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# ELECTORAL **VIOLENCE** IN NIGERIA

A PROTECTION MODEL

A PUBLICATION OF ACTIONAID (AAN) NIGERIA, WITH THE SUPPORT  
OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DFID)

## Electoral Violence in Nigeria: A Protection Model

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAN:	ActionAid Nigeria
CENTRE LSD:	African Centre for Leadership, Strategy & Development
DFID:	Department For International Development
EMB:	Electoral Management Body
ICRC:	International Committee of the Red Cross
IEC:	Information, Education & Communication
INEC:	Independent National Electoral Commission
IPC:	International Press Centre
NGOS:	Non Governmental Organisations
NTA:	Nigeria Television Authority
NURTW:	National Union of Road Transport Workers
PPT:	Power Point
SSS:	State Security Service
UNHCR:	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
VAW:	Violence Against Women

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank all those who made the coordination of the entire process and the positive outcome possible. First to be commended is the tremendous support of my colleagues in ActionAid; Hussaini Abdu (Country Director), Ifeoma Charles-Monwuba, Ene Obi, Oluwole Elegbede, Tunde Aremu, Amechi Ogoebunam, Goodluck Omoh, Kayode Ajayi, Keneth Okoineme among others.

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The warm reception extended to us by Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), trade and professional groups as well as the entire people of Anambra State is duly appreciated. Mark White, Desmond Woode and Okey Eze of the British Department for International Development (DFID) graciously supported the processes that ensured that the project was implemented. We thank them and others too numerous to mention in person who were part of the project. They deserve to take pride in the success of this venture.

Gbenro Olajuyigbe,  
Abuja 2010

# FOREWORD

Observers of the Nigerian political terrain are, in the large majority, in agreement that acts of political violence remain major threats to the credibility of the Country's elections. History actually indicates that the issue of political violence is not new in Nigeria; being as old as democratic practice in the country. Such has been the case that the truncation of the first and second Republics by military coups was immediately preceded by electoral violence that arose from massively rigged elections. In this context, various observers of past elections in

Nigeria, especially the 2007 round of elections, have used the trend as a basis for raising well-founded fears regarding the possible negative effects of political violence on subsequent elections even though the incidence varies in intensity from one part of the country to the other. The summary however, is that the shortcomings that have either been ignored or which Nigerians as a people have refused to respond to, have today become major threats to elections and the electoral process.

Such is the lack of faith in the electoral system, that even the Electoral Management Body (EMB) and other government institutions, including the security agencies, which are responsible for election, are generally perceived to be partial and incompetent. In this regard, it has been noted that the inability of the people to protect their mandate is traceable to the failure of these institutions to support transparency in electoral matters among others.

Yet, these same state organs have been constitutionally vested with the power to protect and maintain the security of lives and property as well as enhance the environment for free and fair elections.

This background helps to clarify the main concern that defined the objectives of the intervention, which basically were:

1. To reduce the risk of electoral violence.
2. To support and empower stakeholders (the people, the EMB and the security agencies) to organise peaceful elections and avoid electoral violence in the state.

By and large, reports and results that followed the intervention have confirmed that these objectives were met. The model adopted has raised the hope of possibility for violence-free credible elections in Nigeria. I commend this to all that are concerned about getting the electoral process right in Nigeria and elsewhere.

Hussaini Abdu  
Country Director  
ActionAid Nigeria.

# PREFACE

The challenge of ensuring credible elections as a means of promoting democratic stability and development in Nigeria has led to series of interventions especially since the return of civil rule in 1999.

The un-willingness of the major stakeholders - - parties, aspirants, candidates, supporters – and even the umpire --the Electoral Management Body (EMB), to play by the rules has led to disputations of the outcomes of successive elections. For those concerned with the issues of fundamental reforms in the political and electoral processes, the experience could be frustrating. Yet, the result of

some of the interventions, as in the case of the recent Anambra State governorship elections has shown that Nigeria is not in a state of electoral hopelessness. It provides a fairly credible foundation that can be built upon.

This publication therefore derives from this glimmer of hope and it is intended as resource material for all individuals and organisations that favour the positive interventionist perspective in resolving the crisis of flawed elections in Nigeria.

The first part, Adapting the Protection Response Model to Political and Electoral Violence provides relevant theoretical framework, the second part focuses on the intervention in the last Anambra State governorship elections thus providing a practical verification given the recorded laudable outcomes.

In all the two parts of the book consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 of Part One makes a quick historical overview of Nigeria's history of political and electoral crises and further dwells on hazard posed by violence as well as conflict risk reduction measures.

Chapter 2 extensively analyses the protection response framework. Relying on the egg nucleus participatory methodological approach, it examines patterns of abuse, responsive and remedial actions as well as environment building action.

The third chapter in the part embarks on the analysis of power for the purpose of assessing areas of change by transforming power relations with actions

Part two provides a comprehensive narrative of the project on Strengthening Action against Electoral Violence in Nigeria: The Anambra experience.

Chapter 4 of this second part explains the background and context, the activities and their implementation, all with the purpose of achieving the objectives of reducing the risk of electoral violence and empowering stakeholders (the people, electoral management body, and security agencies) to organise peaceful elections and avoid electoral violence.

Chapter 5 defines the methodology that was adopted to strengthen the capacity of the various

stakeholders in the electoral affair including mapping/tracking and documenting the trends/patterns of violence that have attended Anambra state since 1999. The chapter also offers a narrative of the various capacity support programmes that were embarked upon pursuant to realising the objectives of the project.

Part two ends with Chapter 6 in which the results of the intervention were stated in the form of the outputs and outcomes; the immediate impact and the achievements. The chapter documents the testimonies of the target groups on the lessons they learnt while also making recommendations for improving future conduct of elections in the country. These include the imperative of engaging INEC to correct operational lapses in vital areas like voters' registration, voters' education and adequate logistics, especially as another general elections beckons in 2011.

Conclusively, the intervention was designed to strengthen the capacity of people and institutions responsible for elections, protection and security of people using the

Environment Building Action approach. Hence, we undertook actions that consolidated political, social, cultural, institutional and legal norms conducive to protection. These actions were concerned with moving society as a whole towards protection norms by limiting or preventing current and future violence and abuses. They were aimed at influencing changes in the political, social and cultural environment to ensure that they enhance and guarantee rights, thereby brightening the prospects for credible and safe elections.

This publication therefore combines the report of the intervention with a Protection Model that is crucial and necessary for creating environment for violence-free credible elections in a political environment like that of Nigeria.

It is highly expected that the Model and the Practical Field lessons will be a tremendous resource base for those that are concerned with finding enduring solutions to the stormy violence-ridden electoral processes in our society and elsewhere.

Gbenro Olajuyigbe  
Coordinator, Strengthening Action Against  
Electoral Violence in Nigeria (SAAEVIN).  
Human Security in Conflict & Emergencies,  
ActionAid Nigeria,  
Abuja.  
2010.

A piece of aged, yellowed paper with ragged, torn edges is suspended by two metal chains from the top. The paper is set against a dark, textured background. The text "PART ONE" is printed in a large, brown, serif font across the center of the paper.

# PART ONE

## ADAPTING THE PROTECTION RESPONSE MODEL TO POLITICAL AND ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction and Background:

Nigeria has had a history of political and electoral crisis leading to and engendering violence. Oftentimes this has been as a result of flawed electoral processes in the context of what may be termed occupied and conquered political space. Ruling political elites, sticking together and wielding state power have very often abused state power and used it to brazenly and exclusively promote their selfish group and elite

interests.

What these have led to is heightened political tension often precipitating violent outbreaks as the rival factions of the elite competitively mobilise grievance and procure the instruments of violence to either sustain their grip on political power or advance their claim to power.

Against this backdrop, it is those made vulnerable by their poverty, marginalisation and exclusion that bear the brunt of the political tension and violence.

Arising from this, the quest has always been to ensure violence free elections while making the votes of the electorate truly count.

However, in a situation where an unpopular and anti popular elite is determined to hold on to power, voter vigilance and electorate alertness and determination to protect the mandate can quite easily increase tension and fuel violence as state violence is met by the active resistance of the conscious electorate.

One way to ensure a holistic and comprehensive approach to resolving the logjam maybe through adapting the protection response framework for designing programmatic responses in contexts characterised by a history and tradition of violent political and electoral contestations.

It is in this light that these guidance notes seek to explore practical, viable and teachable ways to

adapt the protection response framework in developing a comprehensive and all embracing response which empowers the electorate, ensures conscious voting, protects the mandate, prevents rigging, and minimises/mitigates or even prevents violence.

### Conflict risk reduction – violence as hazard

Conflict as a fact of existence is on its own neither negative nor positive. What is detrimental to human dignity, what is harmful and destructive to human existence, and what disproportionately undermines the very existence of those exposed to it is the violence, which sometimes comes with conflicts. It is in this sense that in this approach, violence is treated as a hazard, which when combined with vulnerability and diminished capacity to cope leads to humanitarian disasters.

Therefore, the focus is on minimising the level of exposure to violence, as well as on reducing, mitigating and/or removing the factors that enable, and or trigger the outbreak of violence.

As an approach this method concentrates on the empowerment of the vulnerable, on transforming power relations, and on promoting active agency of the affected or at risk. In this sense, active agency simply means to be able to act consciously in one's own behalf.

# CHAPTER 2

## WHAT IS PROTECTION?

Protection encompasses the entire series and types of actions, steps and processes undertaken to ensure the safety, dignity, and integrity of the human person as an individual living in a society. It is based on the empowerment of the people, and rooted in the guarantee and promotion of their human rights. Wherever rights are pervasively denied and violated, the need for protection increases as a consequence. There are about three main varieties of situations characterised by pervasive and rampant violation and denial of rights, the context in which the need for protection, usually of the affected, at risk and or vulnerable becomes paramount.

These situations/context include:

1. **Armed Conflict:** This may be between or within nations/countries, and in the course of which the civilian population suffers a range of deliberate

violations and abuses of rights, including the terrible and sometimes unimaginable consequences of war. These abuses may occur in the period leading to outbreak of armed hostilities, in the course of the war, or in the period after the cessation of armed hostilities. Oftentimes the abuses occur throughout the continuum of the war.

2. **Protracted Social Conflict:** This situation is characterised by civil strife, heightened social and political tension, sporadic use of violence, but in which armed conflict is not formally declared. This is the category within which political and electoral violence can be classified.

3. **Natural Disasters:** This is where the combination of natural hazard, poverty, and vulnerability makes those affected or at risk of being affected highly exposed to the risk of gross and rampant violation and abuse of rights.

In conditions of normalcy, when society is functioning more or less without grievous disruptions and social dislocations, the need for protection, except of the most vulnerable is often not very pronounced. Protection becomes a major issue where patterns of abuse and violations of rights become pervasive, rampant and gross, leading to and driving humanitarian tragedies.

When protection is situated this way within the context of abuse, denial and deliberate violation of rights, then all human rights are summarised into three broad categories, which need to be enhanced in order to ensure protection. These are:

- A. **Freedom from Fear:** Dealing with safety, security, integrity of the human person and community etc.
- B. **Freedom from Want:** Dealing with dignity, material and physiological needs, including the basics of shelter, adequate nutrition, health, [social, cultural and economic rights] etc,
- C. **And Freedom to Act in One's Own Behalf:** Dealing with movement, assembly, conscience, thought, association, and what is generally referred to as civil and political rights.

Understanding protection this way helps to place emphasis on rights and is based on the international consensus that people have rights to protection while governments, authorities and individuals are obliged to respect the law and ensure this protection.

In this context, rights have been codified in national and international laws, treaties and conventions, collectively referred to as human rights instruments. States and authorities have the responsibility to

protect civilians in the context of war and armed conflict just as in that of natural disasters also. However, in war and armed conflict, individual belligerents and parties to the war also bear responsibility for protecting civilians in areas under their control.

In a political and or electoral crisis characterised by violence the responsibility to protect lies with the state and the political actors. An important and integral part of this includes the responsibility to allow mandated and non-mandated agencies to provide assistance for protected persons, and persons affected by conflict or natural disasters.

Mandated agencies are those agencies charged by states to lead on particular aspects of humanitarian assistance and protection e.g. the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

#### **THE PROTECTION RESPONSE FRAMEWORK**

One of the most widely recognised models of protection is the Egg response framework. This egg model arose out of interagency discussions on protection led by the ICRC, and it uses the shape and parts of the egg to strategically think through and outline the sphere and range of actions needed to be taken together to enhance protection and meet protection needs.

This guidance note is based on a practical

community based adaptation of the protection egg response model. This adaptation emphasises empowerment, active agency and participation of affected and at risk communities or groups in the elaboration of the protection framework.

A normal egg consists of the nucleus, the yolk, the albumen, the membrane and the shell. Each of these parts of the egg is used in this model to represent specific spheres of analysis and range of actions needed to be taken in an integrated manner to meet protection needs and enhance the protection of the affected or at risk individual, community and or group.

#### **THE EGG NUCLEUS: PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

This is the participatory and collective process of in-depth understanding, examination and identification of the nature and character of causes, dynamics, and consequences of violence, Violence Against Women [VAW] or abuses/violations/denials of rights of vulnerable, marginalised, impoverished and or excluded groups that is taking place.

To be empowering and sustainable, this approach will be participatory, it will promote and enhance the teaching and acquisition of analytical and planning skills, it will promote capacity enhancement and development among the affected or at risk group, and it will be aimed at facilitating the organisation and

mobilisation of these groups in defence of their rights.

A comprehensive and adequate analytical framework in the context of political and electoral crisis and violent conflicts will normally be multi stakeholder, multi disciplinary and multi step in nature while it will include at least four broad categories of analyses. These are:

- i. The situation or context analysis, to understand the current situation, the history, the trend and changes in dynamics of the conflict and or violence. It will also include an understanding of the location, scope and scale of the crisis and or violence. This will also normally include power and stakeholder analysis, and relationship mapping among other types of social maps.
- ii. A cause and effect analysis, which will not only be limited to a detailed understanding of the causes [immediate/triggers and deep rooted/structural causes of the violence/conflict but will also include an analysis of the levels of vulnerabilities of affected and at risk communities, an identification and understanding of the most affected, and the nature of the impact; as well as an identification and understanding of the patterns of abuse, violations and denials of rights.

- iii. An analysis of the coping mechanisms and strategies of the affected communities, including an analysis of the capacities of the affected and at risk community with particular reference to resilience, adaptive, recovery and mitigation capacities.
- iv. A series of analysis, which draws action and plans in response to the findings of the earlier analysis.

The nucleus is the brain of the egg and in this framework, it is the process, participatory, inclusive and empowering, which allows a shared understanding of all aspects of the crisis to be developed.

#### **EGG YOLK-PATTERNS OF ABUSE:**

The yolk represents the part of the egg, which provides immediate nourishment for the developing chicken. In this model, the yolk represents the trends in the nature, character and frequency of occurrence of incidences of violence, abuse, violations, denials of rights taking place, and which needs to be addressed and redressed.

These patterns of abuse, violations and denials of rights will be identified in the cause of the participatory analysis of the conflict or crisis. What is expected here is a clear identification of what is happening with respect to emerging

trends in the violation of rights occasioned by the outbreak of violence. For example in the context of potential and or actual political and electoral violence, parts of the patterns of abuse and violations, may include forceful prevention from voting, disfranchisement as a result of exclusion from the voters register, prevention from witnessing the counting of votes, violent actions of political thugs and or party supporters aimed at intimidating voters, threats and actual deployment of violence to harass the electorates, dispossession of electorates, looting and burning of properties of opponents and their supporters, killing and maiming of perceived opposition supporters, deployment of the armed apparatus of the state to take sides in the elections etc.

It is this identified patterns of abuse against which spheres of actions will be developed to enhance protection. In political and electoral crisis situations that go with or without physical violence, the greatest act of violence and denial/abuse/violation of right is electoral fraud which denies the electorate the right to freely choose their leaders or representatives.

#### **EGG ALBUMEN-RESPONSIVE ACTION:**

These are immediate actions and steps taken or

to be taken in order to stop, prevent and meet the immediate needs arising from the impact of the incidence of violence, abuse, violation or denial of rights.

For example, these may include taking collective action to prevent a ballot box from being stuffed with ballot papers, preventing multiple voting, preventing party thugs from hijacking ballot boxes, detaining, restraining and handing offenders over to the police, etc. They may also include establishing mandate protection/voting integrity groups, as well as mobilising and organising to correct inadequacies in a voters' register when it is displayed publicly. Responsive actions will also include first aid for the injured, evacuation of the injured to hospitals, salvaging properties of affected persons from destruction etc.

#### **EGG MEMBRANE- REMEDIAL ACTION:**

These are actions and steps taken or to be taken in order to mitigate, address and redress the impact of the incidence of violence, abuse, violations or denial of rights. They also include actions and steps taken to facilitate the process of recovery from the impact and rehabilitation of survivors, the affected or at risk communities/groups. Such steps will include taking legal action



against offenders, seeking redress in election tribunals, protesting fraudulent elections, calling and pressing for re-run or run-off elections, as well as vote recount as the case maybe.

It will also include medical treatment for victims of violence, rehabilitation and compensation for damaged properties of affected persons, etc.

#### **EGG SHELL- ENVIRONMENT BUILDING ACTION**

The hard external shell of the egg offers protection and a more or less secure environment for the content of the egg before hatching. In the egg response model, the hard shell represents the sphere of activities where actions aimed at securing and guaranteeing the realisation of rights are

undertaken and nurtured.

These are actions and steps taken or to be taken in order to facilitate the creation and or strengthening of enabling environment towards stopping, preventing, mitigating and overcoming the impact of incidences of violence, abuse, violations and denial of rights.

These actions and steps also aid the long-term recovery and rehabilitation of survivors, affected and or at risk communities and groups.

They ensure that the underlying factors for the abuse, violation and denial of rights are addressed and redressed, and that the cause of justice prevails in ensuring the protection of the vulnerable, affected or at risk.

In the specific context of electoral and political crisis and violence, the core of environment building actions will be directed at ensuring the integrity of the electoral and political process, minimising election malpractices, ensuring a transparent, open and accountable voter registration, political party campaigning, voting, vote counting and collation and results announcement process.

Such a process must be inclusive, ensuring participation and involvement of all stakeholders in its design, implementation and management.

It will also include the existence of strong and

independent electoral institutions, the presence of impartial and responsible law enforcement agencies, with an understanding of human rights and trained to protect the population.

It will require a very alert, active and organised electorate mobilised to ensure the integrity of the process and protect the mandate while being vigilant enough to identify and restrain offenders and hand them over to the law enforcement agents. It will additionally require the existence of disciplined and patriotic political parties, guided by principles and mutually watching one another to prevent the undermining of the process.

An independent and strong media, civil society and the judiciary are very decisive components of the enabling environment. This is the sphere of constitutional, legislative and institutional reforms with respect to the electoral and political process.

Where violence has become a tradition at elections, peace building initiatives, intra and inter community reconciliation and trust building initiatives become imperative. So also is trust building between a professionally trained law enforcement agency and a conscious and actively organised and mobilised civil society and community.

# CHAPTER 3

## TRANSFORMING POWER RELATIONS WITH ACTIONS

To ensure that the variety of actions and steps that are taken in responsive, remedial and environment building spheres contribute to the empowerment of citizens and the transformation of power relations, it is necessary to situate the steps in the context of power analysis.

One simplified framework for undertaking transformative power analysis is to disaggregate power into four essential components as processes. These are:

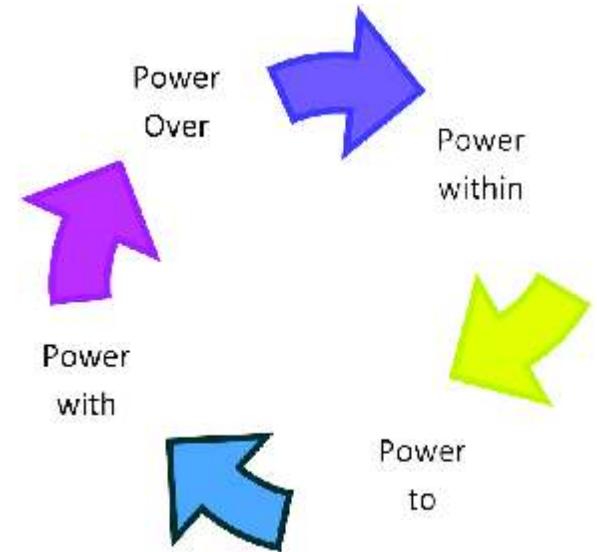
1. **Power To:** This represents the ability to undertake an action or a series of actions to influence some processes. For example organising a rally to protest a malpractice or taking action to

prevent the hijack of a ballot box by political party thugs.

2. **Power With:** This is the strength or ability derived from working with others to achieve common goals. For example establishing a group to ensure that all eligible voters actually come out to register and vote. This is the power that comes from working together, working in coalitions and alliances etc.

3. **Power Within:** This is the strength and ability/capacity that comes from one's knowledge, understanding, and exposure to issues. It is the foundation of self-confidence. For example this can be manifested in knowledge of electoral laws, knowledge of constitutional provisions etc.

4. **Power Over:** This is the power that is exercised as control over processes or things. It is essentially the power and institution that is targeted in organising and mobilising to influence change. For example, this may be the electoral institution, the police force etc.



We challenge all forms of power that result in election violence and stolen mandates by:-	How do we achieve this? Our core interventions:-
Building electorate's and citizens' confidence and power within;	Increase awareness and critical consciousness;
Strengthening electorate's and citizens' power to act on their rights and on their own behalf;	Strengthen citizens' civic and voters education, support them to organise and mobilise to ensure transparency and empower them to act to prevent malpractices;
Enhancing citizens' and electorate's collective power with others to act;	Build and strengthen citizen organisations/movements and link them to broader alliances;
Challenging and changing power over ;	Strengthen advocacy & campaigns for laws, institutions and policies for transparent, accountable and reliable electoral processes OR the effective implementation of those already in place.

## PROTECTION EGG RESPONSE MODEL ANALYTICAL MATRICES

PATTERNS OF ABUSE	RESPONSIVE ACTION	REMEDIAL ACTION	ENVIRONMENT BUILDING ACTION	POWER TO

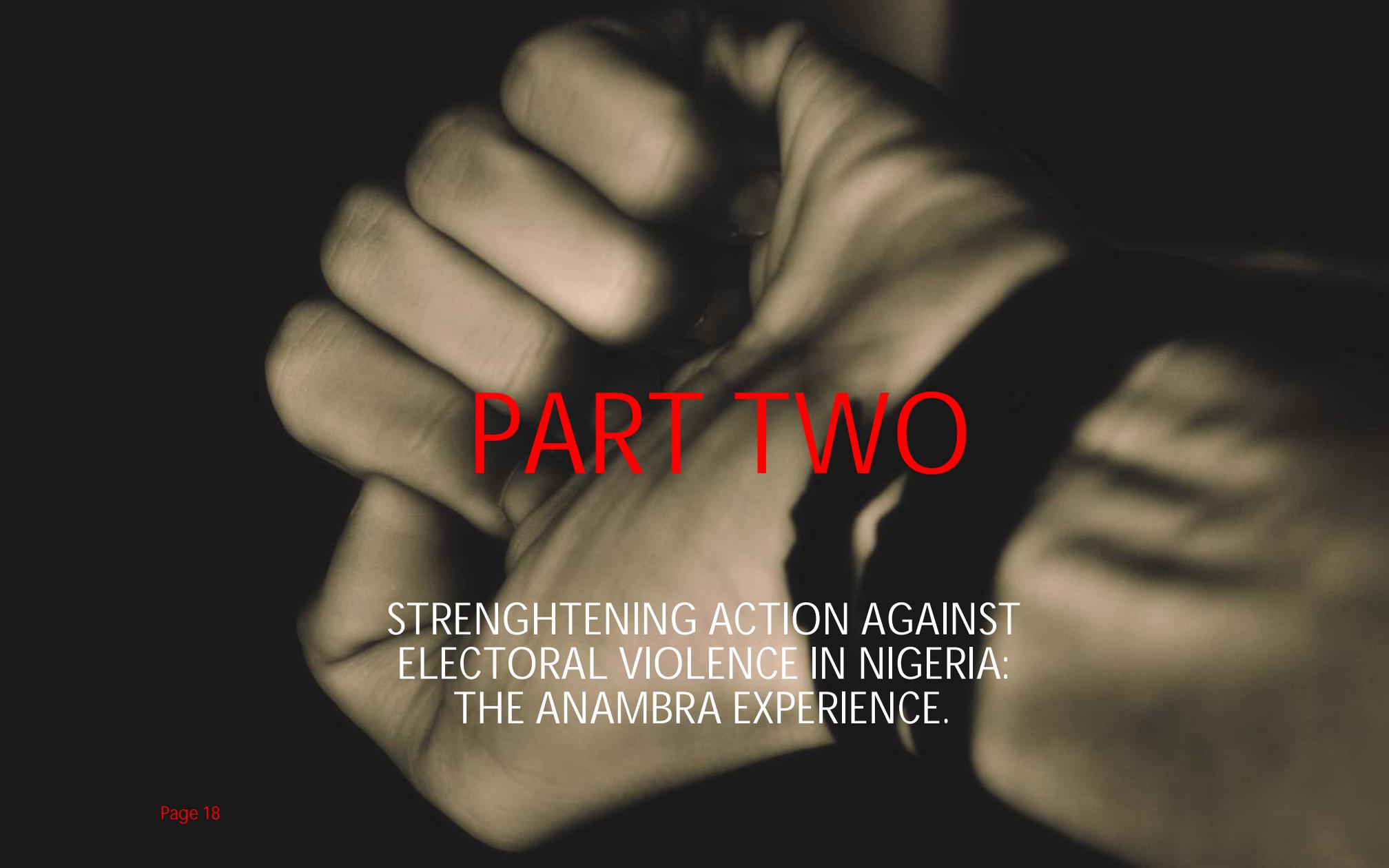
PATTERNS OF ABUSE	RESPONSIVE ACTION	REMEDIAL ACTION	ENVIRONMENT BUILDING ACTION	POWER WITH

PATTERNS OF ABUSE	RESPONSIVE ACTION	REMEDIAL ACTION	ENVIRONMENT BUILDING ACTION	POWER WITHIN

PATTERNS OF ABUSE	RESPONSIVE ACTION	REMEDIAL ACTION	ENVIRONMENT BUILDING ACTION	POWER OVER

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# PART TWO

STRENGTHENING ACTION AGAINST  
ELECTORAL VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA:  
THE ANAMBRA EXPERIENCE.

# CHAPTER 4

## Background and Context:

This report describes the context, implementation, output, outcome and impact of the Strengthening Action Against Electoral Violence in Nigeria project, focusing on the February 2010 Governorship Election in Anambra State, South East Nigeria. The intervention was deployed against the backdrop of past elections in the state which were bedeviled by widespread violence and thus wrought very adverse effects on its governance processes. There was an identified need to take appropriate steps to help to anticipate and prevent the types of violent conflict

that often accompany elections and set back development in Nigeria.

Ten years of civil rule in Nigeria have actually raised more questions about democracy than it has answered. With a constitution that concentrates too much power in the hands of the executive arm of government and the sheer indolence and self-interest that characterize the conduct of the dramatis personnel in the legislative branch of governance, the emergence of dictatorship in Nigeria appears to be a fiat accompli. The attitude and policies that guide agencies and institutions of government in Nigeria attest to the fact that agents of governments at all levels see their jobs as doing favour to Nigerians rather than being a normal duty and service. The glaring effect of this is that Nigeria runs a government that is neither in the hands of the people nor rooted in the rule of law as well as the principles and practices of democracy. To them, people do not count; so their votes! This has increased the tempo of election rigging and its attendant violence in Nigeria

This was particularly the case in Anambra State where the state agencies and security organs had failed to protect the lives and property of the people, let alone supporting credible election. Arising from this development are a number of questions: Why were the state and its security organs unable to respond to the early warning signs? Was it not possible for the state and its security organs to contain the escalation, magnitude and lingering of conflict, especially electoral conflict? Why were the police, SSS and other

para-military forces charged with the maintenance of internal security always overwhelmed by violent situations? Finally, what were the act(s) of commission or omission of the state organs (especially INEC) and the security institutions that led to the persistence of conflict which in one instance in the past culminated in the kidnapping of a serving Governor in the State? What hope can now be created?

The imperative of providing answers to these questions and much more led to the decision of AAN, with support from DfID, to implement the project on Strengthening Action Against Electoral Violence in Nigeria, with the focus on the February 6, 2010 governorship election in Anambra State.

### Objectives

The specific objectives of the project were:

1. To reduce the risk of electoral violence
2. To support and empower stakeholders (the people, electoral management body, and security agencies) to organise peaceful elections and avoid electoral violence in the state.

### Activities

To ensure that the project achieved the objectives, the following activities were carried out:

- i. Civic/Voters' Education & Election monitoring on the field.
- ii. Capacity Support/Media dialogue on role of media in preventing electoral violence in Nigeria

(Focusing on Anambra) for Political Editors in Lagos.

- iii. Capacity Support for Political Correspondents on role of media in preventing electoral violence in Nigeria (focusing on Anambra) for political correspondents in Anambra State
- iv. Capacity Support for State/Security Organs & Stakeholders on policing to protect people and democracy during elections
- v. Capacity Support on practical issues in electoral violence: INEC's relevance and responsibilities

#### Implementation (general observation)

All the activities scheduled to take place under the project were actually undertaken as follows:

- December 19, 2009 – February 6, 2010: Civic/Voters' education & election monitoring on the field
- January 18, 2010: Capacity support/ media dialogue on role of media in preventing electoral violence in Nigeria (Focusing on Anambra) for Political Editors in Lagos. The Guest speech on The role of the media in preventing electoral violence: The Anambra challenge was presented by Mr. Lanre Idowu, Executive Director of Media Review while other presentations (PPT) were made on Conflict sensitive journalism and methodologies for reporting elections ahead Anambra 2010, by Lanre Arogundade, Director of International Press Centre (IPC) and Challenges in Anambra elections: Media as a critical element in

AAN & DFID's interventions by Gbenro Olajuyigbe, AAN.

- January 21, 2010: Capacity support for state/security organs & stakeholders on: Policing to protect people and democracy during elections. Presentations were made on Policing Election by Dr. Otiye Igbuzor, Executive Director, African Centre for Leadership, Strategy & Development (Centre LSD); Promoting protection in policing by Gbenro Olajuyigbe, AAN and The Media and Security Agencies as partners in violence-free polls - Anambra 2010 in focus by Lanre Arogundade, Director of International Press Centre (IPC).

- January 25, 2010: Capacity support on practical issues in electoral violence: INEC's relevance and responsibilities. The presentations were Electoral violence in Nigeria by Dr. Otiye Igbuzor, Executive Director, African Centre for Leadership, Strategy & Development (Centre LSD); Reducing the risk of electoral violence in Anambra gubernatorial election by Gbenro Olajuyigbe, AAN and Preventing electoral violence: Stakeholders' responsibilities – INEC, Parties, Candidates, Security Agencies etc by Lanre Arogundade, Director of International Press Centre (IPC).

- January 27, 2010: Capacity support for political Correspondents on role of media in preventing electoral violence in Nigeria (Focusing on Anambra). The topics presented

and discussed were Media, conflict sensitive journalism and Anambra 2010 by Lanre Arogundade, Director of International Press Centre (IPC) and Media as a critical element in AAN & DFID's Interventions by Gbenro Olajuyigbe, AAN.



The Campaign Messages

# CHAPTER 5

## METHODOLOGY

The Project was designed to strengthen the capacity of the various stakeholders in the electoral spectrum namely, the Electoral body, Security Agencies, the Media and the People. Therefore, the Environment Building Action approach/methodology was adopted. Actions that consolidate political, social, cultural, institutional and legal norms conducive to protection were deployed. These actions are concerned with moving society as a whole towards

protection norms by limiting or preventing current and future violence and abuses. Environment Building Action was aimed at influencing changes in the political, social and cultural environment to ensure that they enhance the guarantee of rights, thereby creating an atmosphere for credible and safe elections. This entailed:

1. **Mapping/Tracking and documenting the trends/ patterns of violence that have attended the state since 1999 upon return to democracy in Nigeria:** All incidents of violence in Nigeria and the state were tracked. The idea behind this was to assess the level at which the state is prone to violence, its trends and dynamics. It should be noted that the incidents of violence to be recorded were not restricted to only political violence but also those of communal and social nature. Also, a review of national newspapers was carried out with a view to tracking media documentation of all incidents of political violence all over Nigeria from 1999 to date.



With the Politicians



Participants at the capacity training for Security Agencies in Anambra State



Officers of the Nigeria Police at the Training

2. **Support through capacity building workshops the Conflict de-escalating roles that state organs and security institutions can play in achieving credible election:** This focused on building the capacity of the security agencies deployed during elections so as to checkmate the use of electoral officials and security forces to suppress people's mandate, repress dissent and prevent overt challenge to the manipulative activities of desperate political actors. This component of the project entailed engagement with the EMB and law enforcement agencies with a view to fine-tuning mechanisms for ensuring the protection of lives.

3. **Support and work with Networks, Organisations and the media to perform Conflict de-escalating roles in achieving credible election:** this entailed Capacity support for Media Practitioners, especially Political Editors, correspondents among others on guiding principles on election reportage, news reportage based on responsibility rather than pressure and exigencies, eliminating problems of bias reportage and construct errors among others.



With Political Editors in Lagos

4. **Support and carry out Civic and Voter education:** The idea was to use campaign to bring about attitude and behaviour change in citizens and voters in such a way that it will diminish or even completely eliminate the ability of local politicians to galvanize their supporters to engage in violent actions. The campaigns helped to make prospective voters counteract the effect of political violence on them by refusing to be intimidated and go out to vote or to deliberately vote against politicians whose stock in trade is to

employ violence as a means of achieving their objectives. The campaign took the form of media advertisements, distribution of handbills, person-to-person interactions with a view to taking key anti-violence messages to the people. The Civic and Voter Education Campaign was conducted in the state by three different groups working in the state's three senatorial districts –Anambra Central, Anambra South and Anambra North.

#### Campaign Format

The Campaign was simple and implemented in a uniform fashion across the state. It used the following media:

1. T-Shirts
2. Meetings at which focused group discussions based on the campaign messages were held.
3. Inter-personal communication (especially with key informants)
4. Behaviour change communication materials - Leaflets & handbills



Voter Education Field officers with the Project Coordinator



Civic/Voters' Education at a Market place in Akwa



AAN/DFID Team's Interactive session with Youth Corpers expected to be deployed as INEC Ad-hoc Staff for the 6 February Anambra elections



# CHAPTER 6

## RESULTS

At the conclusion of the entire project, the following results were recorded:  
Outputs of the ActionAid/DfID Intervention

1. The commitment to promote peaceful elections and shun violence, as extracted from the candidates, (Peter Obi, Chukwuma Soludo, Chris

Ngige, Ekwunife (Mrs.), etc were made into radio/television jingles. These were sent to the various broadcast media organisations in the state and played at regular intervals in the days leading to the election. These served to convey the message to the populace that the candidates are themselves committed to eschewing violence as a strategy for achieving their political objectives.

2. Radio and Television jingles directed at the voters, political parties and their candidates enjoining them to avoid electoral violence.

3. T-shirts bearing messages in line with the objectives of the project. These were: "Vote Against Violence", "Your Vote is Your Right and Your Power."

4. Detailed reports of each components of the project including photographs and videos and a final project evaluation report.

### Outcomes of the ActionAid/DfID Intervention

1. The contacts in the three senatorial districts communicated with the Field Officers throughout the voting period on February 6, 2010 giving up-to-date reports. Most of the reports focused on incidents like delayed arrival of voting materials, ballot box snatching, omission of voters' name from the register, etc which were promptly relayed to the appropriate authorities

2. Although the pre-election media coverage was

sometimes sensational, the Reporters on the field demonstrated alertness to warning signals about likely crisis and sought to cross check their facts before going to the press. Thus, for example, the visit of the AAN team to the Anambra State Commissioner of Police afforded journalists to obtain first hand and updated information on the arrest of a Pentecostal pastor who was alleged to be in possession of many voters' card contrary to the provision of the Electoral Act 2006. The report of the January 22, 2010 was summarized as follows:

\* The delegation was well received by the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Philemon Leha.

\* Discussions on violence free election in Anambra and the Action Plans were held.

\* Action plans were presented to the Commissioner for ratification and implementation.

\* The Commissioner of Police immediately ratified the Action Plans, on the spot dispatched officers to go and deliver the Action Plans to Area Commanders in Onitsha, Akwa, Nnewi among others for full implementation in their areas.

\* The delegation and the Commissioner of Police jointly addressed a Press Conference on the Action Plans and the commitment of Police to fully implement same.

\* This was witnessed and recorded by NTA, Anambra Broadcasting Service, The Guardian, This day, Business Day, Vanguard and others.

\* The same delegation met with the Nigeria Security & Civil Defense Corps Commandant in Akwa for the same reason.

3. Some of the journalists who participated in the capacity building workshops contacted the AAN-DFID team for up-to-date information on the day of voting. They were able to speak with some of the team leaders and in the process enriched the content of their reports on what actually transpired during voting

4. The post-election media reportage of the elections played on the positive aspects, such as the general peaceful conduct despite few instances of ballot box snatching while not downplaying the shortcomings especially on the part of INEC whose poor preparation led to the late commencement of voting in many places

5. The press release issued by AAN warning INEC to live up to its responsibility of ensuring credible election and the interview with Gbenro Olajuyigbe, leader of the AAN-DFID team were widely used by the major newspapers shortly before the polling day. So also a features article by Lanre Arogundade, the field officer responsible for the media. There were also some other reports in the newspapers on the activities of AAN-DFID in

relation to the elections. Among the newspapers are Leadership, The Nation, Daily Trust, Thisday, Guardian, Vanguard, Newsday and the Compass.

6. Security Agencies that participated in the election comported themselves well and professionally. Unlike in the past when they were used by politicians and other interest groups to rig election and intimidate people, they were well positioned for protection of people and the integrity of vote.

Generally, it can be said that:

1. The people are now ready to shun electoral violence and violent politicians in future elections.

2. The people now realise the implications of selling their votes for good governance.

3. Security agencies now realize that they can actually help to reduce the incidence of electoral violence to the barest minimum if not eliminate them completely.

4. With the civic and voter education along with the radio and television jingles, the mindset of the people has changed as their confidence has been built to appreciate that their votes are capable of determining their future

5. The people welcomed the intervention and called for more of it and this is reflected in the warm reception accorded to the field officers everywhere they went in the state.

#### Immediate Impact of the ActionAid/DfID Intervention

The target groups as participants in the civic education and capacity building programmes confessed to having benefitted from the intervention and on that basis worked individually and collectively to facilitate violence-free poll

1. Participants at the capacity building programmes were able to listen to perceptions about their respective organisations, learned from the experiences of others and appreciate the important role of other stake-holders and the challenges they face through open, frank and honest discussions. This was particularly the case during the capacity building workshops that brought INEC, the security agencies and the journalists together. It turned out that each group regarded the other as being corrupt and contributing to non-credible elections in the country. There were remarks on the challenges that the groups faced, admission of shortcomings and pledges to do things better

2. The journalists (editors and reporters) who participated in the capacity building programmes said that their knowledge of politics

as conflict was greatly enhanced while they understood better that applying the principles of conflict-sensitive-journalism helps to promote the peaceful conduct of elections. Although confessing to the constraints posed by media ownership which sometimes has deep rooted political interests, they nonetheless pledged to abide with journalistic ethics and use that to improve their reporting of politics especially by touching on the issues that affect the people

3. The discussions and interviews at the capacity building programme for political editors

were well reported by both the broadcast and print media in Lagos, thus helping to spread the violence-free poll message of AAN-DFID

4. The field officers who undertook the civic education had useful insights into the complexities of electoral management in the country and confessed that they are better armed for future work on elections. They particularly noted the importance of working with grassroots organisations and opinion leaders in the communities

#### Achievement of the ActionAid/DfID Intervention

1. The civic and voter education along with the radio and television jingles led to increased awareness among the people that they can play a role in eschewing violence in the electoral process. They actually demonstrated this during the Anambra governorship elections as they did not react violently when majority of them could not find their names on the voters' register as a result of which they were denied the opportunity of voting.

2. The voter education also impacted on the level of voter turnout as large number of voters turned out to vote even though most of them eventually failed to vote as a result of not finding their names on the voters' register.

3. Organisations that are traditionally known

to be used to perpetrate political violence like National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) avowed their unwillingness to be used as tools for electoral violence and there were no reported case of their involvement in perpetrating violence on behalf of any politician during the elections.

4. The security agencies in Anambra State carried out their duties during the elections with a high sense of responsibility and commitment as they actually acted in accordance with the commitment given at the capacity building workshop. There was a strong presence of the police, the military, civil defence corps, and other security agents in the state during the election. This had the positive effect of drastically reducing violence during the election. On the average there were five policemen at every polling station. Generally the policemen and other security personnel were civil in their conduct except for few incidents.

5. People are now willing to speak up about electoral irregularities as they actually put calls through to the voter education field officers to intimate them of happenings during the election including the few cases of ballot box snatching, issues concerning the absence of most voters' names on the register, etc.

6. The people actually waited after casting their votes with a view to defending their votes.

7. The media carried out their reportage of the elections in accordance with conflict de-escalating procedures.

#### Recommendations

1. There is the need for vigorous engagement with INEC to persuade it to work on areas of perceived lapses in its operations especially in the area of voters' register, voter education, etc.

2. Government and INEC should consider having elections staggered. Findings from the field during the Anambra elections showed that staggered elections, while not being a deliberate act or policy provided the opportunity for various groups to focus on the details of the electoral process as all energies of groups working on various aspects of the electoral process were concentrated on the state. Therefore it would be a great service to the enthronement of electoral democracy in the country if subsequent reforms of the Electoral Act would take into account the provision for staggered elections in the country.

3. There is a disconnect in terms of information sharing and logistics between and within the various bodies involved in the conduct of the elections. In the various stakeholders meeting held in the course of executing the project, the various government agencies including INEC and the security agencies all seem to be on different pages on the level of preparedness. To this end it is important that in subsequent elections the various agencies of government involved in the elections should cooperate with one another to share and plan towards improving on the efficiency and credibility of the process.

4. In all the locations, the people expressed the desire to see the campaign carried out nationwide. There is therefore the opportunity to scale up the campaign with an eye on the 2011 elections in Nigeria. If this is to be successful it should be started early say, by the middle of 2010.

5. IEC materials should be designed using slang's and local languages that the communities will identify with.

6. The planning for ActionAid/DfID intervention towards the 2011 should commence early.

In conclusion, even though time for the intervention was short, the intervention was excellently implemented, delivered and achieved its objectives. Its success will definitely serve as model for future engagements.



## ActionAid Nigeria

ActionAid is an International Non-Governmental organisation registered in The Netherlands with headquarters in Johannesburg South Africa. ActionAid International works in over 50 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. 25 of these country programmes, affiliates or associates are in Africa and are led by Africans. All country

programmes have since 2003 been operating as equal partners with equal say on how we operate.

ActionAid was founded in the United Kingdom in 1972 and was then known as Action in Distress. It was formed as a child sponsorship agency. It also commenced operations on the continent of Africa in 1972 and in Nigeria since 1999.

The organisation started programming with service delivery, especially assistance to orphans and poor children to access primary education. Now, we utilise Rights-based Approach in our work.

ActionAid works with the poor and excluded, promoting values and commitment in civil society, institutions and governments with the aim of achieving structural changes in order to eradicate injustices and poverty in the world.

The ActionAid Nigeria programme commenced programmatic operations in January 2000 after a Country appraisal which found poverty in the midst of plenty. We commenced work then through a Country Agreement signed with the National Planning Commission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Our works are defined in Six Thematic Areas of (i) Right to Health (R2H); (ii) Right to Education; (iii) Right to Human Security in Conflict and Emergencies (iv) Women's Rights (v) Right to Food; and (vi) Right to Just and Democratic Governance. Linking all these is our geographically based integrated Partnerships Against Poverty (PAP) which is being implemented in twelve states of the federation. We are building on the experiences and lessons learnt from the initial work, and where appropriate creating linkages with existing thematic areas. Promoting the right to just and democratic governance and Women's Rights are cross-cutting themes which apply across the whole programme, but also have stand alone initiatives.

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An abstract graphic design featuring a central, semi-transparent blue sphere. From the sphere, several flowing, ribbon-like shapes in shades of blue and white extend outwards, creating a sense of movement and depth. The background is a solid, deep black, which makes the glowing blue elements stand out prominently.

<http://www.actionaid-nigeria.org>