

The Youth Voice

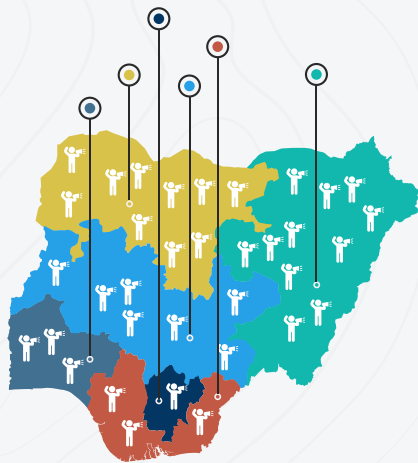
Updates from the Youth-led Electoral Reform Project



August 2024 | Volume 2

YERP_Naija Establishes Youth Advocacy Structures in all Six Regions.

To sustain grassroots engagement, the YERP_Naija consortium partners established a robust youth advocacy structure across the six geo-political zones. This network of youth advocates will be popularizing youth-focused electoral reform recommendations, engaging their legislators at the constituency level in one-on-one advocacy meetings. This effort aims at building ground swell support for youth electoral reform recommendations.



400+
Grassroot
Mobilizers

36
States and
the **FCT**

6
Geo-political
zones

Spotlight on CATYCOI: *See page 2*

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About YERP_Naija

Youth Electoral Reform Project (YERP_Naija) aims to empower Nigerian youths to build consensus on priority electoral reform recommendations and strategically advocate for their enactment.

The YERP_Naija project bring together dynamic youth-focused Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and activists from Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. The goal is to empower young Nigerians to engage actively in the electoral and political processes. Through dedicated advocacy, comprehensive education, and strategic collaborations, we strive to amplify youth voices and ensure their interests are integral to electoral reforms.



Inspiration Hub

The Young Leader Shaping Nigeria's Future

Rukayat Motunrayo Shittu, 26, is the youngest member of the Kwara State House of Assembly. Her journey from journalism to politics showcases increasing youth empowerment, resilience, and the power of digital media.

The 2018 Not Too Young To Run law lowered age requirements for elective posts, enabling Rukayat Shittu, 26, to win a seat in the Kwara State House of Assembly. Rukayat would not have been able to contest for elections in 2023, if the Not Too Young To Run law did not reduce age qualifications for running for State House of Assembly from 30 years to 25 years. Rukayat's success inspires young Nigerians to support electoral reform and contest elections. Rukayat's success also shows that with legislative support and commitment in amending the Constitution and Electoral Act to accommodate youth, more youth will participate as voters and candidates in our elections. The ongoing constitutional and Electoral Act amendment process provides another unique opportunity for youth, legislators and the President to make history together by passing amendments that will make our elections more credible and inclusive.

YERP_Naija consortium members include:

● **North-West:**
*JESZ Development
Foundation*

● **South-South:**
*Whillz Trust
Foundation (WTF)*

● **North-Central
& National Partner:**
*Kimpact Development
Initiative (KDI)*

● **South-East:**
*Catch Them Young
Initiative (CATYCOI)*

● **South-West:**
*The New Generation
Girls and Women
Development Initiative
(NIGAWD)*

● **North-East:**
*Child Protection and
Peer Learning Initiative
(CPPLI)*

Read More ↗

#NaijaYouthElectoralDemands

Spotlight on CATYCOI: Strengthening South-East Youth Electoral Reform Advocacy

Pre-Advocacy Engagement with Senator Victor Umeh

Building on existing relationships, Nonso Orakwe, YERP_Naija South East Coordinator connected with Senator Victor Umeh during a book launch event. The conversation, rooted in their shared community ties, focused on updates about the Youth Electoral Reform Project (YERP). Senator Umeh, a long-standing youth ally, reaffirmed his support and commitment to facilitating further high-level meetings with other legislators, ensuring that the Southeast youth's concerns remain front and center in legislative discussions.



L-R Nonso Orakwe, YERP_Naija South East coordinator at the pre-advocacy engagement with Sen. Victor Umeh, Senator representing Anambra Central Senatorial District

Spotlight on JDEV Foundation: Mobilizing Youth for Electoral Reform in the North-West

Youth Voices Amplified: JDEV Foundation's Strategic Engagement in Kebbi State

In a continued effort to build momentum and public demand for electoral reform, the JDEV Foundation team in Kebbi State hosted a group discussion with key student leaders in Birnin Kebbi. Chaired by Hauwa Aliyu Musa, the Kebbi State Coordinator, the meeting took place at the Office of the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN) Kebbi State Chapter.

Participants included student union leaders from Federal University Birnin-Kebbi, Waziri Umaru Federal Polytechnic, College of Nursing Science, Kebbi State Students Association (KESSA), National Union of Kebbi State Students (NUKESS), Coalition of Northern Group Students wing (CNG), and NYCN Kebbi State Chapter.

The discussion centered on popularizing the priority reform recommendations and galvanizing support for the Youth Electoral Reform project. JDEV has been actively engaging its youth networks and allies through WhatsApp groups, letters, and social media to keep them informed about the electoral reform process, ensuring that the voices of young Nigerians continue to drive this critical national dialogue.

Building Strategic Alliances for Youth-Led Electoral Reforms

In a strategic move to amplify the impact of the Youth Electoral Reforms Project in Nigeria's Northwest zone, the JDEV team identified a key ally—Dr. Jibril Lawal Tafida, Special Adviser to the Senate President on Diaspora and NGOs. Recognizing his influence and access to crucial electoral committee members, the team held a private meeting with Dr. Tafida to seek his support and introduce him to the youth's priority recommendations for electoral reform.

Dr. Tafida expressed a keen interest in the project and demonstrated his commitment by agreeing to an official meeting with the JDEV team. His support could be pivotal in securing meetings with key targets essential for driving the reforms forward, marking a significant step toward achieving the project's objectives.



L-R Zailani Musa and the other YERP_Naija North West Coordinators during an advocacy visit to Dr. Lawal Tafida Special Adviser to the Senate President on Diaspora and NGOs.

Spotlight on WTF:

WTF Advocates for Increased Citizen's Participation in Electoral Processes.

Whillz Trust Foundation (WTF), the South-South YERP_Naija consortium member participated at the South-South Zonal Legislative Interactive Session (ZLIS) organized by the Joint National Assembly Committee on Electoral Matters, UNWomen Nigeria and the Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI). This citizen-legislative interactive session aimed to give opportunity to women advocacy groups to interact with the electoral reform committee on the amendment of the 2022 Electoral Act, WTF presented a comprehensive memorandum on behalf of the YERP_Naija team to the Joint National Assembly Committee on Electoral Matters. The recommendations included constitutional amendments and electoral reforms aimed at enhancing the electoral system's fairness,

particularly for women. This proactive engagement reflects WTF's commitment to ensuring that electoral reforms are inclusive and that women have a stronger voice in Nigeria's political landscape.



L-R Tare Maureen, YERP_Naija South South Coordinator with Sen. Sharafadeen Abiodun Alli, Chairman Senate Committee on Electoral matters at the South-South ZLIS

National Youth Electoral Reform Priorities

Spotlight on Youth Election Reform: A Call for Integrity in INEC Appointments

As we continue to champion democratic values in Nigeria, the youth have come together to propose critical reforms aimed at strengthening our electoral process. Among the Top Five Youth Election Reform Priorities, one stands out for its potential to restore public trust in the electoral system—the call for a Special Selection Committee for INEC Appointments.

Top 5 Youth Election Reform Priorities in Nigeria *Fostering a More Transparent, Inclusive, and Accountable Electoral System.*



Establishment of an Electoral Offences Commission

Create an independent body to prosecute electoral offenders and uphold election integrity.



Post-Election Petition Resolutions

Conclude all post-election disputes before inauguration to ensure stability and fairness.



Timely Transmission of Election Results

Implement electronic transmission of election results from all levels of collation to a central place.



INEC Leadership Selection Process Reform

Create an independent selection committee to nominate INEC leadership to the National Assembly to remove political influence.



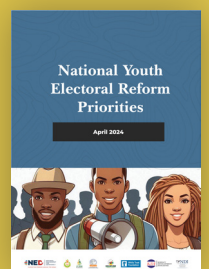
Interpretation of Continuous Voter Registration Provision

Interpret the word continuous in section 10 of the Electoral Act 2022 to allow for CVR, making it easier for all-round voters registration.

Resources and further reading:

[National Youth Electoral Reform Priorities](#)

Scan to Download Document



Reforming INEC Appointments for Transparency

Nigerian youth are advocating for the creation of a Special Selection Committee, composed of non-partisan individuals of impeccable character, to take over the appointment of the Chairman, National Commissioners, and Resident Electoral Commissioners of the INEC. This proposal is not just about changing who appoints these officials but about ensuring that those who hold these critical positions are chosen through a process that is transparent, inclusive, and free from political influence.

Why Is This Important?

The current appointment process, where the President has the power to select INEC officials, has led to concerns about partisanship and a loss of public confidence in the commission's ability to conduct free and fair elections. By transferring this power to a special committee, we can ensure that those who oversee our elections are truly independent and capable of delivering credible results.

The Impact: Restoring Public Confidence

If enacted, this reform will be a significant step towards rebuilding trust in Nigeria's electoral process. It addresses the root causes of public skepticism and sets the stage for elections that reflect the true will of the people.

Creating a Platform for Citizen-Legislative Dialogue: KDI Partners with Joint National Assembly Committee on Electoral Matters

In the ongoing quest for a more inclusive and effective electoral system in Nigeria, the Youth Electoral Reform Project (YERP_Naija), led by KDI, is making significant strides. Recently, KDI forged a strategic partnership with the Joint National Assembly Committee on Electoral Matters and UN Women Nigeria to create a much-needed platform for citizen-legislative dialogue. This collaboration culminated in a 2-day South-South Zonal Legislative Interactive Session (ZLIS) with the powerful theme: "Legislation, Women, and Elections in Difficult Terrain: Beating the Odds."

[Read More ↗](#)

"To achieve good governance we all need to participate in politics and bring about the change we want"

*Rukayat Motunrayo Shittu,
Member, Kwara State House of Assembly*

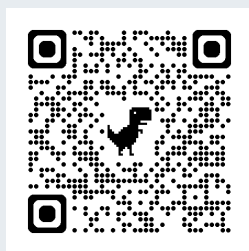
Get Involved

Join Our Advocacy Campaigns

Your voice matters! Participate in our advocacy campaigns to push for the implementation of youth-led electoral reforms. Also, We are always looking for passionate individuals to join our team. Check out our volunteer opportunities and contribute to the movement for a fairer electoral system.

*Follow us on social media for real-time updates and join the conversation using **#NaijaYouthElectoralDemands***

Join Our WhatsApp Community



<https://chat.whatsapp.com/KeHI3MtNpekK-c4zbLIXW0g>

