

FACTSHEET

AGENTS FOR CITIZEN-DRIVEN TRANSFORMATION

The Agents for Citizen-driven Transformation (ACT) programme works with civil society organisations (CSOs) to enable them to be credible and effective drivers of change for sustainable development in Nigeria.

Our work focuses on strengthening the system of CSOs, networks and coalitions to improve their internal, external, and programmatic capabilities. We work with CSOs in 10 states selected across the six geo-political zones in the country: Adamawa, Borno, Edo, Enugu, the federal capital territory (FCT), Kano, Lagos, Plateau, Rivers and Sokoto.

We also focus on providing a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue for an improved, effective, and inclusive regulatory environment for the operation of CSOs in Nigeria. This work is implemented nationwide across all 36 states and the FCT.

The five-year programme (2019-24) is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.



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WHAT WE DO

Our work focuses on the following areas:

Strengthening CSO systems and learning

We work with CSOs to facilitate a process of self-assessment to identify areas of growth. We then support CSOs to improve their internal, external, and programmatic capabilities through coaching, custom training, mentoring and small grants.

We establish platforms for coordination and peer-to-peer learning amongst CSOs on processes, procedures, and sustainable approaches for effective issue-based policy and advocacy, including budget tracking, evidence-based research, grassroots mobilisation, and project monitoring.

Improving the regulatory environment for CSOs

We seek to influence key decision-makers and opinion-formers through targeted research and policy dialogues. We support local research initiatives to strengthen their capacity and address information gaps between government and civil society organisations.

We work with our partners to strengthen accountability, coordination, and strategic effectiveness within the sector. We work collectively to challenge and enhance the regulatory environment, building the capacity of our partners to work within legal boundaries, supporting media freedom, building platforms for dialogue, and defending human rights.

Inclusion

We work to amplify the voice of the marginalised and excluded groups to strengthen government responsiveness to these groups to ensure that no one is left behind (including women, girls and people living with disability).

Coordinating CSO engagement

We coordinate and strengthen the interaction and experience sharing amongst donor agencies and international development partners who support the work of CSOs in Nigeria.

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OUR APPROACH

Problem-driven, iterative and adaptive learning

We use innovative techniques and a facilitative process to empower CSOs and promote adaptive learning, rather than traditional workshops and lecturing.

Organisational development

We promote CSO empowerment through knowledge and systemic learning for sustainable development and change.

Facilitative and participatory

We facilitate platforms for constructive dialogue and engagement of CSOs with other stakeholders in debate on regulatory and policy guidance for CSO operations in Nigeria.

HOW WE WORK

We deliver our programme of support through:

- Technical assistance
- Capacity and system strengthening
- Knowledge management
- Small grants/financial assistance

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

(as of December 2023)

Capacity strengthening

- More capacity building services that meet the need of CSOs, including toolkits, online courses and peer-to-peer learning platforms
- Improved CSO organisational capacity in the areas of governance, proposal writing, gender and social inclusion (GESI), advocacy, media and communication, and monitoring and evaluation
- Improved collaboration between CSOs and other stakeholders
- Increasing trust of stakeholders in CSOs according to independent public perception survey
- Improved accountability and responsiveness of CSOs to citizens
- Improved CSO awareness, sensitivity and captivity to mainstream gender and social inclusion in their operations (35% of CSOs trained have GESI strategies)
- Increased citizens' engagement and participation in 2023 elections
- More CSOs receiving grants

PROGRAMME IN NUMBERS

(as of December 2023)

233 CSOs

benefited from ACT capacity strengthening initiatives.
156 CSOs have cascaded learnings to peers



151 ACT

grants awarded



15

ACT CSO Toolkits



Regulation

- Better dialogue for the collective and mutual understanding by CSOs and regulatory agencies on the appropriate regulatory framework for CSO operations
- Improved regulatory compliance for CSOs through:
- Education and awareness tools driven by CSOs
- Better coordination amongst civil society
- Digital technology, including the digitisation of the financial account filing requirement of the Corporate Affairs Commission
- More harmonised CSO registration

Find out more

Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation (ACT)

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