

The Youth Voice

Updates from the Youth-led Electoral Reform Project

September 2024 | Volume 3



CPPLI's Engagement with Senator Ali Ndume

In Borno State, as part of the ongoing advocacy efforts to promote the youth priority recommendations, YERP-Naija's North-East partner CPPLI and its Youth Network met with Senator Ali Ndume to advocate for youth priority recommendations. Senator Ndume expressed strong support for these initiatives and pledged to convey them to his colleagues in the Senate's "Good Governance Forum." He emphasized the importance of continued dialogue and collaboration, inviting the YERP Naija Team and CPPLI to his Abuja office to discuss the next steps for implementing these recommendations. Additionally, he highlighted the challenges facing Nigerian youths, urging them to reject bribes and small tokens from political elites to foster a better system. This meeting marked a significant step forward in the campaign to gather support from key stakeholders and promote youth-driven reforms.



Hassan Kabulu, YERP Naija North-east coordinator with youth networks at the advocacy engagement with Senator Ali Ndume

Spotlight on CPPLI: [See page 2](#)

Spotlight on CATYCOI: [See page 3](#)

WTF Advocates for Increased Citizen's Participation in Electoral Processes. : [See page 4](#)

About YERP_Naija

The Youth Electoral Reform Project (YERP_Naija) empowers Nigerian youths to build consensus on electoral reforms and advocate for their enactment. It unites youth-focused CSOs and activists from all states and the FCT, promoting active youth engagement in politics through advocacy, education, and collaborations to amplify youth voices in reforms.

[Read More ↗](#)

Inspiration Hub

From Bricklayer to Changemaker: Umar's Journey of Resilience and Reform



Umar, a 29-year-old bricklayer from Bauchi State, has a remarkable story of resilience and commitment to his community. Growing up in poverty, Umar worked tirelessly under the hot sun to fund his education, eventually graduating as the best graduating student in Political Science from the Federal University in Gombe State. His love for his community deepened after witnessing the brutal killing of over ten youth corps members during the 2011 Presidential elections, an experience that left him scarred but determined to prevent future violence. With limited resources, Umar began campaigning against political thuggery in Bauchi State, using his earnings from bricklaying to educate young people about the dangers of electoral violence. His efforts led him to join the "Vote Not Fight" campaign, where he honed his advocacy and organizing skills. Today, as the Bauchi State coordinator for the NED-funded Youth Lead Electoral Reform Project (YERP Naija), Umar uses his platform of over 10,000 social media followers as well as a network of youth volunteers in his state to champion youth involvement in electoral reform. His story is a powerful testament to the impact one person can make, regardless of their beginnings.



[#NaijaYouthElectoralDemands](#)

Recent Activities and Highlights



YERP_Naija Consortium Takes Action: Memorandum Submitted to the Senate Committee on Constitutional Amendment

The YERP_Naija Consortium has reached a significant milestone in its advocacy for electoral reforms by submitting a comprehensive memorandum to the Senate Committee on Constitutional Amendment. This document encapsulates youth-driven recommendations aligned with the National Youth Electoral Reform Priorities, identified through nationwide consultations and surveys.

Our proposals, shaped by evidence and grassroots activism, ensure that Nigerian youth voices are heard at the highest level of government. The submission emphasizes a strategic approach to engaging policymakers and calls for reforms that enhance transparency, participation, and accountability in Nigeria's electoral processes.

How Our Memorandum Supports Electoral Reform:

- **Amplifying Youth Voices:** Ensuring the concerns of young Nigerians remain central in reform conversations.
- **Evidence-Based Advocacy:** Credibility supported by data from youth forums and surveys.
- **Comprehensive Reform:** Proposals cover voter participation, political party structures, and electoral integrity.
- **National Consensus:** Recommendations reflect input from youth across Nigeria's six geo-political zones.
- **Legislative Roadmap:** Actionable steps offered to lawmakers to enhance electoral frameworks.

CPPLI Engages the Emir of Kona

As part of the ongoing advocacy efforts, CPPLI engaged with other influential leaders in the region. They met with the leadership of the Jamatul Nasrul Islam (JNI) in Borno State, where they were received by the State Secretary, Barr. Said Mohammed. The advocacy efforts further extended to engagements with the Emir of Kona-HRH Augustine Vengkhani, the Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Taraba- Rev. Dr. Isaiah Magaji Jirapye, the MSN Chairperson of Taraba State-Mallam Bashir Modibo, and the State secretary of JNI, Borno- Barr. Sai Mohammed. These visits were crucial in securing the support of these influential figures for the youth electoral reform movement.



From Left to Right; Youth Leader, NYC, CAN Chairman, Program Manager CPPLI, State Coordinator Taraba, and other Youth Members during advocacy visit to Emir of Kano



From Left to Right; Youth Leader, NYC, CAN Chairman, Program Manager CPPLI, State Coordinator Taraba, and other Youth Members during advocacy visit to Emir of Kano

Spotlight on CATYCOI:

Building Strategic Alliances to Amplify Youth Voices: CATYCOI's Advocacy Visit to the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC) in Imo State

Political parties have extensive networks and influence which can help mobilise a larger and diverse group of supporters for electoral reforms. A broader support base can lend legitimacy and enhanced visibility to electoral reform efforts, making them more acceptable to the public and other stakeholders.

The YERP_Naija team in Imo State, coordinated by Samuel Ozonna, the Imo State YERP-Naija Coordinator, paid an advocacy visit to Ichie Levy Ekeh, the Chairman of Inter Party Advisory Council (IPAC)-Imo State Chapter. The advocacy team introduced the YERP_Naija project highlighting its goal and stated the primary objective of the visit, which was to present and discuss youth electoral reform recommendations in the electoral process and secure his buy-in. The dialogue focused on the five priority recommendations and the crucial role the chairman can play in amplifying advocacy efforts on electoral reforms.

The IPAC chairman acknowledged the significance of the recommendations and expressed support for initiatives that promote youth engagement in electoral processes. He commended the team for their efforts in promoting a working democracy, and for standing up for the development of democracy in Nigeria. Highlighting setbacks and barriers prevalent in Nigeria's electoral process, the IPAC chairman emphasized the need to amplify youth voices on electoral reform issues.



From Left to Right: George-white Vincent, Finance Officer, Libera Initiative, Ebosie Chimezie, Executive Director SALTII Initiative, Ichie Levy Ekeh, the Chairman IPAC, Imo State, Samuel Ozonna, the State Coordinator YERP Naija/ ED Libera Initiative, and Ezeka Victory, Research and Advocacy Officer, Libera Initiative.

Spotlighting Youth Electoral Reform Recommendations: A Step Towards Transparent and Fair Elections

One of the top five priority recommendations aims at putting a robust mechanism in place to address electoral violence and offences and believes it will contribute to the overall integrity of the electoral process- the Establishment of an Electoral Offences Commission.

Upholding Election Integrity- Establishment of an Electoral Offences Commission

To enhance the integrity and transparency of the electoral process, Nigerian youth have proposed and are advocating for the establishment of a dedicated Electoral Offences Commission. This commission will be responsible for the prosecution of electoral offenders, ensuring that electoral malpractices are addressed promptly and effectively. The proposal postulates the deletion of Section 146 (2) of the Electoral Act 2022, and this is because the section has been seen as insufficient in addressing the complexities and seriousness of electoral offences.

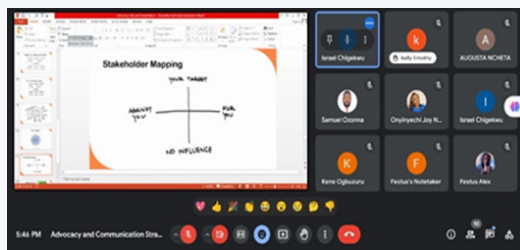
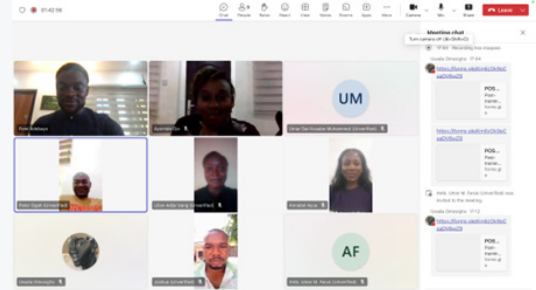
Benefit: The commission will be tasked with investigating and prosecuting all forms of electoral offences, including but not limited to voter intimidation, ballot box snatching, vote buying, and falsification of results. The commission will contribute to the overall integrity of the electoral process, ensuring that elections are free, fair, and credible.

Impact: By having a specialised body focused solely on electoral offences, there will be greater accountability and a higher likelihood of prosecuting offenders. The existence of a dedicated commission will serve as a deterrent to potential offenders, knowing that there is. The establishment of an Electoral Offences Commission is a crucial step towards strengthening Nigeria's democratic processes. By amending the Electoral Act 2022 and creating a dedicated body for prosecuting electoral offences, the country can ensure more transparent and fair elections, thereby fostering greater public trust in the electoral system.

KDI, CATYCOI, and J-DEV Foundation Conduct Advocacy and Communications Strategy Training for YERP_Naija Project

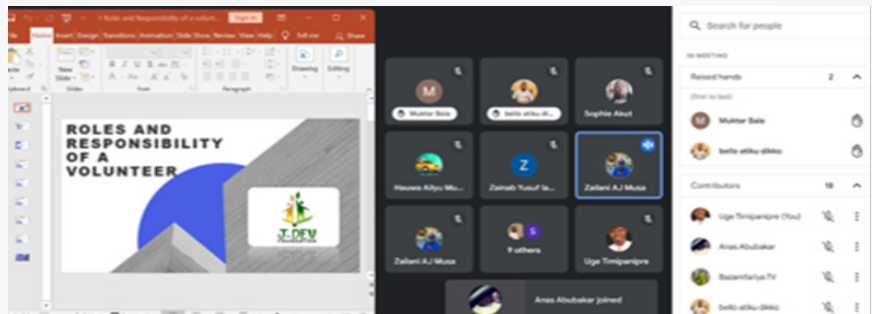
As part of the **Youth-led Electoral Reform Project (YERP_Naija)**, several organizations held comprehensive advocacy and communication strategy training sessions across different regions in Nigeria. These sessions aimed to equip youth leaders and state focal persons with the necessary skills for effective stakeholder engagement, communication, and advocacy to push for electoral reform.

Kimpect Development Initiative (KDI), the national partner for the YERP_Naija project in the North Central region, organized a training program for its State Focal Persons (SFPs). The training covered key aspects of advocacy, such as identifying issues, targets, allies, potential opposition, and gatekeepers. Participants also learned about advocacy tactics and communication strategies to enable them to handle the upcoming advocacy tasks efficiently. This preparation strengthens the ability of SFPs to champion youth-driven electoral reform in their respective states.



Similarly, in the **Southeast**, the **Catch Them Young Community Initiative (CATYCOI)** organized an Advocacy and Communication Strategy Training for state coordinators and youth leaders. Led by **Israel Orji**, the CATYCOI Program Manager, the training emphasized the role of advocacy in driving social change. The coordinators were taught to create and implement advocacy strategies focusing on community outreach, strategic communication, and coalition-building. The CATYCOI Executive Director, **Nonso Orakwe**, encouraged participants to leverage the training insights to drive successful advocacy efforts in their communities.

In the **North West**, **Jesz Development Foundation (J-DEV)** recruited and trained a 35-man volunteer youth structure across the seven states of the region. Over a three-day virtual training, youth advocates from various organizations, such as the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN) and Arewa Youth Forum (AYF), learned about community organizing, advocacy strategies, and communication tools. The focus of the training was on stakeholder engagement and equipping volunteers to promote the YERP-Naija project's top five priority recommendations. These volunteers are now set to carry out advocacy visits, engage with stakeholders, and popularize youth-focused electoral reform recommendations across the North West region.



WTF Conducts South-South Youth Volunteer Recruitment for YERP_Naija Campaign

The Whillz Trust Foundation (WTF), the YERP_Naija partner for the South-South region, recruited 30 youth volunteers drawn from various youth-focused organizations across the six South-South states: Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers. These volunteers are tasked with conducting advocacy visits to the primary targets of the YERP_Naija campaign within the region.

In addition to their advocacy efforts, WTF has also recruited additional volunteers in Edo State, who will focus on voter mobilization ahead of the September 21, 2024, Edo State Governorship Election, ensuring the youth's active participation in the election process.

Senate Champion for Youth-Led Electoral Reforms: Senator Adaramodu's Commitment to Youth Voices.

On August 31, 2024, Abimbola Aladejare-Salako, Executive Director of NIGAWD, led YERP-Naija 's team meeting with Senator Adeyemi Adaramodu, Chair of the Senate Committee on Youths and Sports at his country home in Ilawe-Ekiti. Adaramodu commended the project, noting, "Real change will not happen unless youth actively participate in the political process. We need more youth in leadership roles." He praised YERP-Naija's focus on mobilizing youth voices and committed to advocating for their electoral reform recommendations, which include constitutional amendments to ensure a more transparent and inclusive election process at the National Assembly. He pledged he would graciously accept our invitation to speak on any of our planned activities on promoting youth involvement in the movement.



Senator Adeyemi Adaramodu, Chair of the Senate Committee on Youths and Sports pledging his support for the YERP_Naija Project

Get Involved

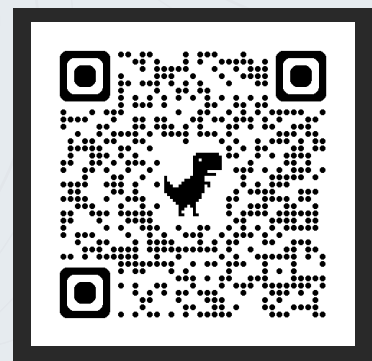
Join Our Advocacy Campaigns



Join Our WhatsApp Community

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



<https://chat.whatsapp.com/KeHl3MtNpekKc4zbLlXW0g>

