



COMMUNITY LIFE PROJECT (CLP)

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017
-
2021



Town Hall Meeting of Grassroots Citizens with Local Government Officials at the Oshodi-Isolo Local Council

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



In order to sustain the impact of its programmes and strengthen its institutional capacity to deliver better programme outcomes, CLP has undertaken its third strategic planning process for five 5-years period 2017-2021. This plan takes into consideration the lessons of over two decades of effective programming on the areas of community Health, Personal Agency, Popular Participation in Electoral Integrity and Participatory Democracy.

We are grateful to all Board members, CLP Staff, Reclaimnaija Grassroots Partners, Civil Society Organisations, Development Partners and other stakeholders who participated in the preparation of the strategic plan.

Our special thanks go to our lead Consultant, Dr Otive Igbuzor, Principal Consultant and Dr (Mrs) Ejoro Otive-Igbuzor, Managing Director of Emerald International Development Services Ltd.

We are confident that the formulation of the strategic plan will help CLP further increase its impact.

Ngozi Iwere

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This strategic plan has been developed taking into cognisance over two decades of experience and based on examination of external and internal contexts of CLP's operations.

The purpose of the strategic plan is, therefore, to provide a strategic direction for CLP and the actions to be taken to achieve the mandate of the organisation. The plan will propose what needs to be done to reposition the organisation for greater performance and resilience. In addition, it will provide guidance to management to make sound decisions in the day to day operations of the organisation as well as provide a framework for performance, monitoring and evaluation.

1.2 VISION

A society where respect for human dignity, inclusion, social and environmental justice prevail

1.3 MISSION

To reduce human misery by empowering citizens to be positive change agents

1.4 VALUES

CLP will be guided by the following core values:

1. Mutual Respect: We recognise the innate worth of all people irrespective of their class and position.
2. Integrity: We match our words with our actions and maintaining truthfulness and honesty in all our dealings at all times.
3. Diversity and Inclusion: We embrace all human beings irrespective of race, religion, sex, disability or status.
4. Accountability: We are accountable to our partners, stakeholders, donors and statutory organisations.
5. Community Ownership: We ensure that communities at the grassroots participate actively in shaping the direction of our programmes.

The values can be remembered by the acronym MIDAC.



SECTION 2:

2.1 INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The mission of eradicating poverty and human misery and ensuring sustainable development is a major challenge in the world today. Historically, the global community has been interested in promoting empowerment of citizens and development. In September, 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted committing countries, both rich and poor, to do all they can to eradicate poverty, promote human dignity and equality and achieve peace, democracy and environmental stability. This led to the adoption of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with targets to eradicate poverty, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development. As at the end date of 2015, there was a lot of progress but billions of citizens were still living in poverty and denied a life of dignity with rising inequality within and among countries. In September, 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted to replace the MDGs to end poverty in our generation.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) propose a new global partnership requiring people, countries and participants in the global partnerships to play specific roles to achieve the SDGs between 2015 and 2030. The SDGs aim to: end poverty and hunger everywhere; combat inequalities within and among countries; build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. The SDGs are also a resolve to create conditions for inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities.

It is important to point out that the context of the world at the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is quite different from the context when the Millennium Development Goals were declared in 2000. First and foremost, in 2000, there was relative stability, prosperity and coherence when western economies were on the rise and the conditions were good for forging agreements on global targets for development. In 2015, the world is encountering more complex problems of climate change, population pressures, increasing urbanization, multi-polar world and increasing breakdown of the division of the world into North and South, East and West. Secondly, “the geography of poverty has also changed. The Brookings Institute notes that ... only 10 percent of the global poor live in stable, low income countries, 40 percent live in fragile and conflict-affected countries and 50 percent in middle income countries.” The institute also showed that “within these countries, the distribution of poverty demonstrates huge inequities across different population groups... and fragile states - which are home to some 1.2 billion people - are largely off the track to meet the MDGs.” Furthermore, the period is characterized by multiple crisis, instability and terrorism.

It is instructive to note that the past five decades have witnessed monumental changes in the world. Global economic wealth has increased sevenfold and



average incomes have tripled. Yet, poverty has increased to record high levels. The major problem is that wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few people while majority of the people live in abject poverty. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in its 1998 report, documented that the three richest people in the world have assets that exceed the combined Gross Domestic Product of the 48 least developed countries. In 2014, 85 richest people in the world had the same wealth as the poorest 50 percent (3.4 billion people). By 2015, 80 richest people have the same wealth as the poorest 50 percent. In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, income inequality is at its highest level in the last fifty years. The average income of the richest 10 percent of the population is about nine times that of the poorest 10 percent. It has been documented that the drivers of inequalities include globalization, skilled-biased technological change and changes in countries policy approaches (ascendancy of neo-liberalism).

2.2 NATIONAL CONTEXT

Introduction

Nigeria occupies a land area of 923,768 square kilometres. It had a population of 140,431,790 million according to the 2006 population census. The estimated population in 2014 was put at 177.5 million (World Bank 2014). Nigeria is a diverse country with several ethnic groups estimated at over 250, four hundred languages and dialects. The country is multi religious; Christianity, Islam and to a lesser extent, African Traditional Religion (ATR), are the main religious groups. Nigeria is a federation which has 36 States and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The States are broadly grouped into six geo-political zones namely: North Central, North East, North West, South East, South-South and South West zones. There are 774 Local Government Areas in the States and 6 Area Councils in FCT.

Political Context

Nigeria is the largest country in West Africa and a very important country in Africa and international affairs. Nigeria attained political independence in 1960 after 99 years of British colonial rule. Out of the 56 years of post-independence Nigeria, the military has ruled for about 30 years. Nigeria is endowed with human and natural resources but years of authoritarian and debilitating military rule rendered the country vulnerable to arbitrary and often poor governance, lack of transparency and accountability, lawlessness, economic instability, impunity and human rights violations of a severe magnitude.

After many years of military rule, there was return to civilian rule in 1999 with the election of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, a retired military General who once ruled the country from 1976-1979. Obasanjo was re-elected in 2003. He was replaced by Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua after the April 2007 elections. Yar'Adua died in 2010 and was replaced by his Vice-President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan. Elections were held in April 2011 and Dr. Goodluck Jonathan was elected President. The April 2011 elections were adjudged by local and international observers to be free, fair and credible. Unfortunately, the election was accompanied by post-election violence. In 2015, President Muhammadu Buhari was elected president. The election marked the defeat of an incumbent president and ushered in the second transfer of power from one political party to another.

Economic Context

Nigeria is a country of paradox with widespread poverty in the midst of plenty. Long years of military rule and poor policies combined with rent-seeking culture have left the country with high levels of poverty and low access to social services. Nigeria is the largest oil producer and the largest economy in Africa and the seventh largest in the world, yet it has the third largest number of poor people in the World after China and India.

In the last one and a half decade, the Nigerian economy has been reported to have grown so enormously that Nigeria has become the largest economy in Africa. In fact, from 1990-1999, the growth rate was between 2-3 percent but from 1999-2015, the growth rate more than doubled. One of the major problems is that economic growth in Nigeria has not created meaningful employment, as many of the country's youth

including those with university degrees are currently unemployed. The problem is that Nigeria's economic growth is driven, in part, by rising global oil prices. The manufacturing sector in Nigeria represents only 4 percent of GDP compared to 20 percent in Brazil, 34 percent in China, 30 percent in Malaysia, 35 percent in Thailand and 28 percent in Indonesia. Meanwhile, it has been shown that “no country can banish mass poverty unless it creates millions of new jobs a year in manufacturing and services.” There is, therefore, a compelling imperative for inclusive growth in Nigeria given increasing economic growth (rising per capita output of material goods and services) over the past one and half decade along with increasing poverty, high unemployment rate and the recent free fall in the global price of oil. But since the inauguration of President Muhammadu Buhari administration, the economic growth rate has plummeted; the growth rate in the fourth quarter of 2015 was a mere 2.11 percent. This is a culmination of many factors including fall in the price of oil, lack of diversification of the economy and monumental corruption.

Social Context

Nigeria ranks very low in all socio-economic and development indices only comparable to countries in war. In its Human Development Report for 2011, the UNDP ranked Nigeria 156 out of 187 countries. In 2012, Nigeria was ranked 153 out of 187 countries. In 2014, Nigeria was ranked 152 out of 187 countries. The Country has been consistently rated by Transparency International (TI), in its Corruption Perception Index, to be among the most corrupt countries in the World. In 2011, Nigeria was ranked 143rd out of 183 countries. In 2012, Nigeria was rated 139th out of 176 countries and in 2013, Nigeria was placed at the 144th position out of 177 countries.

In 2014, Nigeria was rated 136th out of 174 countries evaluated. Nigeria has very poor social indicators; it has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world - about 10 million children out of school. Nigeria was one of the richest 50 countries in the early 1970s but retrogressed to become one of the 25 poorest countries at the threshold of the twenty first century. In Nigeria, poverty is increasing. In 1980, the incidence of poverty in Nigeria using the rate of US \$1 per day was 27.2 percent with only 17.7 million people but by 2010, it has increased to 69 percent with 112.5 million people.

There is a direct relationship between increasing poverty and insecurity. Whenever there is conflict and insecurity, poverty increases. The increased poverty fuels more insecurity and the vicious cycle continues. The Brookings Institute in its study noted that only 10 percent of the global poor live in stable, low income countries, 40 percent live in fragile and conflict-affected countries and 50 percent in middle income countries. This means that poverty is low in stable low income countries but high in conflict affected countries. It also means that poverty is prevalent in middle income countries because of inequality.

Technological Context

The rapid pace of technological development in the area of communications is one of the major drivers of the contemporary phase of globalization. This has been accelerated through access to mobile technology. The World Bank estimates that over 70% of the world's population now have access to mobile phones while in Nigeria, there are over 140 million mobile lines. However, it should be stated that a significantly large proportion of Nigerians do not have mobile phones, as the figure of 140 million hides the fact that many Nigerian citizens have 2 or more mobile lines.

Internet access provides the channel through which the potential of technology can be enhanced for personal development, economic empowerment and community growth and development. It opens up avenues for learning, access to information, goods and services, and citizens' engagement in the governance process. In Nigeria, only 62.61% of mobile users have access to the internet, with 34.09% concentrated in 5 States (Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Kaduna and Kano) of the Federation. This highlights the inequality and disparity in access to the internet between the rural and urban communities; this inequality is also enhanced by the high-speed internet access experienced in the major cities compared to what obtains in the rural areas.

SECTION 3: ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 HISTORY OF CLP

- Founded in 1992
- Registered with Corporate Affairs Commission in 1995

1992 – 1997: The CLP Model

- 1992 - CLP started as a pilot project to demonstrate that bottom up approach to development works and it is possible to engage and empower marginalised individuals, families and communities to take greater responsibility for their well being.
- Developed the CLP Model through community level interventions, programmes and partnerships with community associations, grassroots informal sector groups, women and youth groups, faith based organisations and local institutions.

1997 – 2002: Testing Replicability

- Within this period, CLP expanded its programmes both in breath and scope and expanded from its initial base in Isolo to three neighbouring communities – Mushin, Oshodi and Alimosho.
- This was part of our efforts to test the replicability of the model and begin the process of planning for the scaling up the CLP model through replication

2002 - 2009: Scaling of CLP Model and it's numerous best practices.

- Developed a 2005 – 2009 Strategic Plan for scaling up the CLP Model
- Partnered with Community Development (CD) Department of government at Federal and State levels and tested replicability of the Model across the country in 6 pilot States (1 per geopolitical zone) as well as the Federal Capital Territory - Bauchi (North East), Kaduna (North West), Niger (North Central), Delta (South-South), Ebonyi (South East) and Osun (South West).
- Conducted the formal Evaluation of CLP's model of inclusive and participatory community development
- Established the National Conference on Community Development (NCCD) in 2007

2010 – 2015: Scaling of CLP Model Nationally

- Established the ReclaimNaija movement and platform for promoting Grassroots Citizens' participation in electoral integrity and democratic accountability.
- Use of ICT for programming - Innovative use of Ushahidi and SMS platform for civic education, information dissemination, Grassroots Citizens' participation and real-time monitoring of electoral incidents.
- Increased the number of women's representation in party structures and elective positions in Ekiti and Osun States.
- Promoted Civic Engagement, especially at the Local Government level (popular participation in democracy and governance) - Engaged Community Leaders and Government Officials in Participatory budgeting.
- Successfully piloted Participatory Budgeting programme in Ekiti State and initiated the scale up process across 15 States and 33 Local Governments.



3.2 CLP, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND NIGERIA

Since 2002, CLP has been working assiduously with Community Development (CD) departments all over the country towards repositioning Community Development as an effective mechanism for achieving participatory grassroots development and governance in Nigeria.

Participants at the 3rd National Conference on Community Development held in Asaba, Delta State To this end, CLP has carried out capacity building of CD personnel across the country, equipped CD departments with computers for developing a database of community resources, facilitated the development of a draft CD policy, which is yet to be ratified by the National Executive Council, established the National Conference on Community Development and carried out extensive work on Electoral Integrity and Participatory Budgeting with CD departments.

One of the key challenges is that the CD department at the National level is tucked away at the Ministry of Health, making it difficult for it to help drive a coherent and dynamic programme of people-centred Grassroots Community development.

CLP has been leading a spirited advocacy effort to ensure that the CD department at the national level is located in an appropriate Ministry. The multi-stakeholder advocacy effort involving CD Practitioners, International Development Agencies, several MDAs, CSOs, CBOs, FBOs and Academicians culminated in a petition to the Presidency, which has referred the issue to the Secretary of the Government. But no concrete action has yet materialised towards relocating CD to a more viable MDA.

One of the expected deliverables of the current Strategic plan is to ensure that within the next 5 years, CD is relocated and effectively repositioned at the National level to fulfil its mandate of grassroots participation in governance and human development programmes.



Participants at the 3rd National Conference on Community Development held in Asaba, Delta State

3.3 ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

For the over two decades that CLP has existed as an organisation, it has exhibited great strengths. CLP has built a track record of deploying a replicable model of development that works. The organisation has worked with many partners with great results and achievements. CLP has built credibility with high standard performance and strong message content. Within the organisation, there is a strong team spirit with committed and dedicated staff who are agile, resilient and adaptable. The approach to work is unique with strong partnerships and excellent skills for community organising and mobilisation, popular participation, creativity and innovation.

In spite of the strengths enumerated above, the organisation has encountered some challenges over the years. Funding has been irregular and staffing has been inadequate. Communication and engagement with both conventional and social media has been poor. Human resource and personnel development needs to be strengthened and middle-level management is weak in terms of providing leadership and driving organisational growth.

But there are huge opportunities to reposition CLP in the coming years. CLP has a mass appeal and a large pool of people who want to volunteer. The focus of the organisation is of great need across the world, especially in Africa. There are available potential partners who will like to partner with CLP and the organisation is rooted in the Grassroots with numerous networks and linkages in communities across the country.

But in all of these, there is the need to work to mitigate the threat of emerging constriction of civil spaces, inconsistent government policies, insensitivity on the part of government, political instability and insurgency.

3.4 KEY CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

Over the years, CLP has been faced with some challenges. There is the challenge of inconsistent government policies. The Community Development Department has moved from one ministry to another and is presently tucked away at the Ministry of Health.

Secondly, there is the challenge of environment of operation. There is a great difficulty working in Nigeria with poor infrastructure and poor enforcement of regulations.

Thirdly and more importantly is irregular funding. There are periods of time when the organisation had little or no funding to carry out its activities.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, there is a great opportunity to reposition CLP to greater height. The track record of the organisation and the monumental achievements along with strong partnerships that have been forged can be leveraged to reinvigorate the organisation.

In terms of lessons learnt, we have learnt that holistic and sustained community and social mobilisation yields greater impact in empowering individuals, families and communities for agency.

Another lesson is that the rich social capital available in communities, if effectively, harnessed will help empower individuals to overcome the challenges of bad governance and promote their participation in the governance process.

We also learnt that the potential for change and development is greater when Grassroots citizens are the drivers of the change process; all that is needed is providing the information, space and skills needed through capacity building for Grassroots people to take ownership of the development process. Building capacities of

Grassroots gives them voice and allows them to be able to influence decisions and outcomes. Participatory budgeting is a very effective for meeting the real needs of communities and provides a unique opportunity for local communities to participate in the governance decision-making process.

We also learnt that civic engagement at the local government level tends to yield quicker results, which have direct impact on the quality of life of people in local communities.

Another important lesson learnt is that voter education is more effective when combined with civic education. This Strategic Plan is intended, therefore, to seize these opportunities and focus on strategic direction and actions that will impact on the environment in such a way as to lead to CLP making more impact.

3.5 STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIC CHOICES

CLP's Partners and Stakeholders we collaborate with;

CLP interacts with multiple stakeholders in order to achieve its mandate. The stakeholders include Community Development Departments, Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Budget Offices at the Federal, State and Local Government levels, Ministry of Women Affairs, Civil Society organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Political Parties, Ministry of Education, National Orientation Agency (NOA), media, Development Partners, Youth Groups, Legislators, Educational institutions, actors, film makers, entertainment agencies, private sector organisations and Ministries, departments and agencies with focus on the Sustainable Development Goals. Some of the stakeholders have significant powers and have a high level of interest in CLP's activities such as community development department, community based organisations, INEC, media and development partners. In the coming years, CLP will sustain and strengthen its partnerships. Some of the stakeholders such as the budget office, Ministry of Women Affairs, youth groups, legislators, educational institutions and the entertainment industry are crucial for the work of the organisation and there is the need for continuous engagement. We will also identify other stakeholders to partner and engage with.

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SECTION 4: STRATEGIC DIRECTION

This Strategic Plan is bold and innovative – it aims to carry out programmes that will produce long-term impact, redress the inequality in critical aspects of development – the gap between the elite and privileged members of the society on one hand, and the underprivileged majority on the other hand. We will challenge the structures of exclusion and promote inclusion. It is a human rights approach – but also very engaging and constructive; we will be mindful to promote human solidarity, collective responsibility and agency in the process.

We will work with communities to enable them to engage government institutions (MDAs) in a partnership to ensure more equitable distribution of resources of services – services must no longer be priced above the reach of the poor and communities – all have a right to high standards of healthcare, good quality education and overall quality of life. The programmes are strategically designed to collectively address 14 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Programme Areas

Over the next 5 years, CLP plans to work on 3 core programme areas:

1. Governance Programme
2. Digital Inclusion Programme
3. Holistic Community Development Programme

1. Governance Programme:

Our Governance programme is based on 3 components:

- Participatory Budgeting (getting citizens to actively participate in the budget-making process, especially at the local level);
- Civic Education and Engagement (consistent Post-Election Civic Education of Grassroots citizens for engagement with Government on open governance and democratic accountability)
- Promoting Electoral Integrity and Popular Participation in Elections (empowering Grassroots citizens and partnering with the Election Management Body, INEC and other stakeholders to promote electoral integrity).

Participatory Budgeting:

Participatory Budgeting is a critical and strategic approach to addressing the problem of corruption, openness in governance, inclusion and participation. It is also very strategic in addressing effective service delivery. It ensures that the needs of communities are met and that Government is accountable to people in how resources are allocated and spent. Getting the people actively participating in the budget decision-making process will build trust in government. It will ensure better service delivery, create opportunities for livelihoods, boost the local economy, promote gender equality and contribute significantly to reducing the restiveness of young people as well as the drift to urban centres.

We will also be focusing on promoting inclusion and reducing inequality in civic engagement on the budget. Although in recent times, the government has started engaging in different levels of consultation with the Civil Society and the Private Sector, it has essentially been an elitist affair to the exclusion





Grassroots Community Leaders analysing the Federal and State Budgets and extracting projects to be executed in their local communities

of Grassroots communities and citizens who do not belong to the highly educated, and middle and upper socio-economic classes.

Our work in this area will seek to scale up the successes we have already achieved over the past 4 years. In the area of participatory budgeting, CLP has recorded significant outcomes. In 2012, CLP piloted a participatory budget initiative in Ekiti State with the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs that increased grassroots peoples' engagement in the budget-making process. This resulted in the allocation of over N600 million (equivalent of \$4.1 million) by the Ekiti State Government to communities to execute projects identified as priority by the communities. 170 communities benefited from over 177 projects identified by them, which included rural electrification, provision of potable water, schools, markets, civic centres, drainages and culverts and computer centre/cyber café.

We also opened up the space for Grassroots community leaders to engage with Local Government Budget Officers in budget making in 36 Local Governments spread across 9 States in 6 geopolitical zones of the country. Women Leaders were also empowered through capacity building and advocacy to engage with Local Government Officials in 36 Local Governments on getting the specific needs of women into the budget.

One of the lessons learnt is that our strategy of working on both the supply and demand sides of governance is key to ensuring meaningful participation in the governance process, especially at the grassroots level. The achievements in Ekiti were a result of the capacity building of both the Community Development departments and Community Leaders in all 16 Local Governments on participatory budgeting and

governance carried out by CLP. The other lesson is the power of effective knowledge management and the important role of behaviour change communication and appropriate messaging in capacity building and training content. The funds for the Ekiti Community-driven projects were transparently and accountably disbursed by the Community Development department of government, despite Nigeria's history of endemic corruption in the public service. This is due to the impact of the behaviour change communication component of the trainings we carried out on participatory governance and the success of the capacity building.

Over the next 5 years, the capacities of Grassroots communities and key State Actors will be strengthened for effective participation in budget decision making. We plan to build and maintain synergy between the supply and demand sides of governance on budget making, project execution and monitoring.

Strategic Objectives for achieving Participatory Budgeting

- Build capacities of Grassroots Community Leaders and Government Officials on participatory governance and budgeting;
- Engage Grassroots Community Leaders, Government Officials and other Stakeholders on the implementation of budgets and projects;
- Empower Government Officials, especially at the local level, to improve their capacities for more inclusive and effective service delivery;
- Empower Grassroots citizens to understand their civic rights and responsibilities and enhance their capacity to negotiate with, place demands, and hold government accountable;
- Increase access to information:- making information on government policies, budgets and projects more accessible and governance processes more understandable at the local level.



Boosting Grassroots Citizens Capacity for Community Participation in Governance

Civic Education and Engagement

We plan to carry out consistent civic education of Grassroots citizens in between elections. The aim is to continue to develop a critical mass of Grassroots Community Leaders, especially women and youths who are enlightened about their civic rights and responsibilities, who are able to constructively engage with public officers and government, especially at the local level to demand transparency and accountability and who have the capacity to participate in governance decision-making at the local level.

Promoting Electoral Integrity and Popular Participation in Elections

CLP will continue to work to strengthen the electoral process and ensure that Grassroots citizens and other stakeholders actively participate in promoting electoral integrity and democratic accountability. Our belief that good governance starts with electing the right people at the polls remains unwavering. Over the years, we have built capacities and worked with Grassroots Leaders, the Election Management Body (INEC), CSOs, ReclaimNaija Grassroots Partners and other

stakeholders to ensure that the electoral process has integrity. We will further strengthen our partnerships with these groups in the next 5 years. Over the past 5 years, we have achieved remarkable success in promoting popular participation in ensuring electoral integrity and also recorded successes in engaging citizens in post-election governance activities. The ReclaimNaija Grassroots movement created by CLP, has achieved national recognition and acclaim as one of the leading and most robust grassroots social movements in the country. Through this social movement, CLP has successfully revolutionised the way election business is conducted in Nigeria by changing the paradigm of election observing to real time incident reporting to the Electoral Body on Election Days. By so doing, Grassroots citizens have been given real voice and empowered to participate and add value to Election Management, resulting in enhanced electoral transparency and more credible electoral outcomes in the country. Similarly, the ReclaimNaija ICT platform, supported by the Ford Foundation, has equally been internationally acknowledged as one of the most successful and active Ushahidi deployments around the world as some of these links show:

<http://www.ushahidi.com/2011/03/30/using-the-ushahidi-platform-to-monitor-the-nigeria-elections-2011/>,
<http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2011/04/12/nigerians-mobilize-for-free-and-fair-elections/>,
<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/techtank/posts/2014/04/14-ict-governance-livingston-part-3>.

In the next 5 years, we plan to expand the scope of our electoral integrity programme to cover more Local Governments (LGs) beyond the 212 LGs where CLP presently operates. We will organise consistent civic and voter education programmes for Grassroots citizens. We have learnt that voter education is more effective when combined with civic education. Equipping Grassroots Community Leaders as Civic and Voter Educators enables them to get the right messages to their constituencies and networks and also helps to positively influence behaviour of voters.

As a result of CLP's massive direct person-to-person civic and voter education carried out prior to the 2011 elections, where Grassroots Community people were equipped to act as voter educators, people were able to take the message down to their constituencies and voters were better able to vote according to their consciences and report electoral incidents.

We will also continue to use and adapt appropriate ICT tools to broaden the scope and reach of our civic and voter education programmes. Our focus will remain the use of Grassroots friendly ICT tools. We will explore and harness the potentials of existing technologies and combine both conventional and new media to increase access to information on the electoral and governance processes and to promote active citizenship.



Youth Volunteers processing Calls and SMS Reports at the CLP-ReclaimNaija Election Incident Reporting Centre on Election Day

Increasing the Participation of Women in Politics and Governance

Our work in this area will also involve consolidating and scaling the successes we have achieved in promoting the participation of women and youths in politics and governance. Preparatory to the 2015 elections, CLP's pilot project in Ekiti and Osun on increasing women's participation in politics and governance recorded tremendous success. In Ekiti State, the number of women holding party leadership positions at the local level increased from 384 in 2013 to 946 in 2015. Also, in Osun State, a very significant increase resulted. The number of women in leadership positions in political parties at the ward, local and state levels increased from 522 in 2013 to 2,173 in 2015.

Over the next 5 years, we will focus on strengthening the capacity of women to vie for and win elections in more States and create the opportunity for more women to get into leadership positions within political party structures. We will also empower Grassroots Women Leaders to play an active role in the governance process and build a groundswell of support for women politicians.

Post-Election, we will build the capacity of Women Politicians to be effective leaders, to be able to advocate and influence decisions within their political parties and the government; to promote gender equality and gender-based budgeting, as well as mentor other women for leadership positions.



Women Politicians developing their campaign budgets at a CLP Training.

Participation of Out-of-School Youths in Politics and Governance

We will also continue our work of strengthening and building the capacity of the thousands of youths in our Okada (Commercial Motorcyclists) partner community, for effective social mobilisation and community organising around non-violence and peaceful elections in different parts of the country. Over 40% of youths in the labour force are either unemployed or underemployed. Given the spate of violence and the precarious security situation in the country, there is need to meaningfully engage the youths.

Part of the aim of our Governance Programme is to promote social cohesion, human solidarity and a celebration of diversity. There is currently a lot of divisive information in the Media along religious, ethnic and regional lines. Concerted efforts will be made with our youth partners to redress this situation.

Strategic Objectives for Promoting Electoral Integrity and the Participation of Grassroots Women and Youths in Politics

- Build capacities of Grassroots citizens to promote electoral integrity;
- Strengthen our partnership with the Election Management Body (INEC), CSOs and other stakeholders in promoting electoral integrity;
- Strengthen the capacity of women politicians and youths to participate in politics and elections as well as occupy leadership decision-making positions, especially at the local level;
- Engage with Political Parties and other Stakeholders on Affirmative Action for women and youths;
- Advocate for an Electronic voting system.

Our Governance Programme will directly and indirectly help to achieve the following **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**: Goal 1 - End Poverty; Goal 3 - promote good health and well-being; Goal 4 - promote quality education; Goal 5 - promote gender equality; Goal 6 - provide clean water and sanitation; Goal 10 - reduce inequalities; Goal 11 - promote sustainable cities and communities and Goal 16 - promote peace, justice and build strong institutions.

Digital Inclusion Programme: Ensuring that no one is left behind in the Digital World / Revolution

Nigeria is the “6th country with the largest offline population in the world.”

A critical mass of Grassroots citizens comprising mostly women and out-of-school youths is completely excluded from the benefits of the digital economy, which includes reduction in the cost of business and business overheads, easy access to and flow of information, new ways of engaging with government and improvement in the quality of life. The rise of technology has systematically opened up the space and created vast opportunities for both low-income and high-income earners. According to The World Bank Report on Digital Dividends, “the digital revolution has brought immediate private benefits - easier communication and information, greater convenience, free digital products, and new forms of leisure. It has also created a profound sense of social connectedness and global community.” However, it has equally increased the gap between the literate elite and the Grassroots people.

There is great inequality in the access and use of digital technology for personal and community advancement, resulting in further disadvantage to already underprivileged sub-populations, to the advantage of the educated and technology savvy elites. The World Bank Report also notes that “Public sector investments in digital technologies, in the absence of accountable institutions, amplify the voice of elites, which can result in policy capture and greater state control ... Not surprisingly, the better educated, well connected, and more capable have received most of the benefits - circumscribing the gains from the digital revolution ... 111 million Nigerians are estimated to be offline, making it the 6th country with the largest offline population in the world.”

While most internet savvy youths are taking advantage of incentives being offered by online commercial businesses, their Grassroots counterpart who are not internet savvy are left in the cold. Enhancing opportunities for life skills development and promoting financial inclusion of Grassroots people via use of mobile telephony, internet and social media will go a long way in bridging the digital gap.

CLP has a reputation for creating opportunities that enable Grassroots people to tap into the power of technology, driving innovation in the adaptation and use of digital solutions tailored to meet the needs of Grassroots people. In the 2011 and 2015 Elections, CLP deployed the Ushahidi web technology to effectively amplify the voice of Grassroots people, which contributed significantly to the integrity of the elections. This innovative ICT deployment helped to tremendously bridge the gap between elite Election Observation Groups and grassroots communities in Election Observation by allowing Grassroots voices to be heard on Election Days. In fact, CLP's work revolutionised and changed, for good, the way Election business is done in the country; through the innovative deployment of the ReclaimNaija Ushahidi platform with integrated voice telephony, Grassroots people were able, through CLP, to partner with INEC and deliver real-time election incident reports aiding the Election Management Body to troubleshoot problems while elections were still going on.



Training of Community Development Desk Officers on setting up and maintaining a Database of Community Assets and Services in Ekiti State

Over the next 5 years, we plan to advance our work on bridging the digital gap and promoting inclusion in order to ensure that nobody is left behind. We plan to focus on 2 Categories of Grassroots people:

- Those who have access and connectivity but lack the capacity to use the information that ICT provides them to improve their quality of life;
- Those who completely lack access to Internet Technology

We will focus on building capacities and skills to move Grassroots people, especially women and out-of-school youth, from mere access to productive use of ICT. We will leverage the CLP-ReclaimNaija brand (as a leader in using SMS and Internet Technology), to promote inclusion of Grassroots communities in the use of digital technology for enhanced livelihood, personal and social advancement. There are ample opportunities to be explored in improving the quality of life of Grassroots people through the use of digital technology. We will work with technological firms and technology-Based CSOs to develop products that will expand the knowledge and skills of vulnerable and Grassroots people. We will build their capacities to confidently embrace new technologies that will improve their health, economic and social well-being.

Strategic Objectives for achieving Digital Inclusion:

- Set up a Grassroots Digital Academy to increase Grassroots awareness, knowledge and skills to effectively use ICT for personal and occupational development as well as community empowerment;
- Drive innovation in the development, adaptation and use of digital solutions tailored to meet the needs of Grassroots people;
- Enhance opportunities for life skills development and promote financial inclusion of Grassroots people, especially women and out-of-school youths, via use of mobile telephony, the internet and social media.

Our Digital Inclusion Programme will contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals 1, 3, 8, 10 and 17: Goal 8 - promote decent work economic growth and Goal 17 - promote partnerships for the goals.

Sustainable Community Development Programme

This programme will be informed by a paradigm of community development, which seeks to build and distribute wealth and prosperity at the local level by empowering communities to take their economic destinies and well-being into their own hands.

We plan to carry out a very bold and creative initiative that places the people at the centre of development. We will harness the resourcefulness and creativity in our self-help culture to facilitate the building of authentically healthy and thriving communities.

Our track record shows that we excel in changing paradigms and demonstrating workable solutions that are replicable and scalable – solutions and paradigm shifts that bring about quantum leaps in transforming desperate situations for the better.

Over the next five years, we will identify and partner with diverse communities to develop holistic, sustainable, Community Development Plans. These Development Plans will address issues of access to services, green energy, infrastructural development and economic growth, through participatory budgeting, synergistic partnerships and inward-looking solutions. Communities will be placed on the drivers' seat of development – providing and managing viable livelihoods, education, healthcare, clean energy and other amenities while creating prosperous communities.

We plan to pursue a vigorous plan for creating local economies that generate wealth; we aim to build socially cohesive communities founded on the best traditional, African values that are now fast being eroded, values such as service, volunteerism, human solidarity, dignity of labour, honesty in business dealings, celebration of diversity, transparency and accountability and consensus building. The progressive eroding of these values over the past two decades is seriously undermining social cohesion at the community level, heightening ethno-religious tensions, divisions, conflicts with grave consequences for security of lives and property and the stability of communities and the society at large.

Our programme will be holistic and integrated. We will facilitate a consortium of partnerships with public and private sector as well as Development Agencies, Foundations and Communities - private, public and community partnerships – for building healthy, wealthy and sustainable communities.

Our local communities must be enabled to prosper. We need to end the inequality between local, rural communities and cities on one hand, and within cities and communities in terms of quality of life and access to wealth, material and financial resources, services and amenities. The wealth of the country must go round, be more evenly distributed.

Young people should not necessarily be forced by poverty and hopelessness to drift to cities and urban centres where they are further subjected to new forms of vulnerability, facing the challenge of finding decent shelter, unemployment, poorly paid jobs and the lure or imperative of a life of crime.

A Rights Perspective to ending poverty and human misery

Our philosophy is that all human beings have a right to adequate resources for a quality of life befitting of their human dignity; that all policies must respect and uphold human dignity; society, governments and policy makers have a moral obligation to end whatever undermines the dignity of the human person and engenders human misery. It is the responsibility of all who claim to work on any and all aspects of human development to address poverty as a social justice and human rights issue.



Town Hall Meeting on How to make Local Government work for rural communities in Enugu State.

Poverty is not a socio-economic problem; it is a human rights problem. No society has a right to harbour poverty and poor people, in a world of plenty. *(According to the 2014 Oxfam Report, “Almost half of the world's wealth is now owned by just one percent of the population”)*. To allow this situation to persist is to negate the principle of our common humanity; societal solutions must address the structures of inequality and injustice, which are located in governance decision-making, in power, influence and control. The people should no longer be treated and seen as beneficiaries of the government but as shareholders; citizens own the government.

We need development solutions that reflect the true ownership of public governance. It is about power, influence and control of resources – who decides where and to whom the money goes. We say unequivocally that communities should decide where the resources should go, who gets what and when. That is real power,

and it legitimately resides with the people, not with an elite minority acting on behalf of the people. There should no longer be citizenship by proxy – a situation where the highly educated and or rich minority decide for the majority and make policy decisions expected to be applicable to all citizens in all situations.

We plan a bold, courageous, but constructive solution, where the people are enabled to take their rightful place in history at the governance decision-making table, with a strong and healthy influence over development processes and outcomes.

Our Goal:

- Build healthy & sustainable communities through community agency.

Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Community Development Programme

- Grassroots Communities, Government and other Stakeholders develop, adopt and implement holistic and integrated Community Development Plans.
- Grassroots People embrace integrated Agricultural practices with a value chain culture aimed at ending hunger and poverty, and creating wealth.
- Grassroots people embrace new technology to improve their health, economic and social well-being.
- Grassroots Citizens actively engage in Politics and Local Governance.
- Grassroots People gain deeper understanding of the impact of climate change, commit to Positive Life Style changes and work to reduce Environmental Pollution.

“We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.”

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* 139

Due to its integrated and holistic design, our Sustainable Community Development Programme will help to achieve **Sustainable Development Goals** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16 and 17: Goal 9 - promote industry, innovation and infrastructure.

SECTION 5: ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

5.1 Governance

The Board of Trustees of Community Life Project (CLP) will continue to provide governance for the organisation. The board will provide strategic and policy direction for the organisation. Among other things, the board will provide oversight and support to the Management, ensure effective organisational planning, resource mobilisation and management as well as organisational sustainability.

5.2 Management

In line with the 5 year strategic plan, we now have 3 core programmes, which have implications for our administration, human resources and organisational development. The strategic plan was complemented by an Institutional Assessment of the organisation that reviewed the administration, internal systems and procedures. Management will work with Professionals to ensure the full implementation of reviewed and updated policies and procedures, which will promote and enhance the institutional growth, sustainability and effectiveness of the organisation.

5.3 Communication and Media Plan

As a result of the new strategic direction, we plan to develop an effective Communications Plan.

Over the next 5 years, we will strengthen our internal communications systems to enable us cope with the increasing information needs. We will revamp our websites and maintain an active presence on Social Media, which will help us achieve our organisational and strategic objectives, engage effectively with diverse stakeholders, demonstrate the success of our work, ensure people understand what we do, contribute and shape discourses around our core programmes. We will focus on building our brand, enhancing relationships, facilitating citizens' access to relevant resources necessary for citizen participation, driving citizens' interest in national and local issues, and promoting inclusion of Grassroots citizens and the marginalised (in line with our objective of leaving no one behind in the digital revolution). Over the next 5 years, we will work to make our governance site - the reclaimnaija.net – one of the most interactive and most referenced site for governance and community development issues in Nigeria.

We will be guarded by the nature of our audience, the nature of the topic being communicated and the depth of information to be given to bring about the desired results.

5.4 Resource Mobilisation and Financial Management

Finance is critical to the sustainability of the organisation, the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan and optimum programme impact. A major priority in the take-off of this strategic plan will be to formulate and implement a robust plan for strategic Fund-raising from diversified sources that empowers us to attain programme independence and financial autonomy.



SECTION 6: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The implementation of this strategic plan will put premium on knowledge management. Over the next 5 years, we will vigorously promote learning within the organisation and between the organisation and other stakeholders. Operational research will form an integral part of our work. This strategic plan will be complemented by the implementation of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework that specifically spells out our hierarchy of results including performance indicators at every level, a risk analysis and risk management matrix. The M and E framework will provide a high level guide for achieving the strategic goals of CLP.

In this regard, we will, in compliance with international best practices, invest in capacity building of all staff in monitoring and evaluation so that all staff can take ownership of the process. In addition, we will invest in a comprehensive data collection, management and analysis system.

6.2 IMPACT DOCUMENTATION

Part of our Communication plan is to document and publish the impact of our work as a knowledge management resource. Our Monitoring and Evaluation paradigm will be impact oriented and will aid our impact documentation process. The impact documentation will be produced in different formats; it will be simple, engaging and widely disseminated.





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