigeria
DANIDA-	Danish International Development Agency
MDAs-	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDGs-	Millennium Development Goals
NSIP-	National Social Investment Programmes
NYIF-	National Youth Investment Fund
SPW-	Special Public Works
NBS-	National Bureau of Statistics
PwDs-	Persons with Disabilities
PYES-	Presidential Youth Empower Scheme
SDGs-	Sustainable Development Goals
SURE-P-	Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Program
YDE-	Youth Digital Engagement



Community Champion
Collecting data in
Tungan Ashere Abuja (FCT)



Foreward

The disruption by the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified many of the challenges already facing youth in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). An estimated 20 million African jobs might have been lost, according to The African Union, with a particularly strong economic impact expected in Nigeria, South Africa, and Angola (World Bank). The immediate impact of the pandemic on informal employment is particularly acute for younger demographics, including those who depended on the under-employed given their prevalence and precarious situations.

This report looks at the heightened challenges youth are encountering and provides a roadmap for bettering the lot of young people by building back better to create and support more livelihoods now and in the future for a prosperous nation. So far, connected as never before, young women and men are increasingly influencing the course of their communities through digital means. Despite youth's capacity to shape social and economic innovations, they are increasingly left out in access to livelihood enhancement programmes put in place by governments. This report also proffers recommendation for addressing the factors hindering young people's access to programmes aimed at empowering them; increasing their inclusion in civic space and helping them to cope with the challenges of environmental issues and climate change.

Our research also reveals that COVID-19 pandemic adversely affects the livelihood of many in Nigeria. For young persons, the pandemic led to more job losses and widened the already terrible social exclusion gap. Available data from the National Bureau of Statistics shows that Nigeria's unemployment rate rose to 33.3% in the fourth quarter of 2020 compared to 27.1% in the second quarter of the year 2020. The unemployment rate among young persons (within ages 15 – 34 years), which is higher than the national unemployment rate, increased to 42.5% in 2020 Q4 from 34.9% in 2020 Q2.

This is most likely to be hard-hitting for vulnerable groups such as women and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) as they are more likely to be within the informal bracket. This impact also extends to indirect business activities at the bottom of the pyramid and corresponding unstructured and precarious employment in areas such as quarries and construction sites. The initial school closure and its attendant social distancing measures hamper education facilities and impede on-the-job training opportunities affecting low-skilled (often informal) employment uptake and progression. Disadvantaged and underprivileged people in low resource environments are also disproportionately affected due to a lack of access to remote learning tools.

The Youth Digital Engagement (YDE) project is a DANIDA funded project implemented by ActionAid Nigeria in collaboration with partners at the subnational level. The data was collected by Community Champions and ActionAid Activistas in collaboration with other partners in FCT-Abuja, Akwa Ibom and Gombe States using the MagPi app. The analysis was done using MagPi app, MS Excel, and STATA software's by the YDE Nigeria In-country Researcher, Terfa W. Abraham (PhD Economics). It is our expectation that relevant MDAs will embrace the recommendations made herein for the nation through the youth to build back better.

Ene Obi
Country Director



Brief about YDE Project-Nigeria

YDE project as a COVID-19 response leverages on the use of technology to support the work of young people in holding duty bearers to account in FCT, Akwa Ibom and Gombe States. Through the creation of digital engagement tools, young people in the project areas were supported and empowered to access information, analyse data, present evidence, and lead their communities in acting against reduced work opportunities for informal sector workers; job losses due to restrictions on business operations and functions; lack of access to formal and informal learning opportunities and social sharing of misinformation regarding the spread of COVID-19 and claimed remedies.

Being a multi-level country project, it was simultaneously implemented in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kenya, Palestine, Nigeria, and Zambia. The countries were selected based on geographical spread, capacity and willingness of the ActionAid country Offices, and the active leadership of young people's organisations that we work with in the country (including but not limited to the Global Platforms, Activista, and youth in social movements).

The project commenced in June 2020 was designed to allow for its long-term sustainability within, and throughout, the ActionAid Federation. Thus, supporting our work beyond the COVID-19 crisis and into the future. At the heart of the project is a platform for citizen generated data, with the aim of aggregating, analysing, and disseminating information within the shortest time possible, to enable young people's access to near real time data and evidence from their communities, that informs timely and relevant action.

To ensure participation by young people from diverse backgrounds, including from both urban and rural settings, this project combined both analogue and digital methods at all levels: in the collection of data, in information dissemination, and for advocacy and campaigning at local, national, regional, and global levels. The use of creative digital techniques and use of mixed methodologies (i.e., surveys supplemented by videos, art, WhatsApp conversations, etc) supports advocacy demands of young people and their communities to duty bearers at all levels.

Young people from the Activista networks and youth movements / alliances were engaged as youth champions in their communities. They determined what conversations were pertinent to them and therefore what data needed to be collected. Basically, they took the initiative for collecting the data at grassroots level, holding their leaders accountable to good governance, sharing information, and planning joint actions with other young people - through social media channels, community radio programmes, roving PA systems, print materials, meetings (can be virtual or face-to-face depending on the situation) radio and television shows.

The youth champions especially those from cosmopolitan communities have been acting in solidarity with those from more vulnerable communities to hold duty bearers accountable for the delivery of services to the most vulnerable, ensuring that resources allocated to COVID-19 responses reach the target recipients, and address issues affecting young people such as unemployment, decent work, etc. The COVID-19 Youth Digital Response project have four (4) components:

- (1.) Data Collection and Aggregation,
- (2.) Analysis of Citizen Generated Data,
- (3.) Dissemination and Local Engagement, Development of Advocacy Tools,
- (4.) Media Engagement; Community-led Activism (including Advocacy and Campaigns)



Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the livelihood of many the world over. For young persons, the pandemic led to more job losses and widened the already terrible social exclusion gap. Available data from the National Bureau of Statistics shows that Nigeria's unemployment rate rose to 33.3% in the fourth quarter of 2020 compared to 27.1% in the second quarter of the year 2020. The unemployment rate among young persons (within ages 15 – 34 years), which is higher than the national unemployment rate, increased to 42.5% in 2020 Q4 from 34.9% in 2020 Q2.

One way through which the government sought to ameliorate the hardship faced by many with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic is through the administration of Social Investment Programmes and palliatives. Understanding how the COVID-19 affected young persons, and their access to government livelihood enhancement programmes, would therefore form a useful basis on how their welfare can be improved in the post-COVID-19 era and beyond.

A central theme of the Post-2015 Development Agenda is Youth inclusion and empowerment. Connected as never before, young women and men are increasingly influencing the course of their communities and countries through digital means. Despite their capacity to shape social and economic innovations, young people are increasingly left out in access to livelihood enhancement programmes put in place by governments. Addressing the factors hindering young people's access to programmes aimed at empowering them, increasing their inclusion in Civil space and helping them to cope with the challenges of environmental issues and climate change, would remain vital.

Young people under the ages of 24 account for one-third of Nigeria's nearly 200 million people. According to the United Nations, nearly 14 million young people are out of work in Nigeria, which has one of the world's largest youth populations, with more than a third of its 200 million people aged 24 or under, according to United Nations data. A report by Reuters noted that youth unemployment in Nigeria has risen five consecutive times to about 14% in 2020. Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic has added more youths to the Youth unemployment number. With a youth underemployment rate of 28.6%, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

The strategies to achieve better outcomes for Youths in the SDGs have been conceptualized across the goals. Nigeria's National Youth Policy also maps out how better development outcomes can be achieved for youths across five thematic areas. The methodology of the YDE project does not only help in fostering the achievement of these policy objectives but also provides a platform to examine how young persons were affected by the impacts of COVID-19 and how to sustain their access to government projects and programmes using digital engagement.

The Youth Digital Engagement (YDE) project is a DANIDA funded project implemented by ActionAid Nigeria in collaboration with partners at the subnational level. The data was collected by Community Champions and ActionAid Activistas in collaboration with other partners in Abuja, Akwa Ibom and Gombe States using the MagPi app. The analysis was done using MagPi App, MS Excel and STATA software's by the YDE Nigeria In-country Researcher, Terfa W. Abraham (PhD Economics).



Overview of Youth Focused Development Policies in Nigeria



An overview of government programmes for youths have taken different focus over the years. Though, these programmes have helped to enhance the outcome for youths in a generic sense, the impacts of COVID-19 on livelihoods which have led to job losses have further exposed young people to existing challenges.

	Table 2.1: Timeline of Youth Focused Development Policies in Nigeria
1960s	Character building and in-school programmes
1970s	National Youth Service Scheme; Establishment of Ministry of Youth & Sports
1980s	Attempt to formulate the first National Youth Development Policy
1990s	Neglect of previous efforts aimed at youth development
2000s	Ministry of Youth development in 2006; National Youth Policy; MDGs
2010s	Ministry of Youth and Sports; SURE-P; MDGs; SDGs/; Annual Budget across related MDAs
2017-2020	ERGP; Ministry of Youth & Sport; NSIP; SDGs; Annual Budget across related MDAs; 2019 Revised National Youth Policy
2021-2023	Economic Sustainability Plan; SDGs; Annual Budget across related MDAs; National Youth Investment Fund (NYIF); Special Public Works (SPW);

Source: Compiled from Summary of various Youth Policies and Programmes

In the 1960s, Youth Development Policy in Nigeria was focused on in-school programmes that were implemented through activities such as Man O' war and so on. In the 1970s, the major platform for youth programmes became the National Youth Service Corp and the establishment of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Attempt to formulate the first National Development Policy began in the 1980s. This was aimed at providing an environment where the government would create the environment for businesses to thrive through deregulation programmes to enable businesses to thrive. The 1990s however, saw most efforts towards youth development neglected due to weak implementation mechanisms and socio-political environment. This was also the period where youth policy became synonymous with sports. In 2006, the creation of a separate Ministry of Youth Development and the revision of the National Youth Policy was positioned as tools of attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The 2010s was characterized by a variety of innovations to address emerging concerns affecting youth restiveness and exclusion. These programmes such as YouWIN, SURE-P, programmes and projects domiciled under the Federal Ministry of Youths and Sports and other programmes funded through the MDGs. From 2015, new innovations have been put in place for the government to address youth unemployment, access to credit and inclusion in the political space. These programmes are embedded in the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP, 2017 – 2020), Presidential Youth Empower Scheme (PYES) and other programmes under the National Social Investment Office such as N-Power, Conditional Cash Transfer and National Home Grown School Feeding Programme as well the Government Enterprise Empowerment Programme.



The vision of the 2019 National Youth Policy is to develop the Nigerian youth with equal opportunities to realize their dreams and aspirations. The major changes to the review was regarding the age bracket for the classification of youth from 18–35 years to 15–29 years. The strategic thrusts of the policy cut across five pillars that will enable the youth's transit to self-fulfilled and productive adulthood with opportunities for full, effective, and constructive participation.

The five pillars are:

- Productive Workforce and Sustainable Economic Engagement of Youth;
- Participation, inclusiveness and equitable opportunities for all Youth;
- Promotive and Protective Environment for Youth Development;
- Health and Health-Promoting Lifestyle;
- Partnership-building and effective collaboration

The policy benchmark for achieving the above policy thrusts include:

- Education, capacity-building and skills development;
- Employment creation and entrepreneurship;
- Youth in Agriculture;
- Youth and ICT;
- Strengthen NYSC platform to support the entrenchment of the culture of volunteerism for both in and out of school youth;
- Create an enabling environment for the emergence of youth social entrepreneurs by awarding grants to innovative initiatives;
- Develop preventive, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to integrate vulnerable youth;
- Develop platform for the engagement of youth with disabilities and other vulnerable youth and their equitable participation in governance;
- Increase educational opportunities for youth with special needs through the expansion of existing special schools, improvement of the quality of special education, and promotion of the integration of children with disability into the normal school system;
- Strengthen the capacities of youth for political engagement through training and mentorship, and the promotion of their leadership skills for governance;
- Institute a National Youth Award scheme to recognize and honour exceptional youth in all fields of endeavour.



Another programme the government fashioned to address youth employment is through the Special Public Works (SPW) programme. The programme seeks to empower about 750,000 young unemployed persons through a three-month job placement at the local government-level with a monthly salary of N20,000.

An additional effort to address youth employment by the current administration is the Nigerian Youth Investment Fund (NYIF). It is an initiative of the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development that is funded by the Central Bank of Nigeria. It targets young people between the ages of 18 – 29 years and is expected to run for the period 2020 – 2023. With the initial establishment fund of N75 billion, the scheme seeks to expand access to finance for youths to empower them to build businesses and create jobs.



Figure 2.1: Framework for achieving National Youth Policy thrusts using the Digital Engagement



Solidarity Football Match (Kick for GRPS) Abuja (FCT)



Federal Government Budget and 2020 COVID-19 Funds



The impact of COVID-19 created a bleak outlook for the growth of the Nigerian economy. The approved total government spending of N10.81 trillion for 2020, is therefore expected to drive the government's programmes for 2020 as contained in the Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) of the Federal Government. The revised 2020 budget also anticipates higher inflation of 14.15% for 2020 and projects a weaker naira relative

Table 3.1: Benchmark Assumptions for 2019 and 2020 revised figures for COVID-19 and the 2020 Actual Figures

	2019	2020	2021	2020/2021 Actual Figures
	Budgeted	Initial Budget	Approved Revised Budget	Actual Figures
Crude Oil Price (\$pb)	60	57	28	64.3 (as at February 22nd, 2021)
Crude Oil Production (mbpd)	2.3	1.9	1.8	1.78
Exchange Rate (N/\$)	305	305	306	379
GDP Growth (%)	3.01	2.93	-4.2	-1.92
GDP Growth (%)	3.01	2.93	-4.2	-1.92
Inflation Rate (%)	12.5	10.81	15.15	16.47 (as at January, 2021)

Source: MTEF & FSP of the FGN, Budget Office of the Federation (BoF)/ MBNP

The 2021 Appropriation Act of the Federal Government of Nigeria provides for a total expenditure of N13.59 trillion that is 72.24% higher than the projected revenue of the N7.89 trillion thus creating a deficit of N5.601 trillion. To fund the deficit, the Federal Government expects that 84% of the revenue will be raised through domestic and external borrowing, while a total of 16% be raised through asset sales/privatization and multilateral/ bi-lateral project-tied loans, combined. Total recurrent expenditure in the 2021 Appropriation Act accounts for 70% of aggregate Federal Government Expenditure while capital expenditure is 30%.

The share of capital project in the 2021 budget is higher than the allocation for capital budget in the revised 2020 budget. The share of debt service in the 2021 budget, however, is higher than it was for 2020. The share of debt service in the 2021 budget should therefore be of concern for the ability of the 2021 budget to deliver on the development needs of the people in 2021 bearing in mind its consequences for debt service and repayment for the future generation.

Table 3.2: Structure of the 2021 Appropriation Act compared to the 2020 Appropriation Act

	2020 Appropriation Act	2021 Appropriation Act	% Change
Statutory Transfers	428,032,186,792	496,528,471,273	13.80%
Total Debt Service	2,951,710,000,000	3,324,380,000,000	11.21%
Recurrent Non-Debt Expenditure	4,942,269,251,934	5,641,970,060,680	12.40%
Capital Expenditure	2,488,789,433,344	4,125,149,354,222	39.67%
Total Expenditure	10,810,800,872,072	13,588,027,886,175	20.44%

Source: Budget Office of the Federation



The 2021 Appropriation Act also shows no evidence for programming recurrent resources for COVID-19. While there are global concerns for a second wave of COVID-19, not providing the component of service wide votes that is committed to COVID-19 administration, will make accountability and transparency of such difficult. In 2020, the amount provided for COVID-19 Crisis Intervention Fund is N213.98 billion. In the 2021 budget, however, it is not clearly stated what the amount has been committed as Other Service Wide Votes for COVID-19 Crisis Intervention Fund.

Table 3.3: Structure of Recurrent (Non-Debt) Expenditure in the 2020 Revised Budget and 2020 Budget

	2020 Appropriation Act	2021 Appropriation Act
Recurrent (Non-Debt)	4,942,269,251,935	5,746,271,340,557
Personnel Costs (MDAs)	2,827,648,399,908	3,053,860,271,901
Personnel Costs (GOEs)	218,805,923,102	701,162,016,535
Overheads (MDAs)	243,178,783,662	302,426,076,635
Overheads (GOEs)	89,606,753,712	312,081,710,125
Pensions, Gratuities & Retirees Benefits	536,717,450,127	552,818,973,631
Other service wide votes (including GAVI/ Immunization)	397,334,060,757	408,922,291,731
Other service wide votes (COVID-19 Crisis Intervention Fund)	213,977,880,667	
Presidential Amnesty Programme	65,000,000,000	65,000,000,000

Source: Budget Office of the Federation, 2016 – 2021

Over the years, rising government expenditures have been accompanied by rising proportion of persons in poverty, school dropout, poor access to health care and unemployment. The nation's Human Development Index, HDI also does not compare favourably with other countries in Sub Saharan Africa as public investment in health, education, and social infrastructure, have been below global recommended benchmarks. The weak level of economic growth in 2020 relative to 2019 further attest to the fact that years of weak investment in social infrastructure, worsened the nation's exposure to the effect of COVID-19. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics shows that Nigeria's real GDP growth in 2020 was -1.92% compared to the 2.29% growth recorded in 2019.

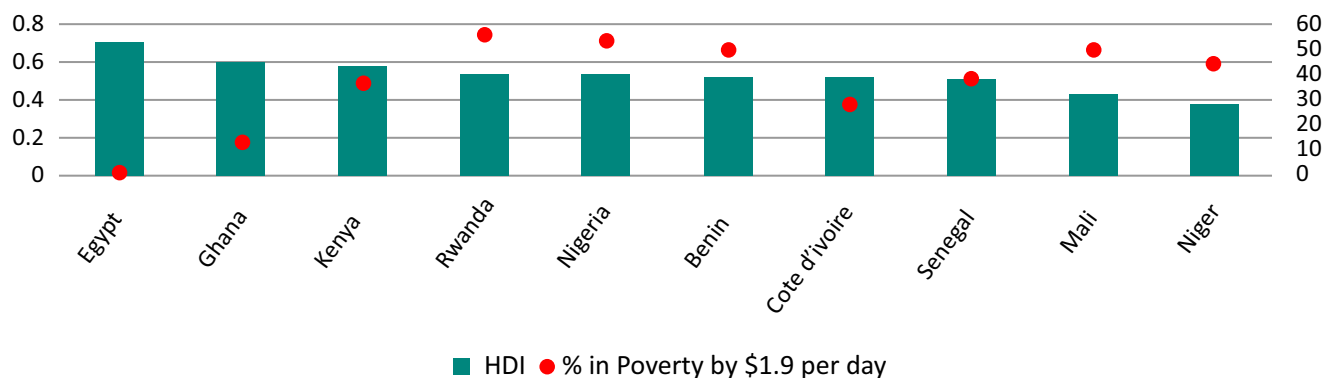


Source: Appropriation Act of the FGN, 2012-2020 (BoF/MBFNP)



Nigeria has a HDI that is higher than that of Benin Republic, Senegal, Mali and Niger, but more people are poorer by the international dollar per line in Nigeria than in these countries.

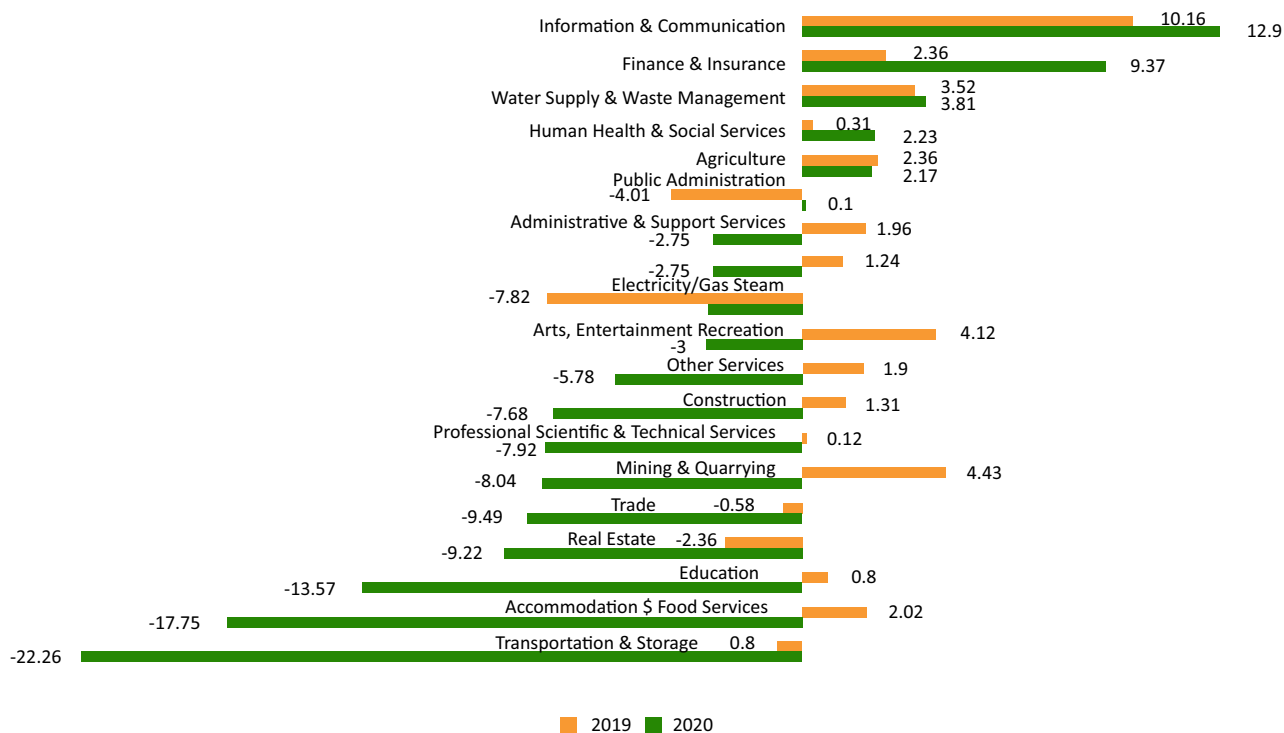
Figure 3.2: HDI and Poverty by International Dollar Line in Selected African Countries: 2019



Source: World Bank/ UNDP

The education sector was one of the sectors mostly affected by COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Data for school enrolment in Nigeria also shows a declining trend for school enrolment for young persons. Sustaining learning through digital means and safe school initiatives will therefore not only enhance the level of literacy but also reduce phenomenon of out of school children for both boys and girls.

Figure 3.3: Nigeria's Real GDP Growth by Sectors: 2019 and 2020



Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2020

Although data shows a decline in school enrolment for male and female, the decline is much lower for female (see Figure 3.3b). It is only natural therefore that this would translate into higher unemployment for female than for their male counterpart. Thus, it is easy to deduce that rising trend of unemployment for female, is accompanied by a declining share of female enrolment in schools.

Available data from the Budget Office of the Federation puts the total funds available for COVID-19 intervention funds in 2020 at N500 billion. The distribution of the funds by geopolitical zone and the FCT is presented below.

Table 3.4: Allocation of 2020 COVID-19 Funds by Project and MDAs

Distribution of 2020 COVID-19 Funds by Project Line	Amount	Responsibility
COVID-19 Support to States @ N 1 Billion per state including FCT but excluding Lagos State	36,000,000,000	FMF&NP
Jobs and Food For All: Agriculture and Food Security	56,462,973,517	FMARD
Energy for All: Mass Rural Solar Powered Lighting Strategy	12,424,849,535	Rural Electrification Agency
Supporting Small Businesses/ MSMEs Survival Fund	75,000,000,000	FMITI
Moving People and Goods: Road Construction and Rehabilitation	60,000,000,000	FERMA
Job Creation scheme for Youth and Women Post COVID-19 in the 6 geopolitical zones	9,589,168,000	FMLE
Public works programme (1000 persons per LGA for 36 states and area councils of FCT - 774,000 persons)	52,000,000,000	NDE
Social Intervention Programme	32,457,500,000	MHADM&SD
Bailout support to Aviation Sector	5,000,000,000	FMA
Health Infrastructure Across FMC, Teaching Hospital and Others	86,000,000,000	FMH
Food and Drug Services: Local manufacturing of vaccine (Bio-vaccine)	10,000,000,000	FMH
NAFDAC: Upgrade of Laboratory Testing of Vaccines	2,000,000,000	NAFDAC
NIMR: Upgrade of laboratory equipment for solidarity trial	1,000,000,000	NIMR
NIPRD: Research and Development	2,000,000,000	NIPRD
Cost of equipping of 10 bedded intensive care unit, equipping of isolation centres and personal protective equipment in 36 states and the FCT	31,376,000,016	Teaching Hospitals and FMCs
Procurement of Molecular Laboratory Equipment in University Teaching Hospitals and FMCs	17,984,130,008	Teaching Hospitals and FMCs
Recurrent Budget Items (FMH, NAFDAC, NIMR, NIPRD, NCDC)	21,639,869,976	FMH
NCDC	6,500,000,000	FMH
Support to Lagos State	10,000,000,000	FMH



Distribution of 2020 COVID-19 Funds by Project Line	Amount	Responsibility
Support to pharmaceutical industries for raw materials not used (CODEINE)	1,000,000,000	FMH
Hazard Allowance	20,000,000,000	FMH
Contingencies	2,500,000,000	FMH
Nigeria Correctional Service	951,145,188	Nigeria Correctional Service
Federal Fire Service	1,484,165,760	Federal Fire Service
Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps	539,673,000	Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps
Artisanal and Small Scale Miners	6,000,000,000	FMMSD
WASH Programme	9,890,525,000	WASH, FWR
M&E and Reporting on Implementation	750,000,000	Monitoring

Source: Budget Office of the Federation

While the projects were spread across various aspects of social intervention, job creation and building a resilient health sector, the budget break down as provided by the Federal Ministry of Finance makes it difficult to track what projects have been carried out in specific states including the FCT.

The recurrent component of the N500 billion COVID-19 funds for 2020 accounted for 10% while the component for capital projects is 90%.

Fig 3.4: COVID-19 Intervention Funds by Recurrent and Capital Component

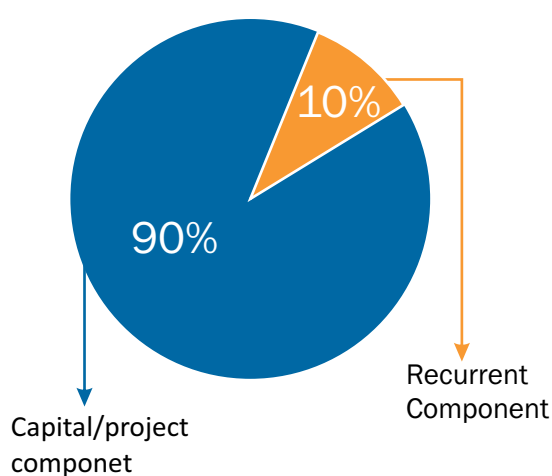


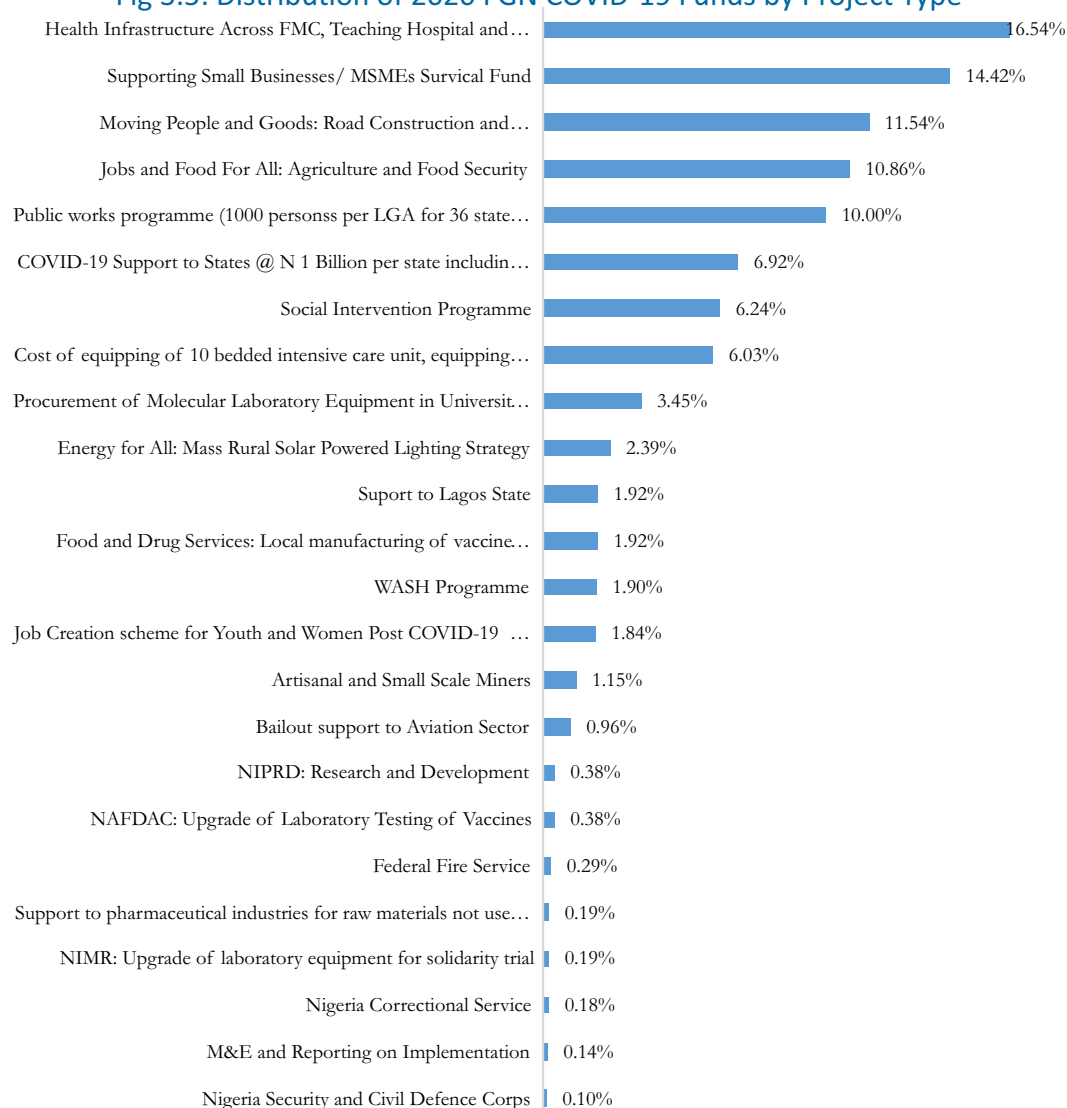
Table 3.5: Recurrent Items in the 2020 COVID-19 FGN Fund

Recurrent Line Items	Amount
Recurrent Budget Items (FMH, NAFDAC, NIMR, NIPRD, NCDC)	21,639,869,976
NCDC	6,500,000,000
Hazard Allowance	20,000,000,000
Contingencies	2,500,000,000

The distribution of the allocation for projects shows that the priority expenditure line was for building a resilient health sector, supporting the growth of small businesses and road construction. Allocation for WASH programmes, which had an allocation of N9.89 billion accounted for less than 2% of the total allocation for COVID-19 intervention funds in 2020. The allocation for COVID-19 research and development of N2billion accounted for less than 0.5% of the total allocation for capital project to the COVID-19 intervention funds.

The projects for job creation, and social intervention provided at states and geopolitical zones are lacking in details that may not allow for effective tracking of the level of project implementation down to community level.

Fig 3.5: Distribution of 2020 FGN COVID-19 Funds by Project Type



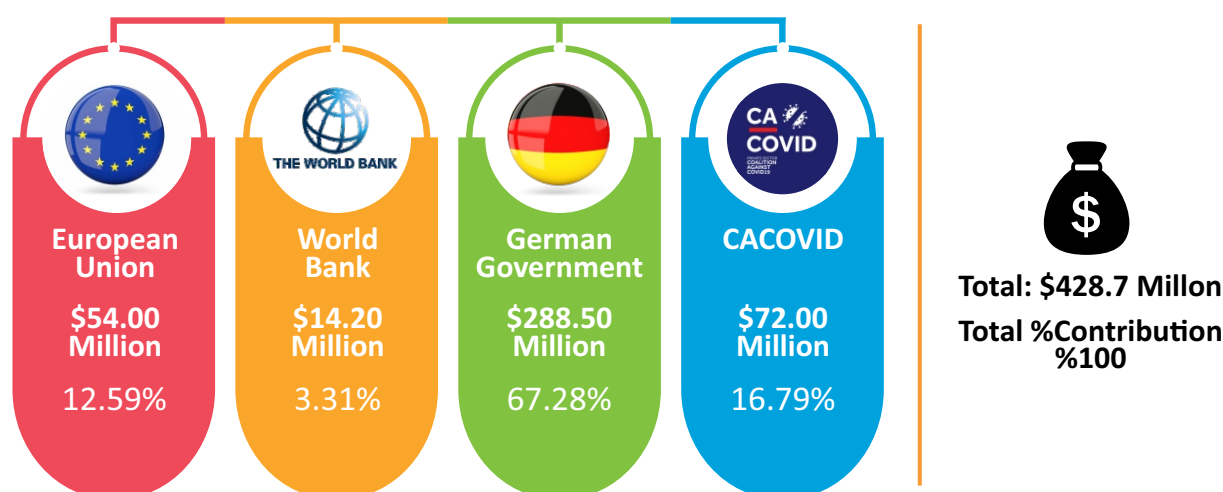
While the projects under FERMA for roads construction and maintenance are well detailed, it remains worrisome why the road construction and maintenance would take such a priority in the utilization of COVID-19 funds. The public works programme to cater for 1000 persons per LGA for 36 states and area councils of FCT (774,000 persons), is also captured in the 2020 COVID-19 intervention fund. Questions about how these 1000 persons per LGA would be determined is yet to be answered. Whereas the data shows the allocation for projects by geopolitical zones, the break down does not allow for effective tracking of specific projects on state specific basis.

Allocations for projects that have details for tracking are those meant for road construction and maintenance across the states and geopolitical zones.

While allocations were made for projects to address job creation, social investment programme, and building a resilient health sector, the details to allow for effective tracking of the level of implementation of these projects, are not contained in the document. Engagement with the relevant government MDAs, will be useful in this direction, if the level of project implementation is to be ascertained.

Contributions received from the European Union, World Bank, German Government and CACOVID also provided support to COVID-19 campaign in Nigeria. The contributions is provided in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: COVID-19 Contribution by Foreign Partners and CACOVID to FGN



Source: ActionAid Nigeria

Details of COVID-19 funds for roads that will be maintained or constructed across the nation were spelt out in the budget office data while projects bothering directly on minimizing the effect of COVID-19 on the welfare of citizens were not.

Providing details on how the funds for post COVID-19 Job creation scheme for youth and women be implemented, will be important.

Knowing the projects that are targeted and implemented across the nation, will also allow for better tracking of the COVID-19 intervention funds.



Interview with PwD on the
impact of COVID-19
in Ikot Unya Community
Akwa Ibom State



National Data Analysis and Issues of Engagement



Data collected for Nigeria was from Abuja (FCT), Akwa Ibom and Gombe States. Nigeria's population is estimated to be about 204 million. With 36 plus 1 subnational levels of government, and 774 Local Government Areas plus 6 area councils, the expected number of samples to be randomly collected is about 7,068.61. Spreading these data across the country would allow for the inclusion of different socio-demographics of the country to be captured in the data. As such, a state from the southern region, north region and the centre of country were selected. The presence of ActionAid Nigeria Activistas and community champions in these states, also allowed for the mobilization of young person's residing the communities to champion the data collection process. Though, the target was to reach a total of 7,068.61 respondents, data returned from FCT and the two states shows that the actual number of data collected was 6,408. This yields a response rate of 91%.

Fig 4.1: PYDE National Data Response Rate from Data Collection

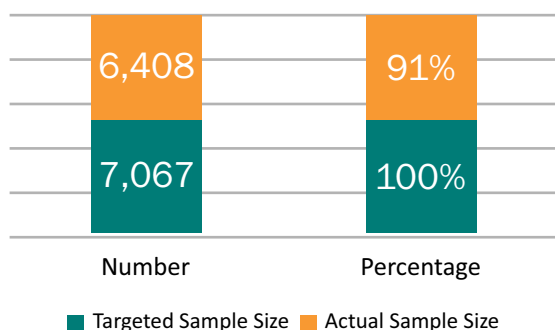
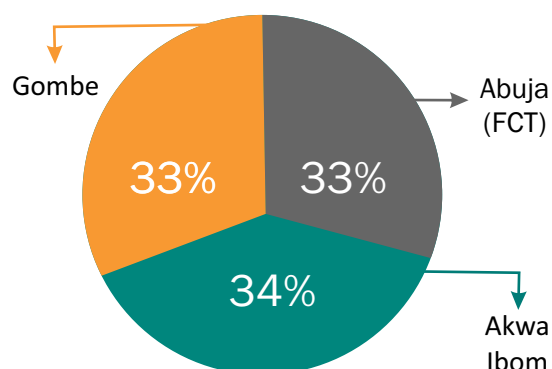
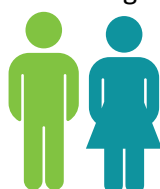


Fig 4.2: Proportion of Respondents across States & FCT



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

The age distribution of the data collected shows that young persons

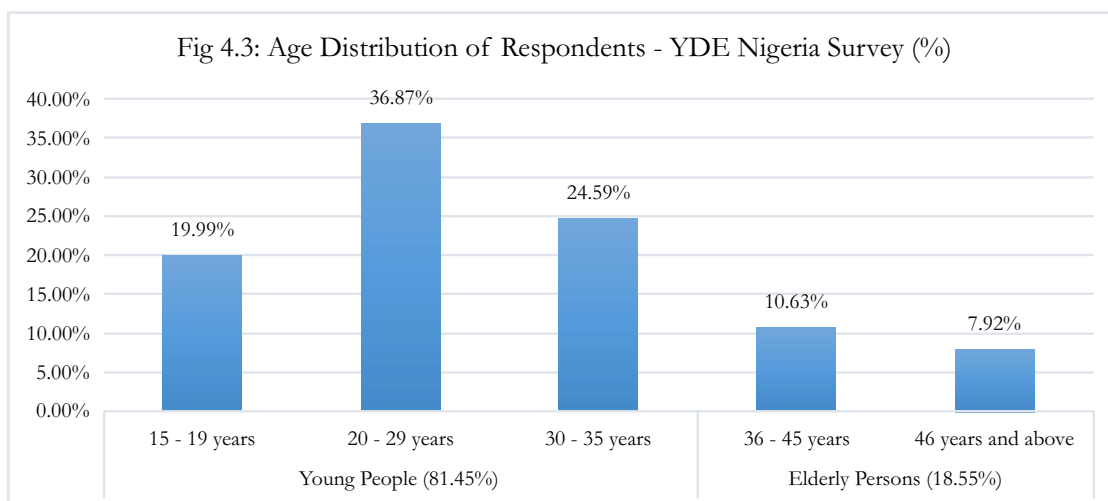


35 years and less account for **81.45%** of the respondents



Elderly persons account for **18.55%**.

Fig 4.3: Age Distribution of Respondents - YDE Nigeria Survey (%)



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021



Female accounted for 51% of the respondent while the proportion of Male is 49%.

Fig 4.4: Representation of Young Persons in the National Data (%)

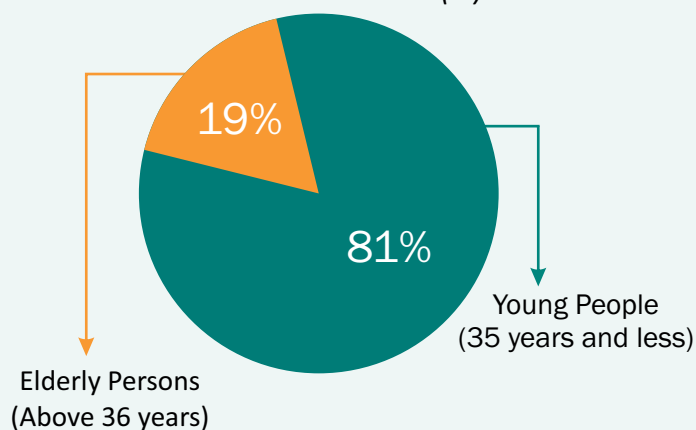
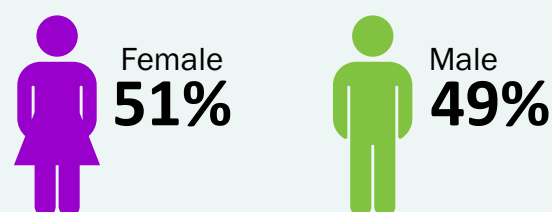
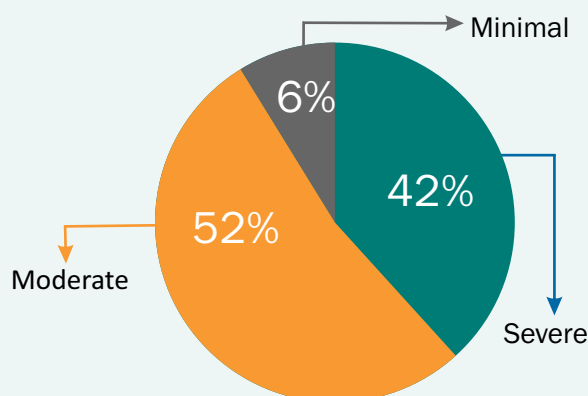


Fig 4.5: Gender Distribution of Respondents (%)



94% of the respondents agreed that the impact of COVID-19 on their livelihood was within moderate to severe. Precisely, 42% said COVID-19 had a severe impact on them, 6% said the effect was minimal, while 52% said it was moderate.

Fig 4.6: Effects of COVID-19 on Communities in Nigeria

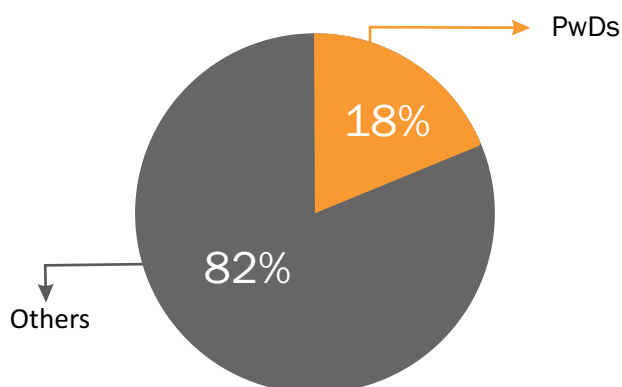


Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021



PwDs account for 18% of respondents (1,104 out of 6,201). This implies that 2 out of the respondents are PwDs. Digital engagement that seeks to enhance the awareness of and access to development programmes by PwDs will be vital as well. 42% of PwDs are female while 58% are Male. 8 out of 10 of PwDs are also young persons.

Fig 4.7: Share of PwDs in Overall Respondents



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Fig 4.8: Gender Distribution of Persons with Disability

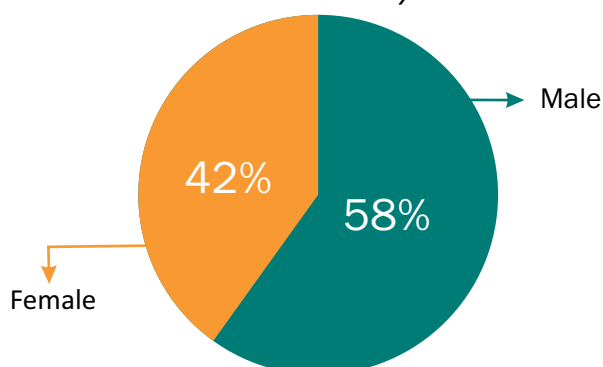


Fig 4.9: Age Distribution of PwDs

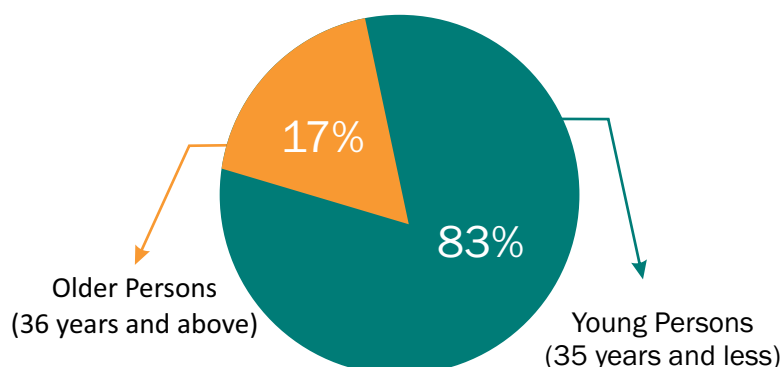
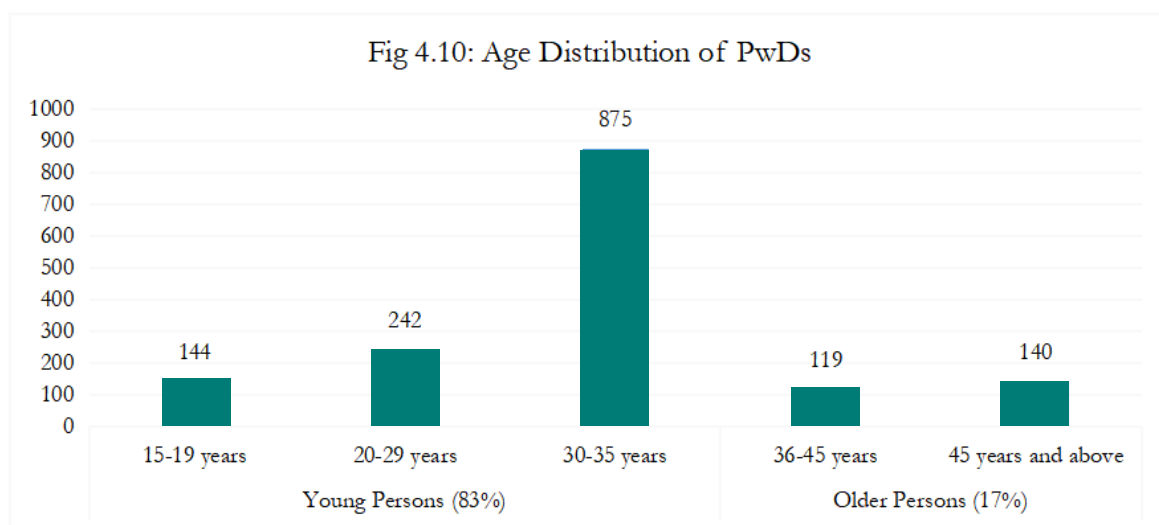


Fig 4.10: Age Distribution of PwDs

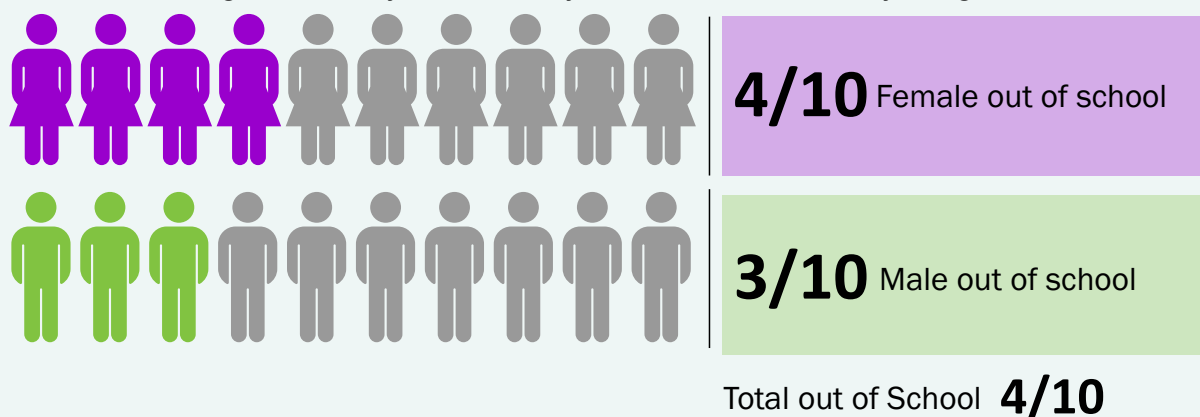


Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021



The data shows an average of 4 out of 10 female are out of school and 3 out of 10 for male. The average for female and male is estimated from the national data which averages the responses from 5,380 and 5,871 respondents. The average for male and female is 4 out of 10 as well.

Fig 4.11: Out of School Data from YDE National Data for Nigeria



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

9 in 10 families, however, have a poor conception about family planning. 10% of the respondents agree that family planning measures are aimed at helping families to better space the children they conceive and give birth to. 90% on the other hand think family planning measures are aimed at stopping women from giving birth.

Whereas culture and tradition are often identified as a constraint to the acceptance of modern family planning measures in the communities, there is ample space for engagement and awareness campaigns. 46% of the respondents agree that they prefer traditional methods of family planning over modern methods. 45% said they prefer modern methods, while 9% were not sure.

Fig 4.12: Does the culture and tradition of your community allow for child spacing and family planning?

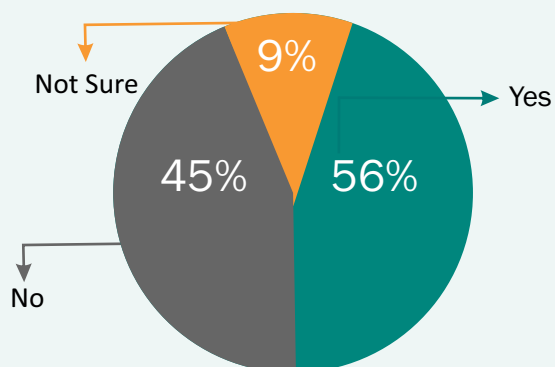
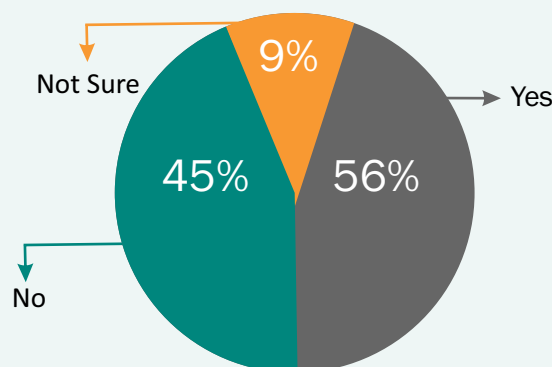


Fig 4.13: Do you prefer traditional family planning over modern methods?



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

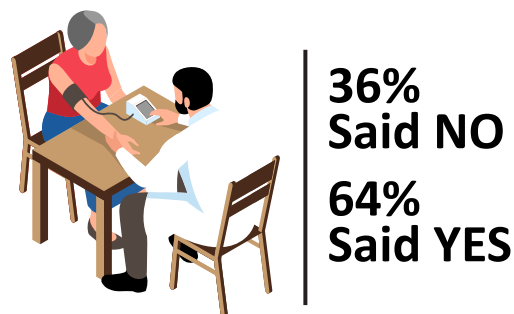


Though, there is a designated health care facility meant for most communities – as agreed by 64% of the respondents, 4 in 10 respondents agree that such is not within reach for pregnant and nursing women.

Fig 4.14: Availability of a designated health care facility for Communities



Fig 4.15: Accessibility of health care facilities to Nursing and Pregnant Women in the Communities

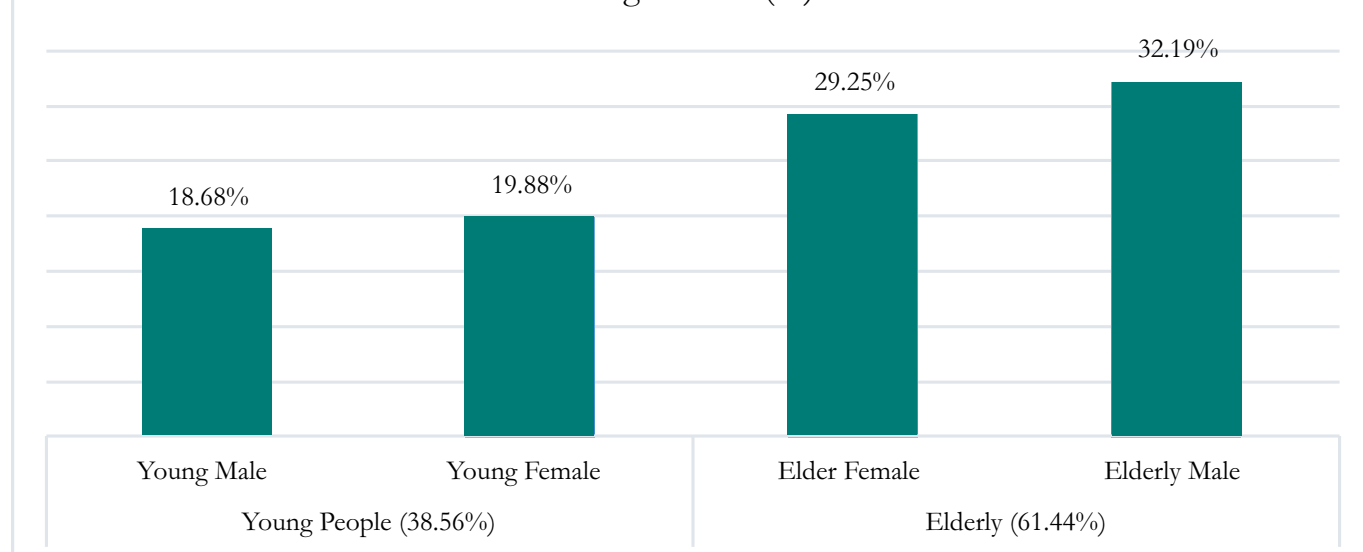


Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Public enlightenment campaigns in partnership with health care stakeholders to raise awareness on the benefits of child spacing and family planning should be sustained. Engagement with Faith and Community-Based Organizations (FBOs/CBOs) on how best to communicate family planning awareness campaigns will also be important.

Young people have the least access to government programmes. More young people have suffered some forms of abuses (verbally, sexually, or physically). When asked if they have been abused verbally, sexually, or physically, 76% of persons less than 35 years said “YES”. When cross-tabulated with the COVID-19, there is a higher proportion of abuse related to exposure to the pandemic.

Fig 4.16: Gender and Age Group Distribution of Access to Government Programmes (%)



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Campaign at YDE Solidarity
Football Match in FCT.



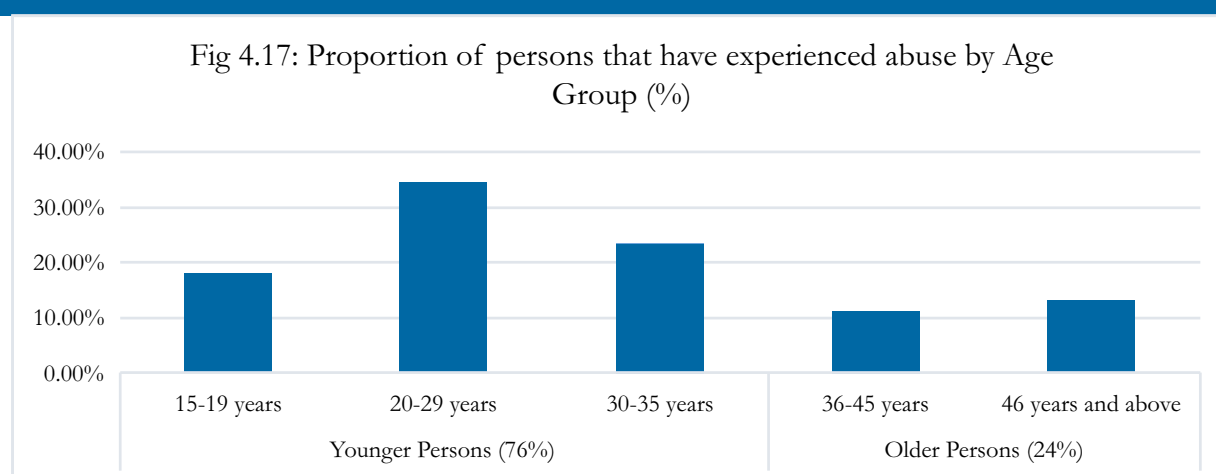
The major channel through which the government seeks to address social exclusion, poverty and unemployment is the National Social Investment Programmes. The N-Power programme and the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programmes are two of such. Data obtained from the YDE Nigeria project shows that people's awareness of the N-Power and CCT programmes are low and the proportion of persons that have benefitted from the programme are even lower. 28% of the respondents agree that they are aware of the N-Power programme while 19.34% of those who are aware said they had benefitted. The situation is the same with the CCT programme as 39% are aware, but only 24% of those who are aware, had benefitted.

Awareness of and Benefit from government Programmes (N-Power and CCT)					
N-Power	Frequency	Percentage (%)	CCT	Frequency	Percentage (%)
People Awareness	1709/6207	28%	People Awareness	2431/6230	39%
Benefit	1203/6220	19.34%	Benefit	1504/6200	24%

Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS 2019 report), about 42% (82.9 million people) of Nigerians live below the poverty line. The Federal Government of Nigeria registers 26 million Nigerians on the National Social Investment Register. The effort of the government has taken NSIP programmes to 601 out of the 774 local governments in Nigeria, and more than 26 million persons have been captured in the register. As such, there is a need for sustained engagement to raise awareness about these programmes and improve the proportion of persons that benefit from the programme. For instance, the share of persons that have been captured in the National Social Register as of February 2021, only accounts for 31% of persons living below the poverty line. Through digital engagement, more young persons who bear the brunt of exclusion and poverty will be reached. Interaction from the field from the YDE data shows that many youths will only require a meagre amount of capital to begin a start-up. Access to such loans/credit, however, is hard to come by.

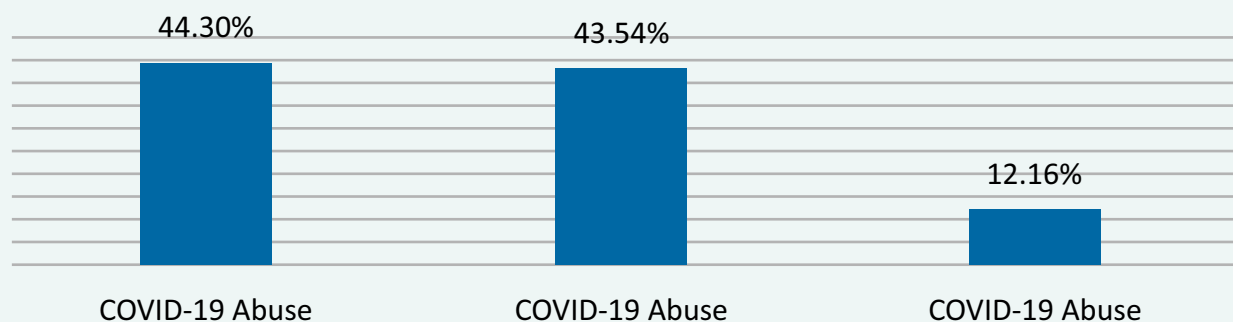
There is need for sustained engagement to raise awareness about these programmes and improve on the proportion of persons that benefit from the programme.



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021



Fig 4.18: Exposure to Abuse and the COVID-19 Pandemic



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

The presence of police in the communities was also weak, as most respondents said there were no physical police outpost or personnel's in the communities. The availability of dispute resolution within the communities is also weak as 5 out of 10 respondents said they were not aware of such mechanisms.

Fig 4.20: Is there a police station and the presence of effective community policing in your community?

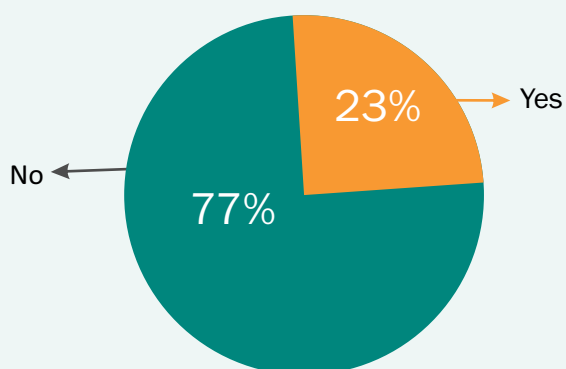
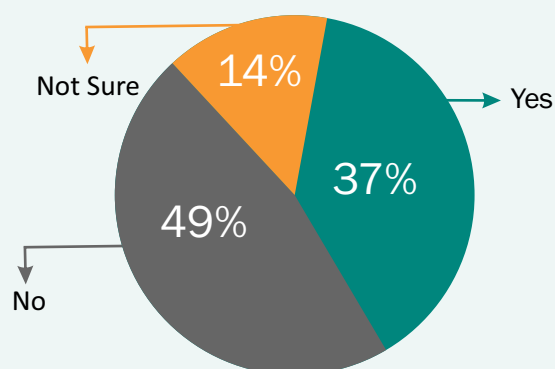


Fig 4.21: Are there mechanisms for dispute resolution in your community?



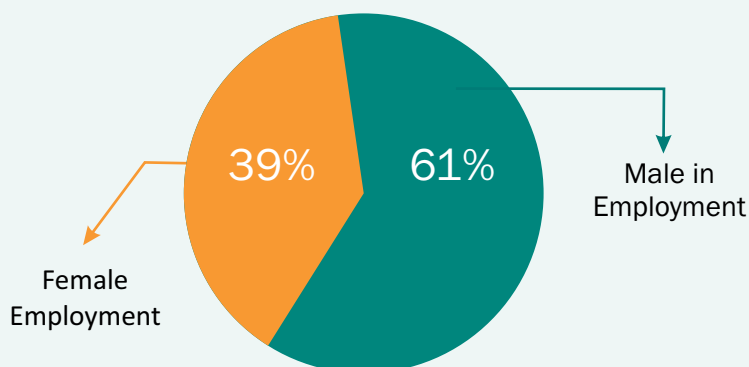
Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Digital engagement tools to report cases of abuse would be helpful. Integrating digital tools to traditional policing would also allow for participatory policing.



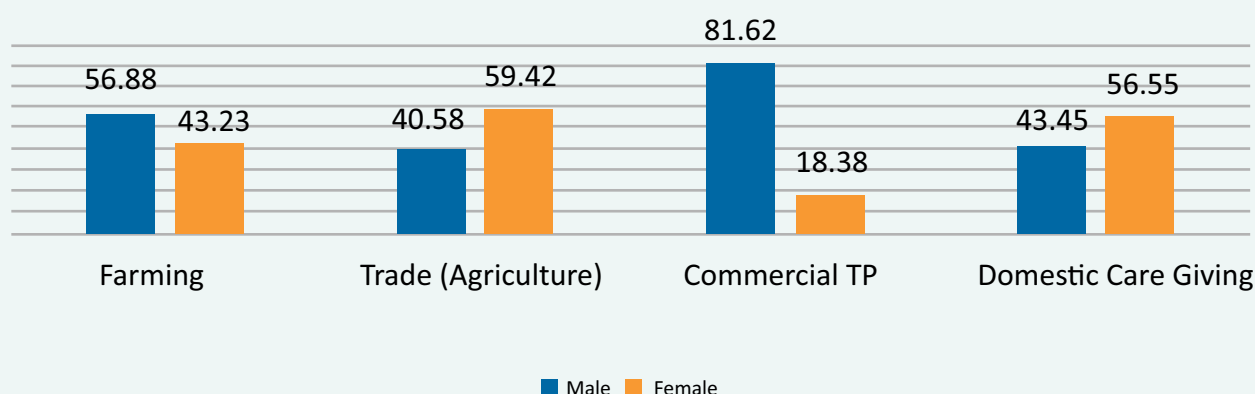
When asked if they were engaged in any form of employment, only 26% said “YES,” while 74% said “No.” There are also more male that are employed relative to female. This implies that that unemployment is higher for female than male. 6 out of 10 female in the working population are without jobs.

Fig 4.22: Employment by Gender Classification



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Fig 4.23: Proportional (%) Distribution of Employment by Gender in Rural Communities



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Evidence on land grabbing shows that 23% of the respondents agree they experience issues of land grabbing in their communities. When cross tabulated against occupation, it was found that 66% of those who are affected by land grabbing are farmers, 25% are persons who trade in agricultural produce/ farm harvest while others account for 9%.



Fig 4.24: Response to Existing issues of Land Grab

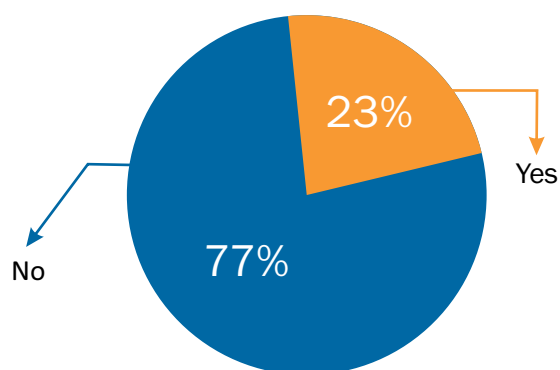
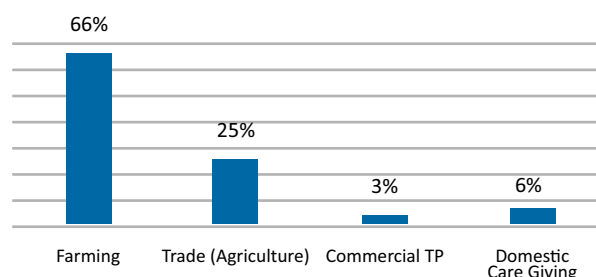


Fig 4.25: Respondents Exposure to Land Grab by Occupational Distribution



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

By gender distribution, male gender are more exposed to the issue of land grabbing, and it cut across age. Young persons are mostly the ones exposed to the adverse effect of land grabbing. Perhaps, a sustainable approach to engage on how best to address the issue of land grabbing will help address issues of violence, youth exclusion and job creation.

Fig 4.26: Proportion of Respondents that attest to Land Grabbing

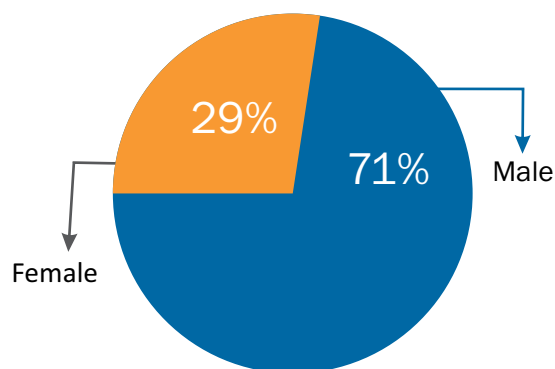
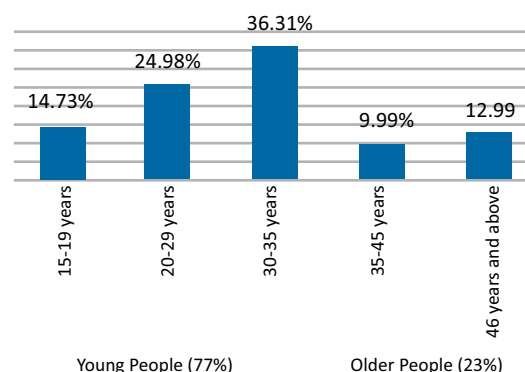


Fig 4.27: Land Grabbing Affects Young People the most



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Digital engagement of youths to address root causes of land grabbing and include youths' land use related decisions would be vital for job creation, civic inclusion and environmental justice. Not doing so, would escalate an already terrible situation with insecurity across the land.



A general assessment of the impact channels for Youth Digital Engagement from the field data for Nigeria reveals the following:

- Access to COVID-19 palliatives and spendings by people in communities is about 13%;
- Nearly 8 out of 10 youth in these communities have phones, thereby, serving as a vital tool for digital engagement;
- 5 out of 10 persons interviewed do not have a bank account(s). Access to finance/credit is vital to empower young people. Deliberate attempts to address the issue of financial exclusion (having a bank account) will be a productive and useful start;
- Although, 4 out of 10 persons have access to a computer. However, only 3 out of 10 persons can operate one; and despite the openings for Youth Engagement through digital means, the willingness to learn how to use a gadget for empowerment purpose is 37%. Building the capacity of youths to use digital gadgets (including their phones) for empowerment purpose will be quite beneficial.

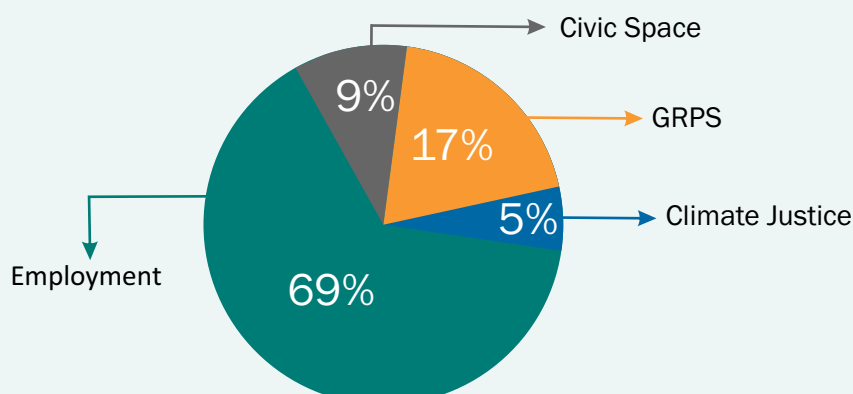
Table 4.1: Assessment of Impact Channels for Youth Digital Engagement

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Benefit from other government programmes (COVID-19 direct assistance)	777 out of 6206	13%
Access to Phones	4743 out of 6203	76%
Bank Account	3192 out of 6205	51%
Access to a Computer	2720 out of 6200	44%
Operate a Computer	1921 out of 6199	31%
Learn a Gadget	2309 out of 6206	37%

Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

A total of valid responses from the data collected yielded a total sample of 6,217. The priority area for the YDE project as determined from the data collected identifies employment and the Gender Responsive Public Service as the major areas requiring intervention and engagement.

Fig 4.29: National Priority Area for YDE project - Nigeria



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021



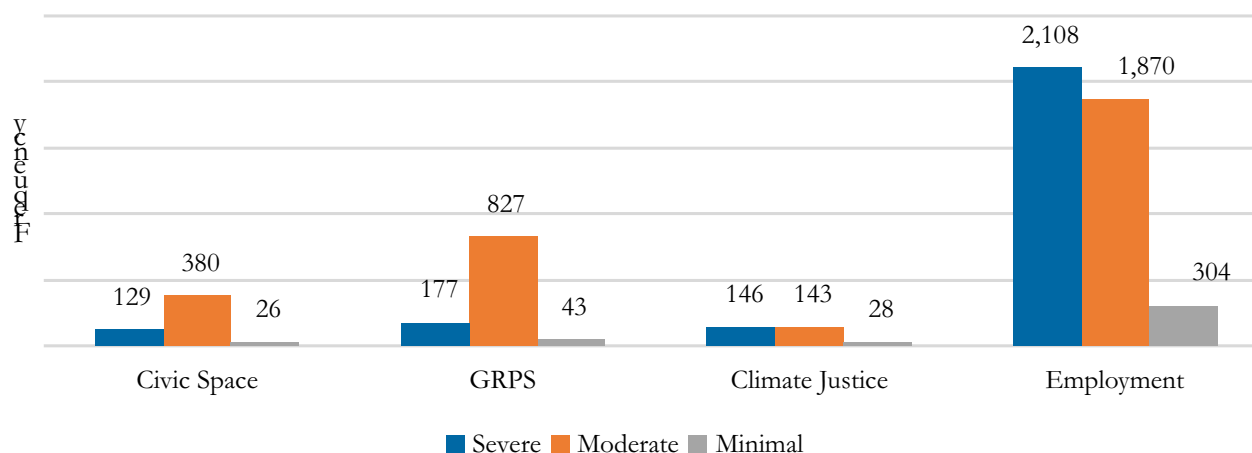
Most respondents that agreed that COVID-19 severely affected their livelihood identified with employment as their chosen area of focus. Respondents who also agreed that the effect of COVID-19 was moderate associated with Gender Responsive Public Service as the focus area.

Fig 4.22: Employment by Gender Classification

	Civic Space	GRPS	Climate Justice	Employment	Total
Severe	2.09%	2.86%	2.36%	34.10%	41.41%
Moderate	6.15%	13.38%	2.31%	30.25%	52.09%
Minimal	0.43%	0.70%	0.70%	4.92%	6.50%
Total	8.67%	16.94%	5.12%	69.27%	100.00%

Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Fig 4.30: Cross Tabulation of Effect of COVID-19 and Choice of Priority Area



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021



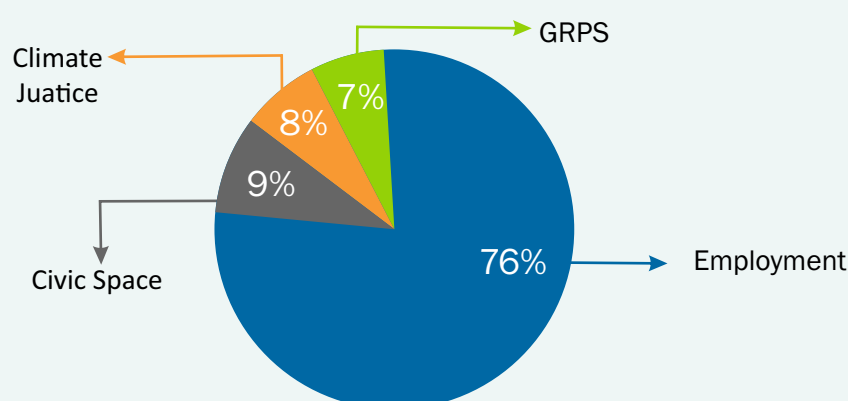
PwDs associated mostly with employment and civic space. Addressing the issues of exclusion of PwDs will therefore be a vital step in expanding their access to job opportunities.

Table 4.3: PwDs choice of Priority Area

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Civic Space	97	8.93
GRPS	82	7.55
Climate Justice	84	7.73
Employment	823	75.78
Total	1,086	100.00

Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Fig 4.31: PwDs choice of Priority Area



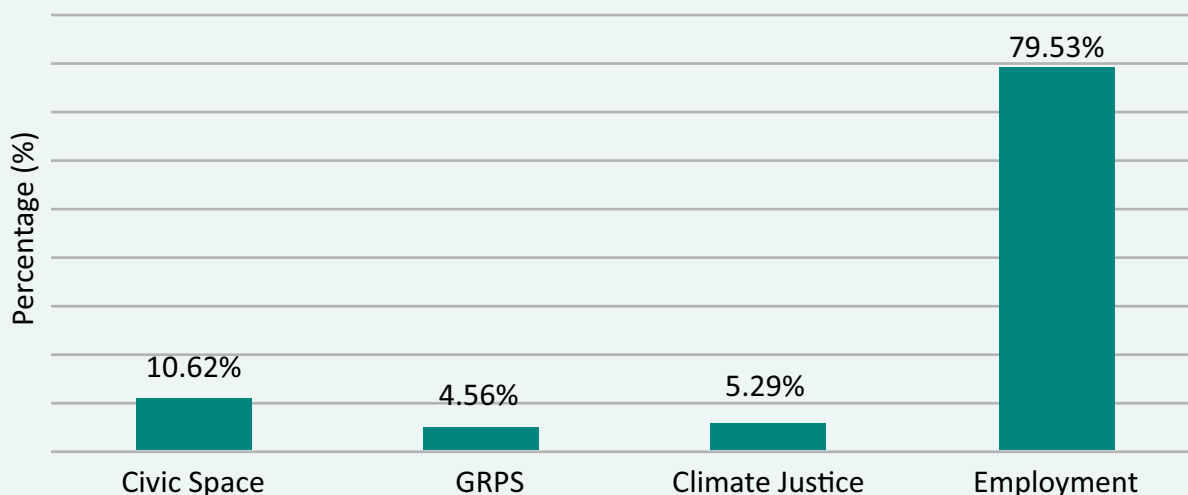
Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Whereas both male and female identified with employment as the priority area, more female associated with the need for Gender Responsive Public Service as the second area of focus. Male respondents, on the other hand, associated with unhindered civic space. Making the access to government programmes to be more gender sensitive and addressing the issues of youth exclusion of decision and policy space, would also be critical to enhance the livelihood of young persons in the COVID-19 era and beyond. Making access to public service to be more gender sensitive and addressing youth exclusion from economic and political space would also play a useful role in taming the spread of violent extremism that is mostly associated with young persons.

The identification of priority areas by female respondents also had an even spread that considers other needs beyond employment. The choice area for male respondents, however, was mainly concentrated on job opportunities.

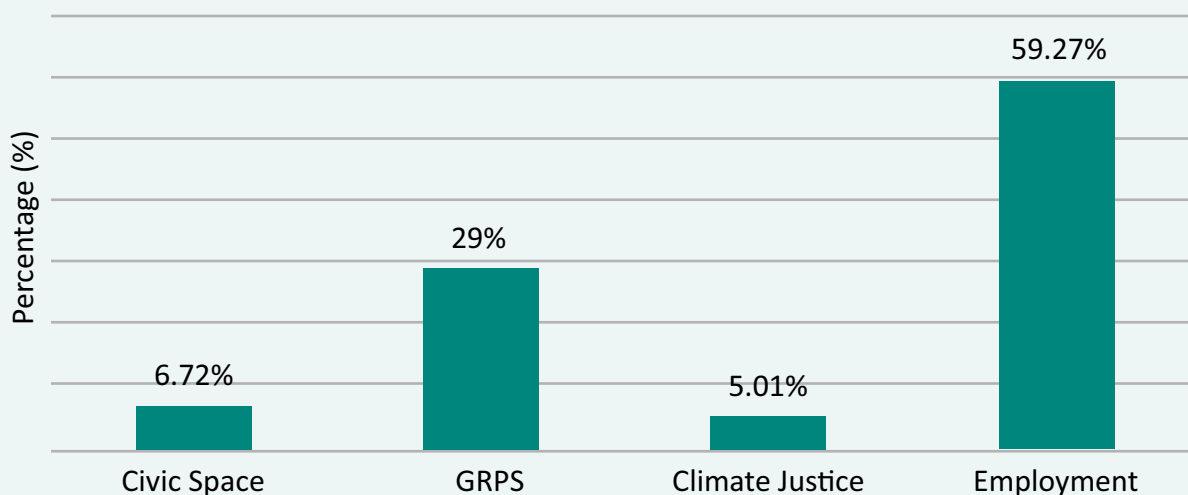


Fig 4.32: Identification of Priority Area by Male Respondents



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

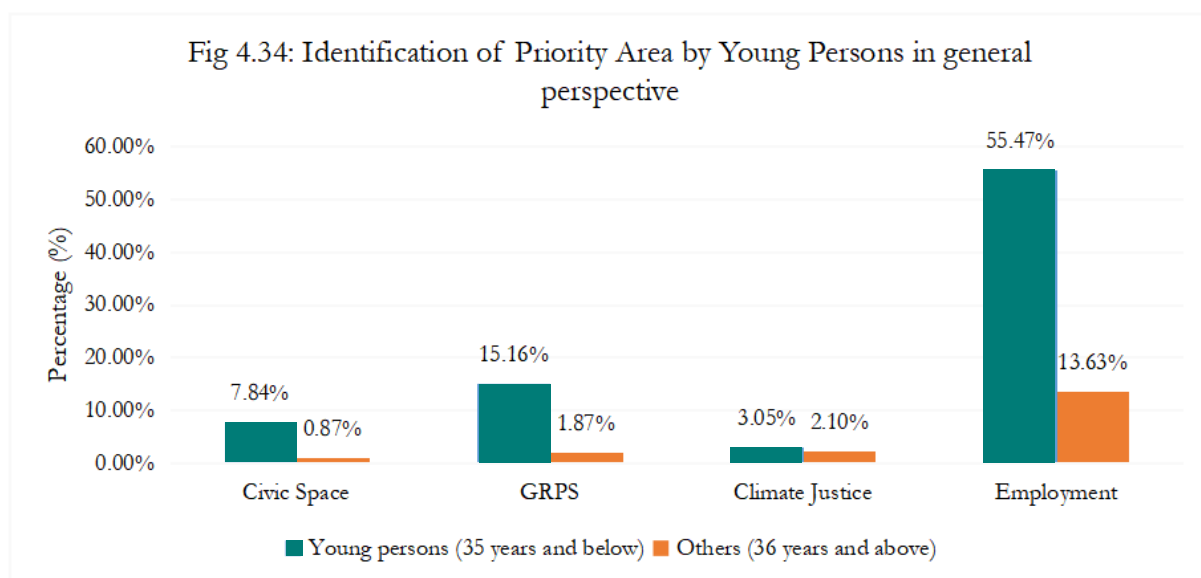
Fig 4.33: Identification of Priority Area by Female Respondents



Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Young people yearn for employment creation and want access to public services to be more gender responsive. This is seen when the data was cross examined by age group. Young people (persons less than 35 years) identified with the need for employment and Gender Responsive Public Service. Elderly persons also identified with the need for jobs but were also concerned about climate justice. As young people grow older, the gains from their employment and access to Gender Responsive Public Service could become exposed to the vagaries of climate change. Educating young people about the need for sustainable consumption and production in a manner that preserves the environment, is therefore a major lesson young persons can learn from elderly persons.





Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021

Table 4.4: Frequency Table for Identification of Priority Area by Age Group

	Civic Space	GRPS	Climate Justice	Employment	
15 - 19 years	155	196	35	858	1,244
20 - 29 years	222	242	77	1,731	2,272
30 - 35 years	108	500	77	843	1,528
Young Persons	485	938	189	3,432	5,044
36 - 45 years	34	67	70	484	655
46 and above	20	49	60	359	488
Elderly Persons	54	116	130	843	1,143
Total	539	1,054	319	4,275	6,187

Source: AAN/DANIDA YDE Nigeria Field Data, 2020/2021



Issues for Advocacy, Campaign and Engagement



The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the livelihood of many around the world. This report finds evidence that young people were the most affected group in emerging economies like Nigeria. For a country with nearly 200 million people with more than 50% as young people, finding inclusive ways to engage them towards getting the governments to tailor development programmes that meet the needs of young people, will be vital, if the SDGs are to be achieved. The YDE project offers the avenue to conduct evidence-based research in order to identify how you engage youth across the spectrum. Using questionnaires that were disseminated using MagPi application through Community Champions and Activistas, the survey data was administered to a determined sample size of 7,068.61 respondents. They were drawn from states that would reflect the socio-demographics of the country. As such, states covered in the survey are Abuja (FCT), Akwa Ibom and Gombe States. The number of valid responses was 6,408. The findings show that:

- I. The age distribution of the data collected shows that young persons within 18 – 29 years account for 81.45% of the respondents, while elderly persons account for 18.55%.
 - ii. Female accounted for 51% of the respondents while the proportion of male is 49%.
 - iii. When asked if they were engaged in any form of employment, only 26% said “YES,” while 74% said “NO.” There are also more male that are employed relative to female. This implies that unemployment is higher for female than male. 6 out of 10 female in the working population are without jobs.
 - iv. 4 out of 10 persons agreed that the COVID-19 has a severe impact on their livelihood. 5 out of 10 agreed that the effect was moderate, while 1 out of 10 thought the impact was minimal. This implies that for every 10 persons, COVID-19 eroded their means of livelihood and exposed 5 more to uncertainties.
 - v. PwDs account for 18% of respondents (1,104 out of 6,201). This implies that 2 out of the respondents are PwDs. 42% of PwDs are female while 58% are male. 8 out of 10 of PwDs are also young persons.
 - vi. The data shows an average of 4 out of 10 female are out of school and 3 out of 10 for male.
 - vii. Though, there is a designated health care facility meant for most communities, 4 in 10 respondents agree that it is not within reach for pregnant and nursing women. More so, 9 in 10 families have a poor conception of family planning.
 - viii. More young people have suffered cases of abuse (verbally, sexually or physically). When asked if they have been abused verbally, sexually, or physically, 76% of persons less than 35 years said “YES.” Cross tabulating this response with the response on the effect of COVID-19 showed that there is a higher proportion of abuse related to exposure to the pandemic.
 - xi. Young people have the least access to government programmes. The major medium of government programmes to the people during the COVID-19 lockdown was through the various channels of National Social Investment Programmes based on the existing social register of poor and vulnerable persons as recorded in the National Social Register.



Many poor and vulnerable persons were, however, not captured in the register to allow for effective distribution and access to palliatives in a manner that was consistent with COVID-19 protocols. On top of that, data obtained from the YDE Nigeria project shows that people's awareness of government programmes such as N-Power and CCT programmes were low and the proportion of persons that have benefitted from the programme are even lower. 28% of the respondents agree that they are aware of the N-Power programme while 19.34% of those who are aware said they had benefited. The situation is the same with the CCT programme as 39% are aware, but only 24% of those who are aware, had benefited.

x. The share of persons that have been captured in the National Social Register as of February 2021, only accounts for 31% of persons living below the poverty line. Through digital engagement, more young persons who bear the brunt of exclusion and poverty will be reached. Many youths who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic would only require meagre sums of money for capital to bounce back. Access to such loans/credit, however, is hard to come by. Empowering youths through access to finance, would therefore help create jobs and support existing efforts to achieve sustainable growth.

xi. Despite some cases of abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic and earlier, there is hardly the presence of police in the communities. The availability of dispute resolution mechanisms within the communities was also weak as 5 out of 10 respondents said they were not aware of such mechanisms.

xii. Evidence on land grabbing shows that 23% of the respondents agree that they experience issues of land grabbing in their communities. 66% of those who are affected by land grabbing are farmers, 25% are persons who engage in agricultural /farm related trade while others in other occupation account for 9%.

xiii. By gender distribution, male respondents are more exposed to the issue of land grabbing. Across age, younger persons are most exposed to the adverse effect of land grabbing. A sustainable approach of Environmental, Socio-Economic, Human Rights Impacts Assessment of land grabbing will help address issues of violence, youth exclusion and job creation.

xiv. Access to COVID-19 palliatives and spendings by people in communities is about 13%;

xv. 8 out of 10 youth in these communities have phones thereby, serving as a vital tool for digital engagement;

xvi. 5 out of 10 persons do not have a bank account. Access to finance/credit is vital to empower young people. Addressing the issue of financial exclusion (having a bank account) would be a useful start;

xvii. Although, 4 out of 10 persons have access to a computer, only 3 out of 10 persons can operate one; and

xviii. Despite the openings for Youth Engagement through digital means, the willingness to learn how to use a gadget for empowerment purpose is 37%. Building the capacity of youths to use digital gadgets (including their phones) for empowerment purpose would be useful.

xix. The priority area for the YDE Project, as determined from the data collected, identifies employment and Gender Responsive Public Service, as the major areas requiring intervention and engagement.



RECOMMENDATION

1. The issue of exclusion of PwDs must be addressed by expanding their access to job opportunities.
2. Deliberate efforts must be made to expand Social Investment Programmes for all unemployed or underemployed young people, irrespective of their sex, marital status, education level, ethnic origin, or other characteristics.
3. Gainful employment and Gender Responsive Public Service must be given at top priority at the national and sub-national levels.
3. Build the capacity of, and support, youth to engage in COVID-19 response coordination with other actors, access funding, and design and deliver programmes for empowerment purpose would be useful.
4. Pull together capacity-building resources and deliver them via digital platforms. Consider using local radio/flyers and low-resolution content on how to counter common misconceptions, rumours, and myths spread offline and online about COVID-19.
5. Fund youth-led organizations' COVID-19 mitigation initiatives, including PwD-led organizations and young women's collectives, and ensure that funding streams are reliable, transparent, sustained, and flexible.
6. Empowering youths through access to finance, would therefore help create jobs and support existing efforts to achieve sustainable growth.
7. Creative and motivational approaches should be adopted to close the financial inclusion gaps among youth.
8. A sustainable approach of Environmental, Socio-Economic, Human Rights Impacts Assessment of land grabbing will help address issues of violence, youth exclusion and job creation.
9. There must be special programming or considerations for the youth living in poor and excluded communities in the spirit of leaving no one behind.
10. Top priority must be given to effective Local Governance as a key contributing factor towards achieving robust Gender Responsive Public Service.



WHO WE ARE

act:onaid

ActionAid Nigeria is a social justice organisation working to eradicate poverty through gender equality and the redistribution of wealth and power. We apply a human rights-based approach to development. We mobilise the active agency of people to confront unequal power relations that exclude them or others from participating in decision-making and limits their access to and control of resources and opportunities. We also challenge the norms and practices that undermine women's rights and promote patriarchy in formal and informal spheres. These we believe will contribute to the realisation of social justice for all.



VISION

A just, equitable and sustainable world in which every person enjoys the right to a life of dignity, freedom from poverty and all forms of oppression.

MISSION

To achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication by working with people living in poverty and exclusion, their communities, people's organisations, activists, social movements and supporters.

VALUES

MUTUAL RESPECT

requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity

EQUITY AND JUSTICE

requiring us to ensure the realisation of our vision for everyone, irrespective of but not limited to gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, HIV status, disability, location and religion.

INTEGRITY

Integrity, requiring us to be honest, transparent and accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and our use of resources; and open in our judgements and communications with others.

SOLIDARITY WITH PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY AND EXCLUSION

being the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty, injustice, and gender inequality.

COURAGE OF CONVICTION

requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative - without fear of failure - in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty, injustice, and gender inequality.

INDEPENDENCE

from any religious or political party affiliation.

HUMILITY

recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty and injustice.

Photo Gallery



Photo Gallery



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Published by:
ActionAid Nigeria,
Plot 477, 41 Crescent,
Off Sa'adu Zungur Avenue
Gwarinpa Abuja.

P.M.B. 1890, Garki, Abuja, Nigeria.
info.nigeria@actionaid.org
www.nigeria.actionaid.org
Phone: +234(0)812888825-7
ISBN: 978-978-992-656-5

YDE In-Country Researcher:
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Funmilayo Oyefusi | Suwaiba Yakubu Jibrin
Adewale Adeduntan | Nihilola Ayanda

Graphics Design:
Joseph Augustine

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Youth Champions



YOUTH DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT (YDE NIGERIA)

PROJECT REPORT 2021

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