

AFRICAN CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP, STRATEGY & DEVELOPMENT (CENTRE LSD)

A Capacity Building Organisation



CENTRE LSD CAPABILITY STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The African Centre for Leadership, Strategy & Development (Centre LSD) is a leading national NGO and think tank in Nigeria registered in 2010 to build strategic leadership for sustainable development in Africa. (See www.centrelsd.org). The Centre's mission is to work with forces of positive change to empower citizens to transform society. The Centre carries out its programmes through research, capacity building, advocacy and campaigns built on the principles of catalytic partnership and rights-based approach. Youth, Women's rights and disability issues are mainstreamed in our programming. The Centre's work is built and organized around three pillars: Leadership, Strategy and Development.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMES

Centre LSD runs three leadership training programmes namely leadership school which runs for one year; Leadership Institute (one-week intensive programme) for middle level managers and Executive Leadership Course (one week intensive programme) for Chief Executives. The leadership training programmes focus on both leader development (expanding the capacity of individuals for effective leadership roles and processes) and leadership development (expansion of organizations' capacity to enact basic leadership tasks including setting direction, creating alignment and maintaining commitment). Over eight hundred professionals (868) have graduated from the Centre LSD leadership programmes.

STRATEGY PROGRAMMES

Centre LSD has worked extensively on issues of appropriate strategy. It has engaged issues of strategy including national development strategies (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and Vision 20:2020); Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Africa Agenda 2063; sectoral strategies and strategy for the development of the Niger Delta through policy dialogue series, policy briefs and media advocacy. The staff of the Centre have supported several organizations to develop strategy including developing a 4 year strategic plan for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (now UN Women); WaterAid Nigeria Strategy (2011-2015); ActionAid Nigeria Partnership Against Poverty Strategy; National Coalition on Women and AIDS (NAWOCA) 6 year strategic plan (2010-2016) and Ekiti State Development Strategy (2011-2015), the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) (2012-2016 and 2017-2021), the National Orientation Agency (NOA) etc.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Centre LSD implements development programmes across Nigeria from community level and state to national and international levels with the strategy of maintaining local-national-international linkage. The Centre's governance programmes are conceptualized to improve transparency and accountability and increase citizens' participation in governance especially in budget formulation and implementation. The Centre implements projects on enhancing citizens' participation in budgetary process at the national level and in Anambra, Bayelsa and Delta States. Specifically, the Centre's Budget advocacy project was conceptualized to increase the capacity of CSOs for effective engagement with Federal and State Governments through budget advocacy for participatory and right based budgeting. The focus was to analyze previous budgets and develop policy/advocacy briefs from identified gaps. The documents were then used to engage policy makers. The projects also built the capacity of legislators, legislative staff and CSOs on budget analysis, participatory budgeting, rights-based budgeting as well as effective budgetary oversight.

The Centre engages the electoral process with a view to promoting credible, free and fair elections. This is done through providing technical assistance to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and supporting INEC for a visionary strategy to conduct credible, free and fair elections. In addition, the Centre monitors the electoral process and observes elections. In the past, the Centre observed elections conducted in Anambra State, Delta State and across the country in 2010 and the 2011 general elections. The Centre also observed the staggered elections in Sokoto State, Kogi State, Adamawa State, Bayelsa State, Cross River State, Edo State and Ondo State in 2012, the 2015 general elections and the just concluded 2019 elections.

Since January, 2010, Centre LSD has been organizing policy dialogue series to examine the content of public policies and institutions that formulate and implement them with a view to examining the implementation and impact of the policies. More importantly, the policy dialogue is not only diagnostic of the policy problems but also suggest alternative approaches to dealing with the problems. Issues that have been dealt with include Political Succession, Development Strategy, Management of Public Enterprises, Africa Strategy 2063, Social Protection and formulation of long-term development plan. Proceedings from the Policy dialogue series have been published into books. In addition, Centre LSD serves as the secretariat of the Nigeria Resource Governance Group (NRGG), a consortium of 23 organizations and scholars across the six geo-political zones in Nigeria committed to resource and environmental governance. The group was formed to adopt comprehensive, holistic and programmatic approach to dealing with the challenges of resource governance in Nigeria through advocacy, campaigns, capacity building, research, monitoring and evaluation. The Centre successfully implemented a project on Transparency and Accountability in the Oil and Gas Sector and a project on strengthening civic engagement and advocacy for effective natural resource governance in Nigeria to strengthen citizens' voice for accountability and reforms in Nigeria's oil and gas and solid minerals sector. The specific objectives of the project on transparency and accountability in the oil and gas sector include among other things to monitor and advocate for the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill; monitor broad based groups to advocate for implementation of the recommendations of the subsidy report and other reports on the petroleum subsidy; undertake research into petroleum product pricing

in Nigeria and engage major agencies in the oil and gas sector, parliament and international actors to canvass for reform of the sector. The project on strengthening civic engagement and advocacy for effective natural resource governance has three clear objectives including; (a) to build greater synergy and opportunity for citizens group to engage issues of natural resource governance in Nigeria (b) to re-galvanize civil society groups to engage the process of legal and administrative framework for natural resource governance in Nigeria and (c) to examine the drive for non-oil-revenues, and how it will play out with existing solid minerals development law and possible sub-national governments interests in the mining sector.

The Centre's environment programme is focused on environmental health and climate change. The strategy is to promote community participation in environmental health through Community Led Total Sanitation (CTLS) and increase community's capacity for adaptation to the vagaries of climate change. The Centre also implemented a capacity building programme for Youth in the Niger Delta States of Delta, Edo, Rivers, Cross Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Imo, Ondo and Abia States. The goal of the project is to equip young persons with leadership skills to become change agents with capacity to generate socio-economic development in the Niger Delta. Specifically, the project supported the leadership aspirations of 80 target youths from communities of the nine states of the Niger Delta to develop exemplary skill sets and values in order to create positive role models and change agents for socio-economic development of the Niger Delta. In 2017, with funding from Ford Foundation, the Centre built the capacity of over 240 youth that are interested in politics to enable them participate in not just the 2019 elections but to be fully integrated and socialized into the governance process and mainstream politics in line with the requirements of the African youth charter. Centre LSD puts a lot of emphasis on result-based monitoring and evaluation. Centre LSD staff have supported several organizations in the design of result based monitoring and evaluation framework and conducted evaluation for several organisations including Presidential Amnesty Programme on the Niger Delta; HIV/AIDS response in Malawi; Women's Rights portfolio of the Heinrich Boell Stiftung in Nigeria; UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Nigeria and States Peer Review Mechanism for all states in Nigeria; DfID Coalitions for Change Project and Monitoring and Evaluation for Kaduna State through the DfID funded SPARC project.

In the implementation of the Voice to the People (V2P) project in Anambra State 2013 - 2015, Centre LSD was vested with three responsibilities-partners capacity strengthening, national level advocacy and ensuring national and State level linkages. The Centre strengthened the capacity of partners on the following: Proposal writing, Rights Based Approach to programming, project management and execution, report writing, election management and observation, voter and civic education and introduction to budget analysis. It mentored and hand held many V2P implementing partners. It also deployed rigorous advocacy approaches in engaging Anambra State indigenes at the national level including all Anambra influential citizens and legislators, who later interfaced with the executive at the home front. The V2P project was rated A++ by DFID.

Upon the Federal Government of Nigeria signing up and becoming a member of the Open Government Partnership in 2016, Centre LSD conceptualized the project "Promoting transparency and accountability in Nigeria through the implementation of the OGP"

supported by the MacArthur Foundation. The Centre played a major role in the formulation and design of the first National Action Plan (NAP) which is a guiding document for the implementation of the OGP in Nigeria as required by the OGP global. The project has invigorated the Open Alliance, which is the Civil Society arm of the OGP, organized public education across the six geo-political zones to popularize the partnership. The Centre is also championing the subnational advocacies, with 11 States across the Federation already signed up to the OGP. The Centre is the Civil Society Co-chair of the OGP in Nigeria and is playing a strategic role in the development of the second national Action Plan (NAP II), where service delivery and inclusion has been identified as major element to be included in the new plan.

The African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development (Centre LSD) in partnership with Christian Aid Nigeria implemented the Project “Promoting Peaceful Elections in Nigeria’ funded by the START Network. The Project was implemented in 6 Communities in 6 LGAs of Kaduna and Benue States. They are Mando, Sabon Tasha and Kachia in Kaduna state and Gboko, Oturkpo and Oju in Benue State. The Project is aimed at mitigating and reducing possible violence before, during and after the general election. With a target reach of 255, 000 beneficiaries, 36,000 Households, social media target reach of 2 million persons, the project worked closely with traditional and religious actors, community leaders, women and youth groups in these communities as well as relevant government agencies and actors who helped to sensitize the electorates and create awareness about the need to eschew violence and ensure peaceful conduct during the elections. The humanitarian and Emergency Response component of the project provided for the procurement and distribution of; Non-Food Items like Mattresses, Mats, Mosquito Nets, cooking utensils, sanitary wares, detergents and other basic items to IDPs in their camp in Kajuru, Kaduna. Rapid assessment was also done at community levels to identify possible causes of electoral violence in a bid to mitigating them. There were community outreaches and sensitization; Gender-Based Violence discourse as well as response to persons affected by violence through the distribution of Non-Food Items, with media personnel in both states trained on conflict sensitive reporting and how to report electoral and political issues without inciting conflict. The overall objectives of the project is the reduction of recurrent violent inter-communal, inter-religious and political conflicts for peaceful co-existence in the long run as well as the entrenchment of positive behavioural attitude and conduct by citizens and agencies alike.

Early 2019, the African Centre for Leadership, Strategy and Development (Centre LSD) got support from the Malala Fund to implement **Community Led Collective Action for Girls Education (C-CAGE) project** conceptualized to address the root causes of barriers to girl child education in Adamawa state. The goal of the project is to increase the rate of girl child enrolment, retention and completion in public primary and secondary schools in Numan, Song and Maiha Local Government Areas of Adamawa state, Nigeria. Several interventions by the Government and Development partners have made considerable progress in addressing the issues of girl child education and putting out-of-school children back to school. But most of these interventions were focused on providing incentives - school feeding, uniform and cash transfers to low income households. The interventions centered on basic education, which led to significant increase in primary school enrolment. No intervention has seriously focused on a community-led approach that creates an intrinsic desire for families and communities to want education for their female children. This underscores the place of the Centre LSD C-CAGE project.

In 2020, Centre LSD's work on the deconstruction of the concept of masculinity was expanded to include engaging men to addressing the issues of gender-based violence in the country, and the gender gap in the political process in Nigeria. The Centre's collaboration with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) with the support of USAID was a fillip to advancing the work. Our assignment amongst partners in the Civil Society cohort was clear - "Engage Male allies for Improved Participation of Women in Politics", which was a component of a broader project, **Supporting Advancement of Gender Equality (SAGE)**. As a masculinity partner, Centre LSD recruited male allies made up of traditional and religious leaders, and leaders of Civil Society Organizations to help engage and advance the advocacy on the issue of women participation and representation in politics in Nigeria. Select legislators known as NASS Reformers that Centre LSD has worked with in the past were also brought to the fold. Their work is to push for legislative reforms by setting agenda for progressive laws; initiating progressive laws and ensuring that anti-people laws are not passed in the National Assembly. The involvement of the NASS Reformers group was paramount to forestall the event of a previous voting by the National Assembly members in the last constitution review by the 8th Assembly, where in July 2017, the members of the Senate voted against the proposal to alter the Constitution to provide for 35 percent affirmative action for women in federal and state cabinets. Report of the voting at the time, showed that only a total of 49 of the 96 senators present during the electronic voting on the bill to further amend the 1999 Constitution supported the proposal. The need therefore to involve the reformers who are basically male in the SAGE intervention, was thus key.

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

Centre LSD financial systems and procedure are extremely well developed and complies with internationally recognized accounting standards. The organization's finance and admin department is staffed with highly qualified professionals who manage our contracts, grants and co-operative agreements. Centre LSD donor base includes the UK Department for International Development (DfID), Christian Aid, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through Pact Nigeria, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Friederich Ebert Stiftung and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, IBP Spark, Malala Fund, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, Cordaid and Partnership Initiative in the Niger Delta (PIND). **The Centre's DUNS number is 850519044**

A CAPACITY BUILDING ORGANISATION

Since its establishment in 2010, Centre LSD has grown to become a leading capacity building organisation in Nigeria training people in government, private sector and civil society.

BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

Centre LSD has graduated 868 persons from its leadership programmes. The Centre LSD Leadership programme is designed for people who want to become leaders and be equipped with leadership skills for transformation of organisations and society. It provides students with tools and ways to have vision for leadership and become better leaders. Other training programmes conducted by centre LSD include Strategic Management, board governance, resource mobilisation and fund raising and programme capacity for project management, rights-based approach, report writing, High Impact Management, Gender, Monitoring and

Evaluation. Organisations that have benefited from the training programmes include ActionAid Nigeria, Hayat Foundation, Christian Aid, IPAS, etc. Centre LSD has also supported many organisations to develop strategic plans including UN Women, ActionAid, Ken Nnamani Centre for Leadership and Development, Christian Aid, CLEEN Foundation, Community Life Project (CLP), Ibadan School of Government and Public Policy, The Electoral institute (TEI), Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Kiisi Trust Fund, League of Women Voters in Nigeria, Tearfund and Water Aid.

ADVOCACY AND COALITION BUILDING

Centre LSD is a leading advocacy organisation in Nigeria. Centre LSD has trained many organisations on advocacy with special focus on Advocacy and Campaigns, Political Smart Advocacy, Disruptive Advocacy and Political Economy Analysis. Organisations that have benefited include Environmental Rights Action (ERA), Christian Aid, Civil Rights Concern (CRC), Justice Development and Peace Commission(JDPC) in Onitsha, Awka and Nnewi, Development Practice etc. The Centre has also led many advocacies in the country including advocacy for credible, free and fair elections; social protection, open governance, citizen participation in politics, education of the girl child, transparency in the oil and gas sector and campaigns on - #DoMiningRight and to end Violence Against Women, healthy environment in the Nigeria Delta, against gas flaring and against open defaecation.

Our advocacy approach recognises that the problem in Nigeria with regards to policy choices goes beyond the absence of ‘best practice’, capacity or evidence-based advocacy. There is dysfunction in the system of public administration with widespread corruption and patronage that makes advocacy to be ignored or ineffective.

However, our long years of experience doing advocacy in Nigeria indicates that there are certain factors which contribute to success including consistency and focus; timing of the advocacy actions; messaging that resonates with the people; identification of champions in all sectors (multi-stakeholder engagement); constructive engagement with government; leadership of the advocacy group; secretariat dynamism; passion, interest and funding.

Our approach to advocacy is therefore deliberately politically smart, pragmatic, flexible and adaptable building on long years of trusted relationship in the public sector. It is characterised by the following:

- Bottom up with active engagement of communities at the local government level with linkages to the state and federal governments.
- Identification of windows of opportunity from champions of change in government
- Building external pressure utilising conventional and social media
- Support to initiatives by government agencies that are in accord with our vision for change.

The Centre has networked and partnered with several organisations. It belongs to several networks in Nigeria including Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA), Citizens Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR), Nigeria Social Forum (NSF) and National Coalition on Gas Flaring and Oil Spills in the Niger Delta (NACGOND). It serves as the coordinating secretariat on CSO Think Thank on National Development Plan, Network of Men Leaders to end Violence Against Women and Nigeria Resource Governance Group (NRGG).

POLICY AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

There has been increasing threat and pressure on Civil Society across the globe, with persistent restrictions on freedoms, registrations, funding, operations, etc. These threats are significantly leading to dwindling space for civic engagement as well as shrinking the advocacy roles of civil society. To contribute to the campaigns against the further shrinkage of the civic space, the African Centre for Leadership Strategy and Development has been playing critical roles in Nigeria. The Centre since 2016 have been persistent in her engagements/interventions on issues of civic space. Our main aim is to to protect, respect, strengthen, expand and recover civil society space in Nigeria.

One of our core capabilities in the intervention around civic space is our global networking skills. In other to contribute effectively to the protection and expansion of the civic space in Nigeria, the Centre has been in partnership since 2016, with Innovation for Change (I4C), a global initiative aimed at establishing online and physical centers for the protection of civic space globally. I4C has regional centers in East Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, Latin America & the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and Africa. And Centre LSD belongs to the I4C-Africa (Hub Afrique); where she sat at the board from 2017-2019. Part of Centre LSD's responsibility were to design programmes, campaigns and trainings for member countries.

As an active member of the I4C- Africa, Centre LSD over the years deepened her ability to mobilize CSOs globally on civic space interventions. Centre LSD also attends the annual Campaign, a conference made of representatives from over 100+ countries of the world. At this conference, people and organisations meet to connect and exchange ideas, share their challenges, debate the challenges and create solutions that will shape tomorrow, for specific countries and continents. At this annual conference, Centre LSD gets the opportunity to share her interventions on civic space in Nigeria and support the design of similar campaigns for other countries. Centre LSD also has vast competence in mobilizing CSOs nationally on civic space. This greatly played out in her campaign against the anti-Civil Society bill, known as NGO bill in 2017.

Some Centre LSD's key achievements on Civic Space Intervention during the NGO Bill are outline below:

- ✚ **Increased knowledge among stakeholders on the NGO Bill:** Centre LSD had a massive campaign against the NGO bill. This campaign started weeks before the public hearing. Together with the Centre LSD and I4C media team, various social media platforms were fed with updates, news, against the NGO Bill. Most e-fliers used by Centre LSD for this campaign were developed by our I4C partners in South Africa.
- ✚ **Deepened Collaboration among CSOs on the Nigeria NGO Bill:** Centre LSD organized a CSO Roundtable on the NGO Bill to galvanise CSOs on a Joint CSO MOU for the December 7th, 2017 public hearing.
- ✚ **Massive Mobilization of CSOs on the NGO Bill and the Public hearing:** The Centre successfully mobilized CSOs from within and outside Abuja to the public hearing and presented the Abuja CSO joint MOU on the bill. Centre LSD also worked with non-state actors from human right commission, former parliamentarians, religious leaders (CAN, FOMWAN) traditional leaders, etc during this campaign.

The existence, survival and sustainability of many civil society organizations (CSOs) now depends on innovative responses and the Centre is continuously working on various innovations to protect the shrinking Civic Space in Nigeria.

COUNTERING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Centre LSD supports the effort of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons to achieve their objectives by building the capacity of law enforcement agents especially the Police to improve their understanding of their roles and responsibilities on laws that prohibit human trafficking, including the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, and the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act, 2015. The Centre also works with faith and traditional leaders in local communities by establishing Networks of Men Leaders to End Violence Against Women and Girls. The networks, which have community clan heads as patrons, work to address issues of Gender-Based Violence and human trafficking at community levels. Centre LSD has established community network of men leaders across the country.

SSECTOR STRENGTHENING AND ADCOCACY

Promoting citizens' advocacy is one approach used by Centre LSD to increase citizen participation in governance and development. This has become an important method of holding state and non-state actors accountable for the welfare of the Nigerian citizens. To amplify citizen's voices and strengthen their demand for a more efficient budgetary allocation, the Centre analyzes the Nigeria annual budget and together with other CSO actors represent Nigerians in different budgetary processes including public hearing. Centre LSD's analysis of the budget is mainly in 4 sectors of agriculture, Health, education and infrastructure. Apart from engaging decision makers with these analyses, the Centre also uses it as a tool for media engagements. Centre LSD is currently the secretariat of the National Budget Group, with key NGOs from different sectors as members. Members of this group engage sector specific budget areas and sectors as it relates to the Nigeria budget and this becomes CSOs position on the budget.

Centre LSD's role in the passage of the Local Government Autonomy bill is one of our landmark achievements. Centre LSD's key strength of strengthening the capacity of CSOs and mobilizing them on a CSO single position again played out in the campaign for the passage of the LG autonomy bill. The Centre during this mobilization, hosted CSOs from the 6 geopolitical zones of Nigeria on the LG bill and those participants coordinated the state level advocacy on the passage of the LG autonomy bill in Nigeria.

In 2019, the Nigerian government began the process of the design of a long-term development plan that will guide the economy in at least the next 10 years. Again, CSO actors identified the Centre to be the key driver of CSO contributions to the national development plan. As a result of this, the Centre organized a policy dialogue on the development plan, one of the key outcome of the meeting was a CSO committee, set up to drive the process of galvanizing CSOs and harvest their inputs into the new development plan. So far, the committee has successfully developed a CSO advocacy brief to be jointly used by CSOs to engage relevant stakeholders. The CSO committee has met with the National Assembly members as well as the Secretariat leading the process in the ministry of Finance. The CSO committee members were scheduled to meet with the minister of Finance before the Covid-19 lockdown.

In addition, the Centre has been engaging in training and advocacy in several sectors including advocacy for Citizen Participation (e.g in Budget; Local Governance, Long Term Development Plan; Advocacy for Gender Equality/Women Empowerment, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Early and Forced Marriage; Advocacy for Open Governance; Advocacy for Girl Child Education; Advocacy for Free, Fair and Credible Elections; Advocacy for Transparency and Accountability in the Oil and Gas Sector ; Advocacy for Healthy Environment in the Niger Delta and Advocacy for Do Mining Right.