



Primary concern:

why women are not part of decision making and local governance

Acknowledgement

Authors: Dr. Abdulkareem Lawal and Emeka Nwankwo.

Research assistants: Emeka Ijeomah, Chiamaka Ibeanu and Nneka Ugwu.

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Executive summary

The resolutions and action plan resulting from the stock-take of MDGs in 2010 reflect issues that centre on taking action to improve the number and active participation of women in all political and economic decision-making processes, including investing in women's leadership in local decision-making structures and creating an even playing field for men and women in political and government institutions.

The focus of this report is on the existing policies and practices affecting women's involvement and participation in decision making as well as local governance. ActionAid recognises that the overall development of a country depends upon the maximum utilisation of her people, both men and women. However, in most states where ActionAid Nigeria implements its local rights programmes, the status of women is much lower than that of men in every sphere of life despite that women comprise half of the total population. Women are indentified with domestic life while politics is viewed as a male-dominated public activity that is typically masculine in nature.

ActionAid Nigeria believes that if local government is to meet the needs of both women and men, it must build on the experiences of both women and men, through an equal representation at all levels and in all fields of decision-making, covering the wide range of responsibilities of local governments. Women's role in decision-making is one of the most important questions for consideration in the movement for their empowerment.

Keeping in mind the importance of women's participation in decision-making, the report highlights that at the household level, women are involved in important decisions. At least half of women (50%) are involved either solely or jointly with their husbands in decisions concerning children's school fees. Whereas 59% of women are involved either solely or jointly in decisions concerning food at the household level, two-thirds of the women (63%) decide solely or jointly with their husbands on how to spend their (women) income. In about two-thirds of the communities, women are part of the local village council but representation is very low. In an FCT community for example, only three women hold traditional positions out of over 23 key positions that exist in the council. Dictates of 'tradition' is commonly cited as reason for excluding women from seating in traditional councils.

At the local council level, the research observed that there are no policies/structures on ground to encourage women's representation in the administration of the council. Although there is a national gender policy in

place, the extent to which this is understood at the sub national level is very low. As such, local governments are not necessarily concerned about the 35% affirmative action, which the policy advocates. The study, however, revealed that there is a keen interest in seeking women involvement at local government levels by community people, as 90% of the respondents believed that women and girls can contribute to plans and budget of the local government. Illiteracy, ignorance, apathy as well as domestic responsibilities were major issues mentioned as factors militating against women's involvement in local governance.

On the political scene, women and men respondents confirmed that women participation in politics is very low and not encouraging. Across the states, women constituted only between 1% and 23% of all appointed or elected persons, except in Ebonyi state where there more women in appointive positions. Major reasons adduced for this are cultural inhibitions and lack of funds.

The research concludes that although there are legal and policy frameworks such as the Nigerian constitution and the National Gender Policy which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and promote equal opportunity in all areas of political, social, economic life of the country for women, as well as for men, informal norms centred on the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society are strong and pervasive drivers of gender inequality and exclusion of women from decision making and local governance. Other social or situational characteristics such as illiteracy and economic status are important drivers of women exclusion.

It is recommended that women-only forums are needed to protect women from inequitable power relations, enabling them to develop agendas that can be voiced in formal decision-making processes. This is because participatory spaces tend to reproduce existing power relations, thus requiring that mechanisms for participation must be designed and implemented differently if they are to enable women to influence state policy and programmes.

It is also recommended that women and men alike in communities require further sensitisation on the rights of women and their involvement in decision making and local governance.



Background

Introduction

The past three decades have seen great progress in securing women's formal rights and constitutional guarantees of equality. To date, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the most widely supported international human rights treaty and the primary international vehicle for monitoring and advocating gender equality. CEDAW established a comprehensive framework for the advancement of women (World Bank, 2011). In 2003, the African Union adopted the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Better known as the Maputo Protocol, it asserts women's rights to take part in the political process, to enjoy social and political equality with men, and to control their reproductive health (African Union, 2003).

One of the major objectives as stated in the Nigeria National Gender Policy put in place in 2006 is to "Achieve minimum threshold of representation for women in order to promote equal opportunity in all areas of political, social, economic life of the country for women, as well as for men". Indeed, women are active in all the sectors of the Nigerian economy including in politics. However, according to Aina *et al.* (2008), gender inequalities constitute critical constraints to their effective participation. Across the country there is widespread discrimination against women, and gender-based violence is pervasive. Household income controlled by women is more likely to be used for social costs such as medicines and school costs, so gender inequalities also limit how the benefits of economic growth are distributed to the poorest.

Notwithstanding the outstanding performance of a few key women appointed at the highest level in the past few years, the low number of women in positions of power and decision-making at every level in Nigeria is still striking. Women constitute about 49% of the total population and yet hold less than one-tenth of political and elective positions. According to DFID (2010), with regard to elective positions, women participation in political offices from 1999 to 2006 was recorded to be at 6%. In 2007, the number of women in the National assembly was about 7%. As at mid-2008 out of a total of 148 appointments at the federal level, 17 were female, representing about 11%. In 2009, only an average of about 21% of the population had access to a bank services. A breakdown of this showed that 15% of women had access to some form of banking account or instrument,

compared to 27% of men. Women make up 35% of those who have access to Microfinance Banks.

Women are also disadvantaged in their access to employment opportunities. They make up only 11% of the workforce in the industrial sector while within the lucrative extractive industry this figure approaches zero. In the Federal Civil Service, 24% of employees are women, but women are only 14% of senior management, and therefore seriously under-represented at that level. More than 70% of Nigerian women in the labour force are employed in small, semi-formal and informal undertakings (Nigeria NGO Coalition on CEDAW, 2008).

A key constraint in developing more effective policies and programs is the scarcity of current and reliable sex-disaggregated data. Whilst some progress is being made in this regard in some sectors - education certainly and perhaps health - there is still a long way to go before the collection, collation and analysis of data routinely includes a gender dimension.

Objectives and structure of the report

The objective of this report is to provide (1) baseline information necessary for ActionAid Nigeria and its implementing partners across nine selected LRP states in conceptualising and developing a programming framework for its work that will be effective and sustainable to achieve its strategic goals. (2) an analysis of women's involvement and participation in local governance as well as the cultural barriers to such; factors that support or undermine women's participation, and opportunities and threats for implementing women and local governance work. In addition, the report will be used at national and local levels as a tool to advocate for reform that would ensure creation of quota for women in democratic institutions as well as their participation in local governance.

The report is structured into four parts. Section 2 describes the methodology employed for the research. In section 3, this report documents findings in relation to objective of the research. Drawing on our research, the report goes on to draw a brief conclusion and the plausible programme implications.



How the research was done

Research design

This report draws together desk-based research on the national context, with state-specific research commissioned in eight (8) states – Akwa Ibom, Delta, Bauchi, Gombe, Ebonyi, Ondo, Kogi, Kwara and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The field work took place between March and April 2011, and included both national and local-level research. At the national level, the research was based upon interviews with key government officials, as well as desk-based research. At the local level, a range of research methods were utilised including: focus group discussions with community members, particularly women and interviews with officials of state and local government institutions, community leaders and NGO staff. The local level research sites were selected to provide a representation of different parts of the state and reflect the reality in both urban and rural settings.

A methodological meeting was held both at the national and state levels. In each state, a similar meeting was held before data collection as a way of refining the final instruments especially on issues such as the appropriate interpretation of interview schedule contents in local dialects, as instruments were developed in English Language.

Sample size

The sample size had been arbitrarily determined with ActionAid Nigeria team to spread equally across the states, including equal number of women, men and school children. The study population was chosen because ActionAid wanted the research conducted with groups of its primary stakeholders; school children, men and women. A sample size of 60 was intended per state (i.e., 20 each for women and men, and 10 each for school girls and boys). With the intention to conduct the study in eight states and the FCT, this amounted to a maximum 540 sample size. In addition, various community leaders, relevant state governments, local government councils, ministries, agencies, institutions, and non government organisations were selected to participate at least with a representative included in the study sample.

Table 1 show that responses from 471 participants (155 women, 151 men, 84 girls and 81 boys) were analysed. Respondents were mostly selected from rural areas (95.3%). A shortfall of 69 (13%) was recorded due to various factors, such as incomplete number of interviews by some data collectors, missing values and coding errors. The refrain from areas with political crises accounted for as low as about 43% returns from the affected state.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

	Rural		Urban		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
States						
FCT	51	11.4	9	40.9	60	12.7
Gombe	57	12.7	2	9.1	59	12.5
Ebonyi	56	12.5	4	18.2	60	12.7
Ondo	54	12.0	6	27.3	60	12.7
Akwa Ibom	59	13.1	-	-	59	12.5
Kogi	45	10.0	-	-	45	9.6
Bauchi	26	5.8	-	-	26	5.5
Kwara	44	9.8	-	-	44	9.3
Delta	57	12.7	1	4.5	58	12.3
Gender						
Women	149	33.2	6	27.3	155	32.9
Men	142	31.6	9	40.9	151	32.1
Girls	79	17.6	5	22.7	84	17.8
Boys	79	17.6	2	9.1	81	17.2
Total	449	95.3	22	4.7	471	100.0

Two Local Government Areas (LGAs) were included in all select states and respondents were recruited in select communities ActionAid Nigeria already implements programmes with its partners. The study sample was obtained from 20 LGAs with participants from 52 communities. Table 2 above presents the distribution of respondents in the communities within the LGA across the states.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents in Communities across LGA and States

States	LGA	Community	Number	%
FCT	Kwali	Kilankwa II	27	5.7
		Sheda	1	0.2
Gombe	AMAC	Jiwa	32	6.8
		Kupto	27	5.7
	Funakaye	Garin Abba	2	0.2
		Lashadar	3	0.6
		Lalaipido	19	4.0
	Shongom	Lakenturum	3	0.6
		Bindim	Legan	2
Ebonyi	Biliri	Panguru	1	0.2
		Shela	2	0.4
	Abakaliki	Okpitemo	28	0.4
		Edda	2	0.4
	Afikpo	Ozziza	2	0.4
		Ezi-Ihere	2	0.4
		Amuro	17	3.6

		Mgbom	2	0.4
		Ezi-Udume	1	0.2
		Ezi-Ologw	1	0.2
		Ezi-Eni	1	0.2
		Agba-Ameta	4	0.8
Ondo	Ile Oluji/Oke Igbo	Wasinmi Odunwo	27	5.7
		Adesoji Odunwo	3	0.6
	Akure North	Alayere	30	6.4
Akwa Ibom	Mkpat Enin	Minya Ntak	30	6.4
	Oruk Anam	Ediena Attai	29	6.2
Kogi	Igalamela	Ofuloko	14	3.0
		Etutu	8	1.7
	Odolu	Ajaka	3	0.6
	Adavi	Osarangada	20	4.2
Bauchi	Kirfi	Kwagal	23	4.9
		Garindankwa	2	0.4
		Tubule	1	0.2
Kwara	Asa	Igboroko	16	3.4
		Gbodo	1	0.2
		Apa	1	0.2
		Buduaro	1	0.2
		Sama	3	0.6
		Gbazo	1	0.2
		Ipetu	1	0.2
	Kaiama	Tenebo	16	3.4
		Tungan Majie	3	0.6
		Nuku	1	0.2
Delta	Ndokwa East	Obikwele	3	0.6
		Abuator	25	5.3
		Ossissa	3	0.6
	Ughelli South	Ophorigba	2	0.4
		Otegbo	9	1.9
		Emonu-Orogun	11	2.3
		Ebor-Orogun	3	0.6
		Egbo-Ideh	1	0.2
		Otutuama	1	0.2
Total	20	52	471	100.0

Table 3 presents the number of focus groups, in-depth interviews and key informant interviews conducted to supplement the data for the study. At least 2 focus groups were conducted per state for men and women in the community. The total in-depth interviews conducted were 45. Twenty-three key informant interviews were conducted.

Table 3: Number of Qualitative Interviews and Discussions Held

	FGD	IDI	KII
States			
FCT	4	3	2
Gombe	4	11	2
Ebonyi	4	2	6
Ondo	3	9	1
Akwa Ibom	3	7	5
Kogi	4	1	3
Bauchi	2	3	3
Kwara	4	4	-
Delta	3	5	1
Sex			
Female	15	26	11
Male	16	19	12
Total	31	45	23

Selection of study participants

The study covered eight of the states and the FCT where ActionAid Nigeria implements its Local Rights Programme with partners and community groups. The selection represented, roughly, the programmes with focus on women's rights. The LGAs and communities hosting the programme were purposively chosen as well as relevant ministries, agencies, organisations and institutions within the state capitals. The FCT was treated like a state for all practical purposes within the study, and thus, the same number of participants and methods as in other states applied to it.

The selection of participants was such that it covered the entire communities in the Local Rights Programme within the LGA. The distribution was such that a good balance was achieved between the different LGAs and between both sexes. Participants in the survey and focus groups were selected mostly in the rural areas. The key informants and participants in the in-depth interviews were selected from the communities and relevant offices in the local government and state capitals.

Data collection and management

A research team of six members handled the data collection in each state. The team comprised: ActionAid staff, partners, and consultants. Prior to the data collection exercise, a planning and methodology development exercise was held with the research team in Abuja. During the meeting, the rationale, objectives and proposed methodology of the study were thoroughly discussed. Following the draft of the research instruments a pre-testing exercise and training was held for the research team in Lokoja, Kogi state. The research instruments were critically examined and each question explained. Participants studied and used the instruments on a pilot basis in the selected communities in Kogi state. The participants practiced with the

final instruments and the data generated was also included in the eventual data analysis.

In each state, the research instruments were thoroughly explained to the representatives of ActionAid partners prior to the data collection exercise. The team leaders worked with partners to coordinate the data collection exercise in each state, and undertook daily checks on completed questionnaires and reports of qualitative processes. Data entry and editing were through the use of spreadsheet and SPSS with codes built on it to guide the entry.

The research instruments

The research instruments administered included a set of three questionnaires targeting women, men and school children; focus group discussions, key informant interview and in-depth interview guides targeting groups of women and men in the communities, community and opinion leaders, as well as representatives from relevant institutions and organisations.

Data analysis techniques

Data collation and transcription

Proper data handling is critical for analysis, thus care was taken to ensure that the data collected were properly managed both at the field level, as well as at the level of transcription. While on the field, each schedule was checked for simple errors as they were completed and then sorted by category of respondent (female, male, young, adult); on a daily basis. To take care of qualitative data and because of their inherent analysis therein, each team completed a draft report mainly in bullet points, of the FGDs and in-depth interviews as they were carried out, and submitted such to the state team leaders.

At the end of the data collection process, the interview schedules were coded and transcribed by the research associates in each team. In order to ensure quality control and eliminate data entry errors as much as possible, the transcribed data were cross-checked by one of the authors. Data transcription was done using MS Excel software.

Data Analysis

The transcribed data was exported from MS Excel to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. As part of the data analysis, a “cleaning process” was undertaken that involved the generation of frequency tables of all variables for validation. A final cleaned and edited dataset was produced from this process for analysis. Each state team leader was responsible for pooling together, a summary of the issues from all the FGDs in their respective states. These pooled reports have been used as the basis for this consolidated report.

Limitations to the research

The sequencing of activities and available time to execute them (organising AA Nigeria staff members, implementing partner staffs, methodology meetings at state level, participation, etc.) run against each other and flexibility in sequencing and merging of various components was limited. The timeframe for the research, given the scope and depth of assessments, was clearly ambitious. The short time available for the implementing partner staff and other state-based facilitators to internalise research materials and reproduce such in local language may have inhibited to some extent proper responses to interviews. It is not in doubt that given more time, further detailed attention would have revealed much more qualitative information.

Because the research process took place in March, it was approaching the general elections and the data collection was further hampered by the fact that the research team needed to explain to respondents that the process had nothing to do with the approaching elections of April 2011. However, the critical point was that the quality of outputs, were maintained.



Research findings

The sections that follow present findings from the response in respect of women's participation in local governance. This is situated within the framework of their involvement in decision-making at the household and community levels on the one hand; and their involvement in political and elective positions on the other hand. The analysis draws mainly from the focus group discussions (FGDs) with female and male groups, as well as individual responses from researcher-administered schedules. Individual responses are pooled from a random sample of 155 females and 157 males spread across the study communities.

Policy and legal framework

There has been significant progress made in the policy arena on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). A National Gender Policy was adopted in 2006 and it provides the framework for addressing gender issues and there are significant gender elements within home-grown policies such as the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS). A number of Nigeria's states have enacted laws to eliminate discrimination against women, including laws related to widowhood practices and female genital mutilation, prohibition of early marriage, education and trafficking in women and children. There are also provisions for legal aid to assist women, particularly poor women (Nigeria NGO Coalition, 2008).

In the Nigerian constitution of 1999 as amended 2010, the section on fundamental objectives states that "discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, sex, religion, ethnic or linguistic association or ties shall be prohibited". A major target of the 2006 national gender policy is to adopt special measures, quotas and mechanisms for achieving minimum critical threshold of women in political offices, party organs and public life by pursuing 35% affirmative action in favour of women to bridge gender gaps in political representation in both elective and appointive posts at all levels by 2015.

However, although these legal frameworks generally promote gender equality, there are major challenges in the implementation of policy commitments. Whereas quotas exist for women's representation in the workforce and in political institutions for example, little progress is being made to achieve them. The bill to domesticate the convention on the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) has failed to pass in the National Assembly till date. These issues are compounded by a highly patriarchal society and unequal relations between men and women.

According to Aina *et al.*, (2008), there is a clear social perception of a “respectable” woman’s role, which emphasises childbearing, managing home life and supporting her husband’s career and social networks. In the private sphere, gender relations place household decision-making in the hands of men, even in relation to girls’ and women’s access to basic services. This curtails women’s autonomy even further, resulting in extremely low levels of access to services and assets among women and similarly poor social indicators. In the public sphere, gender stereotypes and women’s generally lower educational attainment further impact women’s chances in life by limiting employment opportunities and their ability to rise to senior positions.

This lack of enforcement of the formal rules allows the informal rules to dominate public behaviours. The formal rules are made more complex by the federal system that exists in Nigeria, which gives both federal and state bodies the authority to pass legislation and form policies. This often results in a patchwork legal framework, where certain bills have been passed at the federal level, but not in all 36 states, and vice versa. For example the child rights act has been in place at the federal level but not all the 36 states have ‘domesticated’ the act. Religious and cultural differences between states are particular factors which serve to open or close legal and policy spaces.

Women’s involvement in decision-making

The research looked at women’s participation in local governance from two perspectives – one at the level of household and community, and another at the official level (public sector work and politics). According to the World Bank (2011), there are differences in voice in households and in society. In many countries, women—especially poor women—have less say over decisions and less control over resources in their households. And in most countries, women participate less in formal politics than men and are under-represented in its upper echelons.

As a proxy to determine women’s involvement in decision-making at the household level, the research asked married female respondents to indicate who in the household mainly decides on certain critical issues such as how much to spend on food, children’s schooling, savings and spending own income. Figure 1 below shows that 59% of women are involved either solely or jointly in decisions concerning food at the household level.

Figure 1: Responses by females on who decides on food issues in households

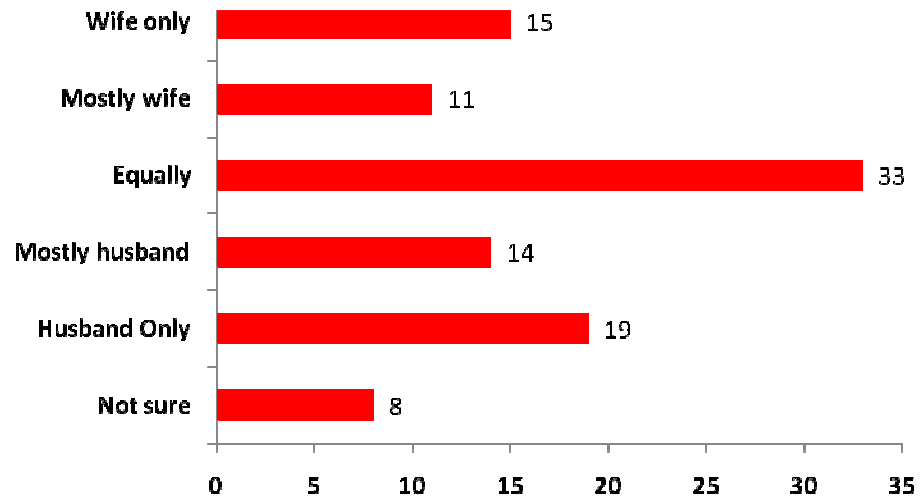


Figure 2: Responses by females on who decides on children's school fees in households

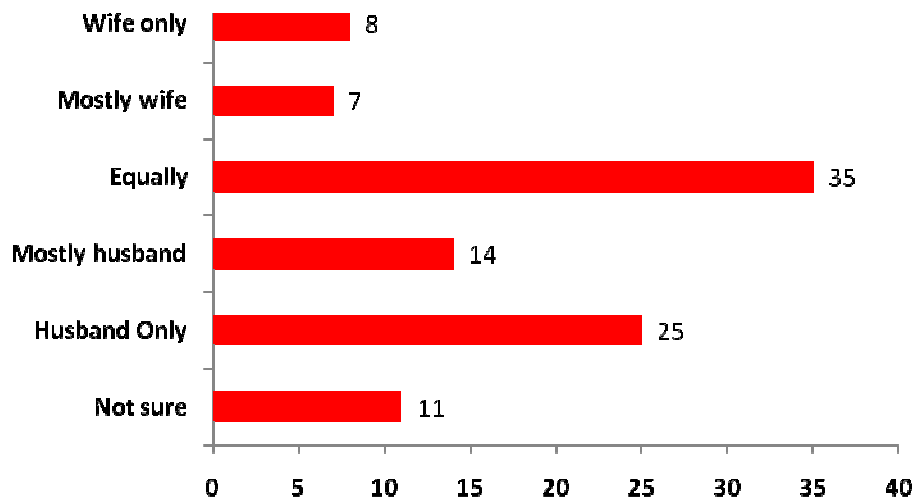
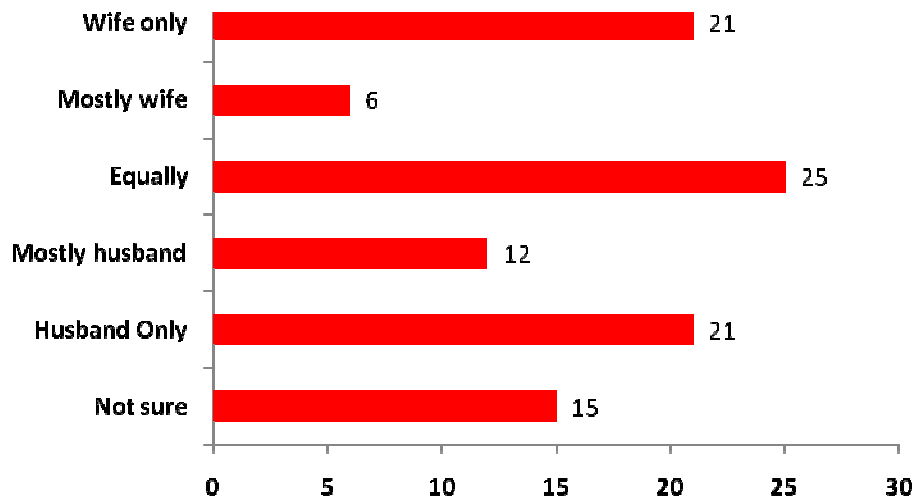


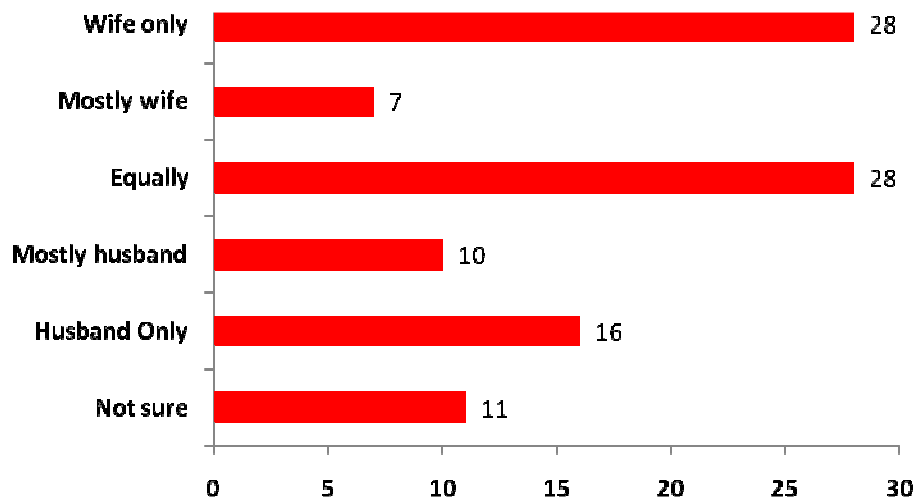
Figure 2 shows that males are more involved in decisions concerning children's school fees, as three-quarters (74%) of males are either solely or jointly involved in this decision with their wives.

Figure 3: Responses by females on who decides on savings in households



In regards to savings, figure 3 shows that females and males are almost equally involved – whereas 58% of the males are solely or jointly involved with their wives, 51% of the females are solely or jointly involved with their husbands.

Figure 4: Responses by females on who decides on how they spend their (females) own income in households



When it comes to spending own income, figure 4 shows that two-thirds of the females (63%) decide solely or jointly with their husbands on how to spend their income.

The research observed that at the community level, women involvement in decision-making processes was mixed as some traditional council have women while some do not have women. During traditional council meetings, the opinions of women are considered but when final decision is to be taken, women might not be there. FGDs revealed that in about two-thirds of the communities, women are part of the local village council but representation was very low. In Jiwa (FCT) for example, there are only two women in the traditional council in the community; they are the Magajiya (women leader) and the MagajiyanNoma (the leader of female youth farmers in the community and subordinate to Magajiya). In Kilankwa II, responses from community members shows that only three women hold traditional positions in the community out of over 23 key positions that exist in the council.

Elsewhere in Ebonyi state, women in Afikpo community cannot be in the traditional council. The situation is such that they have to engage a man to be their council representative or spokesperson when presenting a case in *Essa* the highest traditional ruling council. In some communities particularly in Delta state, the study found that a woman leader might be chosen because her husband is a chief or because of other political considerations. In this situation, the women leader was seen as representing all women if invited to community or political meetings. More often than not a woman's leadership position is used as strategy for mobilising women support and collect money if there is community project. Even though women make important contribution they were not allowed to play traditional leadership roles - a woman cannot be village head or paramount ruler.

The major reasons adduced for women not taking up leadership positions in the community is the dictates of 'tradition'. Many of the community leaders were unanimous in the fact that tradition does not allow women to sit in the traditional council and take decisions with the men. In fact, the women leader is 'just to stand as an intermediary between the traditional council and the women'. Other respondents opined that involving women in local governance is not ideal; naturally they are supposed to be married and be engaged in domestic work at home. Some respondents stated that women do not have the knowledge to participate in local governance because they do not possess the *gift of leadership* and if leadership is given to women they will cause conflict because they are too problematic. There were sarcastic statements made about women involvement such as:

- Women do not think the way men do because they have a shallow sense of reasoning
- They are created for domestic activities mainly
- They forget easily
- They hardly keep secrets.

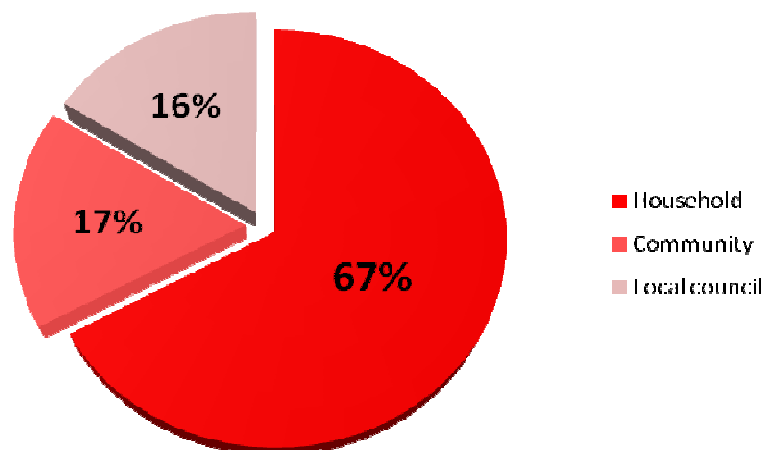
In FCT for example, a male respondents opined that the role of women in the community is natural. According to him, women by tradition are subservient to men. Man is head and bread winner for the family, though women contribute as help made, not in such a manner as to dominate the man. Women are not supposed to take equal status with men. It is so and the folk of women should remain where they are. *"I am a very traditional*

Africa man; the status of women should remain as it is now. The clamouring of women to take the driver seat made exclusively for men has contributed high rate of divorce in the society”.

Although the communities have generally not done much to promote equal opportunity for women, women respondents opined that some attempts have been made by women in the past to form movements to champion their course. Major challenges have been that husbands and fathers threaten divorce or eviction from the home. Given the strong family ties in Nigeria, women often give up these movements.

In spite of the above, responses at the individual level suggest that there is a keen interest and belief that women should be involved in decision-making. For example, all the respondents were of the view that women’s opinions and contributions should be sought in all important decision-making processes at different levels. Figure 5 below shows that respondents felt this should happen more at the household level. 67% said this should happen at the household level. About 17% and 16% respectively said this should happen at the community and local council levels respectively. Again when asked about equal opportunities for women and men in important positions, about 68% of the respondents said yes. When this was disaggregated by sex, slightly more females (71%), than males (65%) agreed that there should be equal opportunities for women and men.

Figure 5: Percentage distribution of respondents on perception of women’s involvement in decision making



In focus group discussions with males in Gombe state, some shared experiences on women’s participation in local governance from their various communities. They were of the view that women should be allowed to participate in community governance since they (men) had long held key positions in various top positions in elective and appointive offices. They said women could play vital roles if given the opportunity as they have long been neglected.

According to them, women by nature are compassionate and also help in influencing the children positively; in doing this, the children in turn become good and better citizens and leaders in the future. They were of the view that both men and women should be given equal opportunity to rule at whatever level so that in the event where one is incapacitated, the other, most probably the woman can take over leadership role.

It was further stated that in the past women involvement and contributions were not valued by the society but a lot of women have now shown that what men can do, they could do same even in better ways. However, they clearly explained that there are some traditional rites and cultural engagements that are exclusively decided by men as well as those exclusively played by women in the communities accordingly. During such occasion strict adherence are given to cultural priorities to be respected.

Women's involvement in local governance and politics

There is a small but growing literature that suggest that women are less prone to corruption and nepotism than men (World Bank 2001). Improving access of women to the workforce and decision-making bodies is therefore likely to improve governance in business and government. Similarly, there is a literature arguing that policies to achieve greater female political participation can lead to the prioritization of investments of particular importance to women such as time-saving infrastructure and human capital which in turn can promote economic growth (Duflo and Chattopadhyay, 2003; World Bank, 2001).

Indeed, one of the targets stated in the Nigerian National Gender Policy is to "adopt special measures, quotas and mechanisms for achieving minimum critical threshold of women in political offices, party organs and public life by pursuing 35% affirmative action in favour of women to bridge gender gaps in political representation in both elective and appointive posts at all levels by 2015".

In spite of this, the official state's public participation exercises have remained cosmetic and peripheral. Lawal (2010) observes that these exercises do not yet involve a genuine attempt to solicit community input to inform policymaking. For example, the current system of ward development committees and community development associations are the primary drivers of public participation at the local level. Yet they do not in themselves seem to enable meaningful citizen deliberation of development and planning issues, let alone women's full participation. The policy framework on these structures stipulates that ward development committees must include 'equitable representation of women and of a diversity of interests in the ward'. In practice, attainment of these quotas has been varied.

What this has meant is that in local development processes, participation by women is variable. It is apparently clear that women's participation is

increasing in number in this dispensation, but qualitative change is not visible substantially because they have limited influence due to power relations within institutions. Problems lie in every sphere of the society.

There is thus disconnection between women's experience and knowledge and state policy and programmatic responses. Even, in the hands of male counterparts they have severely criticised and dishonoured, and physically harassed as being of women. It is a clear reflection of the women situation and position in the society that manifests inequality and gender disparity. For a number of reasons including socio-political and religious hindrances the women cannot exercise their roles and rights properly.

At the local council level, the research observed that there are no policies/structures on ground to encourage women's representation in the administration of the council. Although there is a gender policy in place, the extent to which this is understood at the sub national level is very low. As such, local councils are not necessarily concerned about the 35% affirmative action. Taking Kwali Council (FCT) as a case study, the research found that all the 5 supervisors are men and out of about 10 Heads of Department, only 2 are women (the HOD, Planning Research and Statistics (PRS) and HOD, Women Education). In the accounts department, there are 3 women principal accountants but they are not given space to do their work without interference. Interactions also revealed that women are not really involved in the budget process of the Local Government because they are not given space.

Again individual responses revealed that there is a keen interest in seeking women involvement at local council levels. When asked if they believed that women and girls can contribute to plans and budget of the local government, 90% of the respondents said yes. Responses were similar among females (91%) and males (89%). When asked about the reasons for low participation of women in governance, illiteracy, ignorance, apathy were major issues mentioned. In addition, domestic responsibilities, in which most of the women put their families first and inability to work for long hours was also cited as major reasons.

At the local government level in Nigeria, a budget undergoes four stages: planning, preparation, approval and implementation. Each of these stages is very important but rarely did women actively participate in all. This was not out of lack of knowledge or desire by them to be actively involved in it but rather their marginalization in all facets of governance. In all the LGAs, few women were stakeholders among the political class (local government chairman, secretary to the local government council, supervisors, local legislative members/councillors, traditional rulers, and party stalwarts) and the career class. Likewise, the number of women who were career officers, Directors of Personnel Management (DPM), Treasurers, Heads of Department (a maximum of six) and Heads of units or outpost was abysmally low. Hence, women were neither stakeholders nor prime beneficiaries of budget expectations even though they constituted the largest spectrum of the local population and economy and contributed substantially to LGA revenue generation. While some programs were more related to the

women than men e.g. ante-natal, neo-natal and post-natal programs; public enlightenment for market women, adult literacy, children allowance for tax rebate for the working class, establishment of cottage industries and rights issues were usually not in the budget of governments as prominently as items of expenditure such as roads, culverts, building, farming etc. where men are prevalent.

On the political scene, women and men respondents confirmed that women participation in politics is very low and not encouraging. Major reasons adduced for this are culture and lack of funds which are some of the challenges that hinder their participation. It was also stated that the way politics is played in Nigeria discourages women participation in politics. Male groups listed issues that discourage women from going into politics as including:

- Men are too domineering in politics
- Religious and cultural beliefs often frowns on women who like mixing up with men
- Our cultural belief is that women are supposed to be doing domestic work and not engaging in politics
- Men are afraid that if they allow their women into politics they will engage in extra-marital affairs
- The responsibility of caring for the children and family will be neglected
- The expensive nature of politics at the community especially during campaigns
- The use of intimidation and violence by men during politics
- The strong influence of men over their wives on where to cast their votes
- Men have more source of income than the women

The activities of local government affect both men and women in ways that are fundamental to satisfying basic needs and quality of life. Women and men do not, however, enjoy equal access to or control over the basic services provided by local government, because women continue to be under-represented in both the political leadership and administration at the local level. Yet local government, as the order of government closest to citizens, is in the best position to involve women and men in decisions concerning their lives.

A look at the number of women either appointed or elected in the study states revealed that women representation was poor across the states. Table 2 below shows that the percentage of appointed women ranged from 1% (Bauchi state) to 23% (Kwara state). The percentage of elected women also ranged from 1% (Bauchi state) to 22% (Kwara). Appointed officials include commissioners and special advisers and federal Ministers, while elected officials include those in the state houses of assembly, federal House of Representatives, the Senate and LG chairpersons.

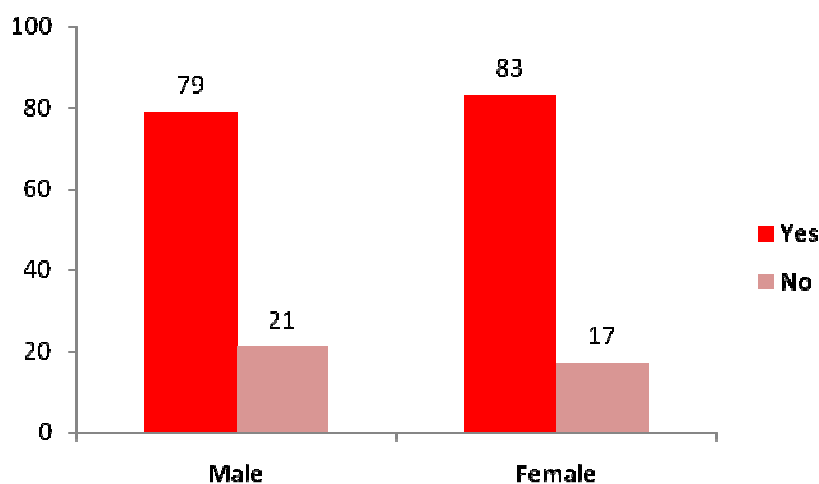
Table 2: Women as a percentage of total elected or appointed officials in states (as at March 2011)

State	Total appointed	No. of women appointed	% appointed women	Total Elected	No. of women elected	% elected women
Kwara	84	19	23	51	11	22
Delta	46	8	17	25	1	4
Ebonyi**	21	15	71	42	9	21
Bauchi	70	1	1	32	1	3
FCT	12	2	17	71	1	1
Akwa Ibom	27	3	11	70	4	6
Ondo	40	3	8	34	3	9

Notwithstanding the existing situation, 81% of the respondents were of the view that women should be allowed to occupy political and administrative positions. When the responses were disaggregated, slightly more females than males were of this view (Figure 6 below).

*** This figure is contrary to expectations and realities and in the absence of details of names and positions referred to, it would be difficult to authenticate.*

Figure 6: Responses on whether women should be allowed to occupy political positions



As a result of changing misogynist gender images, culture and personal socio-economic factors were assigned less priority than women’s citizenship rights, party organisation and the electioneering system on the list of obstacles to female representation. The Nigerian state has not shown sufficient commitment both in terms of providing the appropriate legal framework, accountable institutions and the capacity for gender planning and budgeting. It has not accepted affirmative action for bridging gender gaps, has not engendered party and election guidelines despite the existence of a National Policy for Women and the ratification of CEDAW since 1985.

The increase in the number of women seeking political office could be attributed to the shift from the traditional attitude to power as a resource for men. The upsurge in women's political consciousness explained their claim to power in all spheres and their awareness of their ability to transform women's lives. Patriarchal attitudes were also being forced to change by the inability of male politicians to deliver political and public goods and emerging exemplary female models. Forced to reassess received knowledge of gender difference there was some increased support for women leadership in politics and development among women and youths.

On their part, women groups interviewed highlighted the following as the things that discourage women from active participation in political process:

1. Although the constitution guaranteed the equal rights for women, the reality is that they are not seen as equal, their roles are closely tied to their reproductive and household activities only. At the same time women are considered as unfit to perform political and community affairs. This is due to lack of clarity in the constitution on the role of women in local government.
2. Patriarchy as a system, an ideology and practice impacts in different ways on the lives of women wherever they are. Patriarchal attitudes become so embedded that they are taken as natural. Even where there is supposed equality, these attitudes tend to prevail. Socio-cultural norms and religious misinterpretations are used frequently for challenging and reinterpreting women's rights and create insecurity for women. And although women have equal political rights to participate as voters and representatives, in reality they can be actively discouraged to do so especially because of political violence. The patriarchal society enforces rules and laws in such ways that affect the self-confidence of women, limit their access on resources and information and thus keep them in a lower status than men.
3. Education is the strongest factor influencing women's control of their own fate. The research observed that in all the states, women are furthermore handicapped because of lower educational achievements and the prevalence of social norms that severely restrict their freedom of movement in the public place. And so they do not show interest in participating in local governance activities.

In most of the FGDs conducted, women groups spoke of the fact that men do not give the women space to get involved in political process. Some men do not even allow their wives to go out. Women also said that very sensitive political meetings are held at night and this prevents women from attending – a woman that tries to attend would be seen as irresponsible. In addition, they expressly stated that it is difficult to afford the kind of money that is needed to run for a public office especially given the kind of 'money politics' played in Nigeria, when they can hardly fend for themselves and their children. According to one of the discussants in Kwara state, *"we do not have god fathers to support us (in politics)."*



Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion

Merely having women on councils does not automatically mean that the interests of women in the community are represented. Without women's needs and interests being taken into account, without opportunity for them to participate in and influence decision-making, development interventions and planning sustainable results will not come. Yet, having women in these leadership positions is an important step in changing the male-dominated political agenda. At least they have the opportunity to attend the meetings, interact with officials and take part in important discussions. It also ensures their mobility across the social hierarchy.

There are legal and policy frameworks such as the Nigerian constitution and the National Gender Policy which, generally speaking, support gender equality and women's empowerment. The constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, while the national gender policy seeks to promote equal opportunity in all areas of political, social, economic life of the country for women, as well as for men. This research has however shown that informal norms centred on the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society are strong and pervasive drivers of gender inequality and exclusion of women from decision making and local governance. Other social or situational characteristics such as illiteracy and economic status are important drivers of women exclusion.

Nationally, and in some states, there are active women's organisations, which have worked effectively to champion women's rights, and women's role in development. However such organisations are led by educated urban elites and the voices of poor rural women are rarely heard in these debates. Their effectiveness is also limited by sharp differences in opinions between different groups of women, which often prevent a common front to be formed.

A number of issues observed transcend the issue of women and local governance, but include issues around education and literacy. It is recommended that AAN teams should work together and pursue these through their Country Strategy paper (CSP), in collaboration with the state and local governments and the LRPs, other civil society partners and other international development partners.

Recommendations

The research recommends as top overarching priorities:

IN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING ITS WOMEN'S RIGHT PROGRAMME PLANS, ACTIONAID NIGERIA SHOULD

1. **Recognise entry points for further collaboration**

In northern Nigeria communities, Islamic religious leaders (Imams) are veritable entry points for successful programme activities in the communities. AAN should consider proactively carrying this group of stakeholders along in the planning of interventions on both right to food and women's rights. They actually commented strongly that this is the first time they are being consulted by any group in the community in relation to programme activities as was shared with them. According to them they are consulted when things seem to be going wrong such as when people refuse to repay loans or sensitive issues come up and the programme requires prayers and divine intervention.

2. **Invest time and resources to strengthen participatory structures**

Given that new participatory spaces tend to reproduce existing power relations, mechanisms for participation must be designed and implemented differently if they are to enable women to influence state policy and programmes. Experience with structures like community development committees indicates the potential for participatory structures to be designed that, supported by training; enable women to articulate their needs and preferences in technical local governance processes. However, there is still a high tendency for women to be marginalised. Women-only forums are therefore likely to be needed to protect women from inequitable power relations, enabling them to develop agendas that can be voiced in formal decision-making processes.

Furthermore, the research suggests the following programme prescriptions to be taken into consideration by ActionAid Nigeria:

ACTIONAID NIGERIA SHOULD CONSIDER WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT IN INTERVENTION STATES TO:

1. Create greater awareness among women about their low status in society and the need to improve it, motivational programs along with programs for expanding opportunities for education, health care and employment should be launched.
2. Ensure that women are given various opportunities for leadership training, training regarding the local governance activities and education in order to encourage them to take up political and leadership position. Supportive services should be provided to allow women participate in these training courses.

ACTIONAID NIGERIA AND ITS LRP IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS SHOULD CONSIDER WORKING COMMUNITY STRUCTURES AND OTHER NON-STATE ACTORS IN INTERVENTION STATES TO:

3. Create an awareness among the women in the grassroots levels that political participation would give them an access to the political decision making process relating to the allocation of resources.
4. Use the mass media to educate and mobilise public opinion in such a way that the realisation about the benefits of women's full participation in the development efforts is created among people.
5. Sustain campaign(s) for women mobilisation, regular reporting of monitoring the status, conditions and rights of women; public information and advocacy in this realm.
6. Sensitise women and men alike in communities on the rights of women and their involvement in decision making and local governance. The issue of illiteracy and low women participation in governance can be tackled perhaps through adult literacy (using the Reflect programme) for women who have missed out on some education.
7. Undertake research on women's participation in politics, their voting behaviour, consciousness and participation in the political parties.

Finally, increasing the number of women in decision making positions does not in itself translate into greater empowerment for women. Measures to increase the quantity of women representatives need to be accompanied by measures to improve the quality of participation.

Operational definitions

Women

A woman is an adult female human being, as contrasted with men, an adult male, and a girl, a female child. The term woman (irregular plural: women) is used to indicate biological sex distinctions, cultural gender role distinctions, or both (Wikimedia, 2005:1). Women constitute about half of the total population of the country. Apart from the household activities, they are contributing substantially to the national economy.

Participation

Participation is a development approach, which recognises the need to involve disadvantaged segments of the population in the design and implementation of policies concerning their wellbeing. The strengthening of women's participation in all spheres of life has become a major issue in the development discourse.

Socio-economic development cannot be fully achieved without the active participation of women at the decision making level in society. Various scholars define 'Participation' in various ways.

Norman Uphoff (cited in Khan1993:111) identified four main kinds of participation, which are distinct but interrelated. They are as follows:

- a. Participation in decision making in identifying problems, formulating alternative planning activities, allocating resources etc;
- b. Participation in implementation in carrying out activities, managing and operating programs;
- c. Participation in economic, social, political or other benefits individually or collectively; and
- d. Participation in evaluation of the activity and its outcomes for feedback purposes.

According to Mishra (1984:88), "participation means collective and continuous efforts by the people themselves in setting goals, pooling resources together and taking actions which aims at improving their living conditions".

S. Rahman (1991:3) has stated that all forms of actions through which citizens take part in the operation of administration may be termed as 'participation'. Here, 'taking part' refers to any level from macro to micro region or it may be of any type e.g. advisory or in decision-

making or in implementation etc.

According to Human Development Report, “participation means that people are closely involved in the economic, social, cultural and political process that affects their lives” (1993:1). Participation has both a narrow and wider connotation. In a narrow sense participation means some specific action by which the citizen participates for a limited purpose. And in a wider sense participation refers to the role of members of the general public as distinguished from that of appointed officials, including civil servants, in influencing the activities of government or in providing directly for community needs (Rahman, 1991:14-15).

Empowerment

Empowerment is a process, though the result of the process may also be termed empowerment. But more specifically, the outcome of empowerment should manifest itself as a redistribution of power between individuals, genders, groups, classes, castes, races, ethnic groups or nations.

Empowerment means the transformation of structures of subordination, through radical changes in law, property rights, control over women’s labour and bodies, and the institutions that reinforce and perpetuate male domination (Batliwala, 1993:5).

Empowerment of women is now a global issue. Although this term is usually used for improving women’s condition, in real sense it may be applied to any disadvantaged group of society for bringing them to the same level of advanced section.

Vanessa Griffin (1987:117-18) identifies, some components to illustrate what the term empowerment indicates:

- a. Having control or gaining further control;
- b. Having a say and being listened to;
- c. Being able to define and create from women’s perspective;
- d. Being able to influence social choices and decision affecting the whole society;
- e. Being recognized and respected as equal citizens in human beings with a contribution to make.

So it can be said that empowerment means a process to establish control over resources and also means to acquire ability and opportunity to participate in decision-making process and its implementation.

Governance

Governance refers to a process of decision-making and the ways in which decisions are implemented. Both national

and local level governance involve formal and informal decision-making, implementers and implementation structures. Government is only one of the actors in governance. A measure of good governance involves, to a large extent, the relationship between government and civilian actors. The latter include women's organizations. The participation of women in governance issues encompasses policy frameworks, participation in decision-making, inclusion in the development agenda and resource allocation.

Abbreviations

AA	ActionAid
AAN	ActionAid Nigeria
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DPM	Director of Personnel Management
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
HOD	Head of Department
LG	Local Government
LGA	Local Government Area
LRP	Local Rights Programme
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MS	Microsoft
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PRS	Planning Research and Statistics
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STAR	Societies Tackling AIDS through Rights

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Appendix: Research tools

A. Structured Interview Guide for Women

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR COMMUNITY WOMEN

QUESTIONNAIRE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER |__|__|__|

Community Name _____ LGA _____ State _____

[__] **Respondent Group:** 1 = Community Women . 2 = Community Men

Introduction: My name is..... I am working for AAN. We are interviewing people here in [name of community/city] to find out women participation in governance, violence against women and girls, their livelihood means, access to agro support services and resources.

Confidentiality and consent: I am going to ask you questions some of which may be very personal. Your answers are completely confidential. Your name will not be written on this form, and will never be used in connection with any of the information you tell me. You may need to know that this exercise is taking place here and in other places. Your honest answers to these questions will help understanding of the issues above. The information collected from you and people like you will help AAN to find a way to develop programme in the community. We would greatly appreciate your help in responding to this interview.

Signature.....

(Signature of interviewer certifying that informed consent has been given verbally by respondent)

Interviewer visit

	Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3
Date			
Interviewer			
Result (code as below)			

Result codes: Completed 1; Respondent not available 2; Refused 3; Partially completed 4; Other (specify) 5.

Interviewer Code [__|__] Name _____ Signature _____

Date of Interview ____ / ____ / ____

Checked by Supervisor/Coder _____

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Questionnaire Data Entry No [] [] []

[N.B: FOR CODED ANSWERS CIRCLE EACH RESPONSE BY RESPONDENT]

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

No	Questions and filters	Coding categories		Skip to
101	Respondent's location	Rural	1	
		Urban	2	
102	Record sex of the respondent	Male	1	
		Female	2	
103	How old were you at your last birthday?	Age in completed years [] []		
		Don't know88		
104	What is the highest level of school you completed or are attending?	No formal education	1	
		Koranic education	2	
		Primary	3	
		Secondary	4	
		Higher education	5	
		Other (specify)		
105	Currently are you	Never married	1	
		Married	2	
		Separated	3	
		Divorced	4	
		Widow	5	
		No Response	99	
106	To which ethnic group do you belong?	Specify:		
		No Response	99	
107	What is your religion?	Islam	1	
		Christianity	2	
		Traditional	3	
		No religion	4	
		Other (specify)		
108	What is your occupation i.e. what kind of work do you mainly do?	Small farming	1	
		Average farming	2	
		Trading	3	
		Employed worker	4	
		No regular occupation	5	
		Other (specify)		
109	Everything put together (money through main work and other sources) what is your total income per month?	Amount ₦		

SECTION 4: WOMEN'S RIGHTS: Women Participation in Governance

No	Questions and filters	Coding categories		Skip to
401	Are you of the view to seek women opinions and contribution in all important decision making at: (MULTIPLE RESPONSE POSSIBLE)	The household/family?	1	
		In the community	2	
		In the local government?	3	
402	Do you believe women can contribute to plans and budget of the local government?	No	0	
		Yes	1	

403	If Yes/No, why?						
404	Do you approve of women having equal opportunity with men to important positions?	No	0				
		Yes	1				
405	If No/Yes, why?						
406	Do you think women should be allowed to occupy important political and administrative positions?	No	0				
		Yes	1				
407	If Yes/No, why?						
408	Did you register to vote in the general election?	No	0				
		Yes	1				
409	If No/Yes, why?						
410	Are you a registered member of a political party?	No	0	→Go to 412			
		Yes	1				
411	If No why?			→Go to 419			
412	If Yes, do you feel important being a member of the party?	Very Important	1				
		Important	2				
		Not Important	3				
413	Give reasons for your importance/not						
414	Do you actively participate in the party activities?	No	0				
		Yes	1				
415	If Yes/No, why?						
416	Do the party process and structure support your active participation?	No	0	→Go to 418			
		Yes	1				
417	If Yes, in what ways?						
418	If No, why?						
419	Do you feel respected by your spouse, family, and friends?	No	0				
		Yes	1				
420	If Yes/No, why?						
421	Do you actively participate in your local community	No	0				
		Yes	1				
422	If Yes/No, why?						
423	In your household, who decides (<i>Ask only of currently married respondents?</i>) <i>Use the code below in answering this question</i>	How much to spend on schooling for children					
		How much to spend on food					
		How much to save					
		How to spend your income					
1=	2=	3=	4=	5=	6=	99=	98=
Husband only	Mostly husband	Husband and wife equally	Mostly wife	Wife only	Individually	Don't know	Not applicable

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION

B. IDI Guide for the Ministries of Women Affairs

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS

Introduction: Thank you for granting us this interview. We are happy that you are able to spare some time for us. Let's begin by introducing ourselves. My name is....., my colleague name is..... We would like you to introduce yourself. Tell us your name and the position you occupy in office. This process will take about 45mins if we focus and contribute promptly.

Purpose: We will be interviewing about women participation in governance, violence against women and girls, access to agro support services and resources. We are interested in your views, comments and suggestions. All comments both positive and negative are welcome; no right or wrong answers. Whatever you say is confidential; no name or identification would be attached to the information collected

Demographic Information

1. Record respondent's ministry/department/programme, location and main functions. Note the sex, age, education, marital status, ethnic group, religion, and income level of respondent.

Women Participation in Local Governance

2. There is concern about representation of women in local governance, what are you doing to promote effective women representation in administration of the local council?

Probe:

- What have you done to ensure implementation of the gender policy and 35% affirmative action for women in the local council?
 - How many women are holding elective/appointive positions in the local council?
 - How many women candidates you have standing for next election?
 - What support have your office provided them?
3. Looking at the political processes and administration structures what are the things you think encourage and discourage women representation in the local government system?

Conclusion: Thank you, we have come to the end of our questions. We have learnt important things from you today. We are very happy for your participation. Do you have any question for us? If any question, note it, and respond as appropriate.

C. IDI Guide for LG Officials

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Introduction: Thank you for granting us this interview. We are happy that you are able to spare some time for us. Let's begin by introducing ourselves. My name is...., my colleague name is..... We would like you to introduce yourself. Tell us your name and the position you occupy in office. This process will take about 45mins if we focus and contribute promptly.

Purpose: We will be interviewing about women participation in governance, violence against women and girls, access to agro support services and resources. We are interested in your views, comments and suggestions. All comments both positive and negative are welcome; no right or wrong answers. Whatever you say is confidential; no name or identification would be attached to the information collected

Demographic Information

1. Record respondent's office (ministry/agency/division), location and main functions. Note the sex, age, education, marital status, ethnic group, religion, and income level of respondent.

Women Participation in Local Governance

2. There is concern about involvement of women in governance at all levels, what is your view about giving equal opportunity to women in the administration of the local council?

Probe:

- Why do you think so? Why? ... How? How? How? ...
- What has the local government council done to promote equal opportunity for women?

3. What role do you think women can play in the local council administration?

Probe:

- Why do you think so? Why?
- What is the ratio of men to women in key positions in the local council?
- How many women are holding elective/appointive positions in the local council?

4. In what way are women involved in planning and budget processes of the local government?

Probe:

- What contribution have women made to decisions by the council that affect them?
- How many interactive forums the local government held with women in the last 12 months?

5. What are your views about electing/appointing women into key positions of the local council?

Probe:

- Looking at the political processes what are the things that encourage and discourage women active participation in the local government administration?
- Looking at the structure and processes of the local council what are the things that encourage and discourage women appointment to leadership/key positions?

Conclusion: Thank you, we have come to the end of our questions. We have learnt important things from you today. We are very happy for your participation. Do you have any question for us? If any question, note it, and respond as appropriate.

D. IDI Guide for Community Leaders

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEADERS IN COMMUNITY

Introduction: Thank you for granting us this interview. We are happy that you are able to spare some time for this interview. Let's begin by introducing ourselves. My name is...., my colleague name is..... We would like you to introduce yourself. Tell us your name and perhaps what you like best. This process will take about 45mins if we focus and contribute promptly.

Purpose: We will be interviewing about women participation in governance, violence against women and girls, access to agro support services and resources. I am interested in your views, comments and suggestions. All comments both positive and negative are welcome: there is no right or wrong answers. Whatever you say is confidential no name or identification would be attached to the information collected

Demographic Information

1. Record the respondent target group, location, sex, age, education, marital status, ethnic group, religion, occupation, income, and role in community.

Women Participation in Local Governance

2. There is concern about involvement of women in decision making process in the community, what is your view about giving equal opportunity to women in the community?

Probe:

- Why do you think so? Why? ... How? How? How? ...
- What has been done/is being done to promote equal opportunity for women in the community leadership process?

3. What role do you think women can play in the leadership system in the community?

Probe:

- Why do you think so? Why? ... How would this happen?
- What are your views about appointing women as chiefs (key roles) in the community?
- How many women are holding key positions in the community (traditional council)?

4. What is your view about women involvement in political process in the community and local area?

Probe:

- What are your views about electing/appointing women into key political positions?
- Looking at the political processes in this community and area what are the things that encourage and discourage women active participation in politics?
- Looking at the structure and processes in this community what are the things that encourage and discourage women appointment/election into political positions?

Conclusion:

Thank you, we have come to the end of our questions. We have learnt important things from you today. We are very happy for your participation. Do you have any question for us? If any question, note it, and respond as appropriate.

E. FGD Guide for Women Groups (adapted for Men groups)

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE FOR WOMEN GROUP AND REFLECT CIRCLE

Introduction: You are welcome to this discussion. We are happy that you are able to spare some time for this discussion. Let's begin by introducing ourselves. My name is....., my colleague name is..... We would like you to introduce yourselves. Tell us your names, the community and group you represent. This process will take about 45mins if we focus and contribute promptly.

Purpose: We will be discussing about women participation in governance, violence against women and girls, access to agro support services and resources. I am interested in your views, comments and suggestions. All comments both positive and negative are welcome; no right or wrong answers. Whatever you say is confidential; no name or identification would be attached to the information collected.

Demographic Information

1. Note interview location, as well as the sex, age, education, marital status, ethnic group, religion, occupation, and income level of respondents.

Women Participation in Local Governance

2. There is concern about involvement of women in decision making process and leadership of the community, what is your view about opportunity for women to participate equally in decision-making in the community?

Probe:

- How many women are holding key positions in the community (traditional council)?
- What are the challenges faced by women to actively participate in decisions that affect them in this community?
- What has been done/is being done to promote equal opportunity for women to participate in decision making?

3. What is your view about women involvement in political process in the community and local area?

Probe:

- Looking at the political processes in this community and area what are the things that encourage and discourage women active participation in politics?
- Looking at the structure and processes in this community what are the things that encourage and discourage women appointment/election into political positions?

Conclusion:

Thank you, we have come to the end of our questions. We have learnt important things from you today. We are very happy for your participation. Do you have any question for us? If any question, note it, and respond as appropriate.

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act!onaid

ActionAid Nigeria
NAIC Building
Plot 590 Cadastral Zone, Central Area
PMB 1890, Garki, Abuja NIGERIA
+234 9 461 8778/9
info.nigeria@actionaid.org
www.actionaid.org