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NIGERIA ANNUAL REPORT 2023

In 2023 Accountability Lab Nigeria made significant strides in advancing accountability in the country. We strengthened collaborative efforts with stakeholders, built power for citizens in local communities, and expanded our reach to enhance accountability in governance.

The Lab achieved this through advocacy visits, stakeholder engagement, maximising the traditional and new media, workshops, and training. We're proud to share the impact of our work, showcasing innovative projects and dedicated individuals driving positive change.



Shifting norms to ensure that integrity becomes the expected behavior within societies.



Influencing policies, processes and practices through growing coalitions and advocating for change.



Equipping reformers - inside and outside government - with the knowledge and tools to push for better governance.



INTEGRITY ICON

In 2023, we pushed hard to garner nominations of honest government officials from all regions of the country, and recorded; 23.1% from the North East, 18.6% from the North Central, 18.4% South-South, 16.3% South-West, 7.4 South-East and 16.1% from the North West. We also had 3 Integrity Icons from the health sector and one each from procurement and education. By prioritising gender inclusion, three of the five integrity icons awarded were women. 2023's campaign has achieved the highest number of nominations due to our improved strategic approach.

NUMBERS OF INTEGRITY ICON



2,758

votes



2,628

nominations



30

volunteers



14

media mentions



451,157

social media reach

OUR WINNERS

1. Dr. Lois Akut, a dedicated medical doctor at Barau Dikko Teaching Hospital, Kaduna;
2. Catherine Ogunjebi, Director of Legal Services at the Ondo State Contributory Health Commission;
3. Samuel Ogundare's journey from a civil engineer to Director in the Ekiti State Bureau of Public Procurement;
4. Dean of Student Affairs at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Tombia, Seiyefa Wifi Worthy;
5. Mrs Nkwuda Ogechukwu, a dedicated teacher at the Ebonyi State Secondary Education Board





CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

- The 2023 finalists joined the Integrity Icon network. Mrs. Catherine Ogunjebi, head of legal services for the Ondo State Contributory Health Commission, emerged as the 2023 People's Icon.
- "The recognition and honour bestowed upon me serve as a powerful encouragement to reinforce and uphold my values of integrity and accountability persistently. It reinforces my commitment to embody these principles, inspiring positive change within myself and the community." —Lois Akut, 2023 Integrity Icon.
- The Integrity Icon campaign reached over 20 million people through traditional and social media platforms; Improved skills and knowledge for the Integrity Icons network were developed through the IIL, and three integrity hubs were established in critical regions: North Central, the North East, and the South-South, serving as platforms for collective action towards promoting integrity and accountability. Through grassroots advocacy, outreach, and engagement activities, 3,849 individuals were reached and motivated, encouraging participation in initiatives promoting ethical conduct;

Participating in the event on integrity and accountability in Nigeria was truly transformative. The diverse ideas generated are seeds of positive change, and I'm inspired to cultivate them into actions for a more accountable and transparent society.

– Izobo Oyeronke, 2020 Integrity Icon



IMPACT

- Through radio show awareness campaigns, AL has contributed to over 57% of host community members becoming aware of the provisions of the PIA on HCDF, thereby paving the way for acceptance of HCDF and prompting their demand for its establishment.
- By working with the community through the instrumentality of the Community Justice Team, AL increased the pressure that led to the establishment of trust in Ibeno, Mbo, and Esit Eket communities in Akwa Ibom, Umuechem, Joinkrama, and Egi in Rivers and Kwale in Delta State.
- Leveraging the knowledge and experience gathered while implementing the Natural Resource Governance project, AL participated in and contributed to the review process for more impactful NUPRC regulations on the Host Communities Development Trust Fund.

CIVIC ACTION TEAMS

We conducted community entry visits to nine oil-producing communities: Upenekang, Uquo, Unyenge, Utagba-ogbe, Imodje, Uzere, Joinkaram, Unuechem, and Egi in the Delta, Akwa Ibom, and Rivers States, engaging community leaders on the provisions of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), the host community responsibilities, and responses by oil companies to establishing the Host Community Development Trust Fund (HCDF). We secured support from traditional rulers, chiefs, and elders in the nine communities, who helped us identify 52 (74% male and 26% female) Community Frontline Activists (CFAs).

CIVACTS BY NUMBERS IN 2023





We also organised workshops separately for the 9 Community Justice Teams, comprising the 52 CFAs. Before the workshops, 97% of participants disagreed with the PIA and its provisions for the HCDF. The workshop served as a comprehensive immersion into priority areas such as the establishment and operations of the HCDF, notably the 3% of their annual operating costs for oil companies, forming the basis of the HCDF for their community development. 100% of the participants revealed the training was relevant to them.

We also aired three radio shows (Quest FM 93.1, TangSio FM 102.7, Comfort FM 95.1, and Treasure FM 98.5) in Akwa Ibom, Rivers, and Delta states titled "Voices from the Communities: Rebuilding Back Better." These shows have increased awareness, understanding, and engagement around the HCDF. TangSio is aired in the local dialect Ibibio in Akwa Ibom State to connect directly with locals. The show has featured 126 guests (64% male and 36% female) and has a cumulative audience of 7.5 million. It has also featured 162 call-ins and over 56 SMSes from citizens on topics around the PIA and the HCDF. While most phone-in calls revolved around complaints, this revealed the trust deficit between citizens, oil companies, and the government in implementing the PIA.

The radio program has proven highly beneficial to our community by effectively informing our residents about the Petroleum Industry Act in general, educating them on their specific roles, responsibilities, and the benefits of the PIA, and enlightening them on the Host Community Development Trust Fund. Reverse was the case before the program began, as most of our community members had little to no understanding of the PIA as a whole.

- Martins Asukpa, Ibeno community member, Akwa-Ibom state



Impact

- We connected with procurement officers from government entities, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), media representatives, and private sector organisations. We provided hands-on training to 147 procurement officers from government agencies in Ekiti, Plateau, and Edo states. This training enhanced their ability to enter data into the Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) portals, ensuring they function optimally and have reliable and up-to-date data;
- We also equipped 61 CSOs and media representatives with essential skills to access, analyse, and use open contracting data for tracking and advocacy. They can now monitor government projects and advocate for improvements. We developed joint action plans for each state to enhance public procurement processes and foster stakeholder collaboration.

ANTI-CORRUPTION INNOVATION PROJECT

In partnership with the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP) and AL Nigeria, UNDP Nigeria launched a programme to utilise technology and innovation to improve transparency in procurement data across [Edo](#), [Ekiti](#), and [Plateau](#) states. The primary objectives were to recognise areas of corruption risk, facilitate informed decision-making processes, and promote civic engagement to enhance the quality of service delivery. These states have actively worked to boost transparency and accountability in their procurement processes using technology-driven open contracting and monitoring dashboards. This effort has promoted collaboration among government agencies, anti-corruption entities, the private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders. Ultimately, this collaboration has improved governance and enhanced service delivery through technological innovation. The state-level Open Contracting Digital Portals have recorded about 2945 (Ekiti 1512, Edo 993, Plateau 440) procurement data points. During the year, we executed a comprehensive training programme spanning four days across Plateau, Edo, and Ekiti States. The objective was to promote open contracting and equip relevant stakeholders with the skills and knowledge to effectively utilise open contracting mechanisms for improved data usage and enhanced service delivery. Representatives from government agencies, contractors, local community members, and oil company delegates also convened for a [stakeholders' forum](#). The purpose was to review and discuss the reports of the monitoring exercise conducted by monitors and to formulate solutions collaboratively.

IMPACT BY NUMBERS

147

procurement officers

61

CSOs and journalists

14

monitors

55

projects monitored

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

- Praise Akobo spearheaded Project BALE to create an inclusive society for children and young adults with disabilities in the NorthBank community of Makurdi, Benue State. The initiative has collected 10,000 plastic bottles through community engagement and transformed over 100 plastic waste bottles into creative pieces, promoting environmental conservation and sustainability awareness. With the storytelling skills she acquired during the training, her online conversations reached over 1,500 people, raising awareness of disability inclusion through animal-assisted therapy and educational resource provision in English and native languages, benefiting over 1,000 people, and teaching over 50 rural youths using these resources. During her visit to the US as a Mandela Washington Fellow, Project BALE made significant strides in advocacy, influence, and community engagement through strategic partnerships with the Dogalov Human Support Initiative and Veterinary Teaching Hospital. Additionally, visits to disability organisations and Animal Adoption Centers have further contributed to these advancements. Her work has resulted in a remarkable 30% improvement in raising the awareness of children with disabilities.

"As a 2023 Accountapreneur, I acquired valuable Knowledge and wisdom to drive the process of my community project. This encompassed practical knowledge in project management, report writing, and fundraising techniques. Moreover, I've had the opportunity to impart this knowledge to other NGOs, particularly startups and sustainable development advocates. Since participating in the program, our visibility has increased, we've received positive feedback from potential donors, and we've strengthened our team significantly." - Praise Akobo, Accountapreneur

- Moshood Abiola Sanni partnered with the Irede Foundation to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs) and raise funds for artificial limbs for amputees. He also participated in other enlightening programs, e.g., Out on a Limb 2023-Walk for Inclusion in Alimosho, Lagos, Moshood's efforts impacted over 500 PWDs, enlightening them on their rights as outlined in the Disability Act and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Through effective advocacy, Lagos State now offers PWDs free health services under the "Ilera-Eko Health Policy," covering minor operations and health-related costs. Despite this progress, many PWDs remain unaware of the two designated seats for PWDs on newly introduced BRT buses in Lagos State, often occupied by those without disabilities. Moshood mediated between bus drivers and ticket operators, advocating for PWDs' access using the National Association of Persons with Physical Disabilities membership card. Discussions are ongoing on creating a universal smart card for PWDs to access social services. Additionally, Moshood facilitated an empowerment programme through the National Association of People with Physical Disabilities (NAPWPD) in collaboration with MTN Nigeria during the 21-day Y'ello Care campaign, reaching over 200 PWDs in Alimosho, LGA, in Lagos State.

"The Accountability Incubator programme has been instrumental in transforming my organisation. Before joining the incubator, I lacked clarity on serving my community. As a social enterprise focused on supporting employability for people with disabilities, securing funds was a significant challenge. After completing the programme, I feel more empowered. I've successfully applied the skills acquired during the training to secure grants and now possess improved capabilities in preparing proposals and reports. This newfound knowledge has been invaluable, significantly propelling my organisation's growth and impact." - Moshood Abiola Sanni, Accountpreneur

- "As a past participant in the 2022 Innovation Lab workshop, my engagement has led to a profound transformation in my comprehension of transparency and accountability challenges within the Bureau of Public Service Reforms. The insights from the workshop have enriched my knowledge and ignited actionable initiatives within our organisation. A significant outcome has been the intensified effort to operationalise the National Ethics and Integrity Policy (NEIP) and Code of Conduct Act across various Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). This strategic prioritisation was prompted by the impactful communique crafted during the workshop, driving the Bureau to focus on several critical areas. Firstly, there is a discernible increase in awareness surrounding transparency and accountability in public institutions, evident in the prominence of these discussions and initiatives during our quarterly MDA meetings.

Furthermore, the workshop's influence has extended to sensitising stakeholders on the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs). Through targeted awareness campaigns and advocacy, we are actively working to ensure inclusivity and equal opportunities for all members of society. This transformative impact is palpable in the evolving organisational culture of the Bureau, marked by a renewed commitment to integrity, heightened dedication to duties, and a sense of patriotism among my colleagues." - Ekpe Egbe - Deputy Director, BPSR

ADVOCACY AND POLICY

We spearheaded impactful advocacy campaigns and policy engagements aimed at promoting gender equality and upholding data and digital rights. Through extensive research and analysis, our team identified critical areas for intervention and worked diligently to influence policy shifts and increase stakeholder awareness.

One notable advocacy effort involved visiting the Honourable Minister of Defence, Mohammed Badaru Abubakar. During this visit, we advocated for implementing the National Gender Policy 2021, emphasizing the importance of gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive policies. Additionally, we highlighted the critical need to safeguard digital rights to prevent security agencies from infringing on citizens' fundamental rights. Another significant engagement was our visit to the Director General (DG) of the National Orientation Agency (NOA). Our discussion focused on increasing awareness of gender equality and dismantling barriers hindering women's empowerment and social inclusion. We emphasized the importance of the NOA's role in implementing the revised National Gender Policy and explored strategies to create an environment enabling women to thrive in Nigeria. Other visits and strategic advocacy meetings include; the [National Data Protection Commission](#), Nigerian Communication Commission, Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, etc. In another effort to entrench our commitment to promoting digital rights, freedom of speech, and preserving an open civic space in Nigeria, we launched a new album titled "[This is the Truth; Cyber Culture](#)." This album serves as an impassioned expression of our advocacy efforts, using music as a powerful tool for social change. Through the "This is the Truth; Cyber Culture" album, we amplified our advocacy messages and reached over 35,000 people, fostering greater awareness and engagement on digital rights and civic participation issues. By harnessing the power of music, we are driving forward our mission to create a more inclusive and equitable society in Nigeria.

One significant aspect of our research involved developing four policy briefs to address the country's critical concerns about surveillance and censorship. These briefs were meticulously crafted and disseminated to 75 government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and private sector entities. The first policy brief, titled "[Strengthening Data Protection: Ensuring Privacy and Security for Nigerian Citizens](#)," analyzed Nigeria's existing data protection framework and identified potential loopholes that could lead to the abuse of citizens' data privacy rights. It proposed practical solutions and recommendations to guide policymakers in rectifying these challenges.

The second brief, "[Towards the Implementation of Data Protection Measures to Safeguard Against Surveillance Abuse in Nigeria](#)," focused on preventing surveillance abuse and protecting citizens' rights by leveraging Nigeria's data protection regime. It provided evidence on using mass surveillance tools in the country and outlined recommendations for reinforcing enforcement mechanisms and promoting citizen awareness. The third brief, "[Combating Online Censorship - Protecting Access to Information in Nigeria](#)," highlighted the surge in online censorship incidents and emphasized the need for a collaborative approach to address this issue. It compared local legal frameworks with international standards and proposed best practices for combating online censorship. Lastly, the fourth brief, "[Enhancing Accountability in Surveillance Practices: A Call for Judicial and Public Oversight in Nigeria](#)," underscored establishing clear guidelines and oversight mechanisms to regulate surveillance practices. It advocated for comprehensive frameworks to protect individual rights and ensure thorough oversight of surveillance activities.

In addition to our research efforts, Accountability Lab Nigeria spearheaded several advocacy campaigns directed at [the National Data Protection Commission \(NDPC\)](#), the Department of State Services (DSS), the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), and the Minister of Defence focused on digital rights and surveillance reform. These campaigns aimed to raise awareness, engage stakeholders, and drive policy change in critical areas.

Furthermore, as part of our advocacy outputs, we developed and disseminated public education materials, including jingles aired in Lagos and Abuja, reaching an audience of over 48 million. These materials informed the public about the importance of digital rights principles such as privacy, freedom of expression, and online safety, contributing to a more informed and digitally literate society. These advocacy campaigns and policy engagements have yielded tangible results, contributing to increased awareness of gender equality and digital rights. Our efforts pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable society in Nigeria.



BUDGET



7

grants



\$374,864

total budget 2022



9

staff



39

volunteers
and interns



1,032

participants

