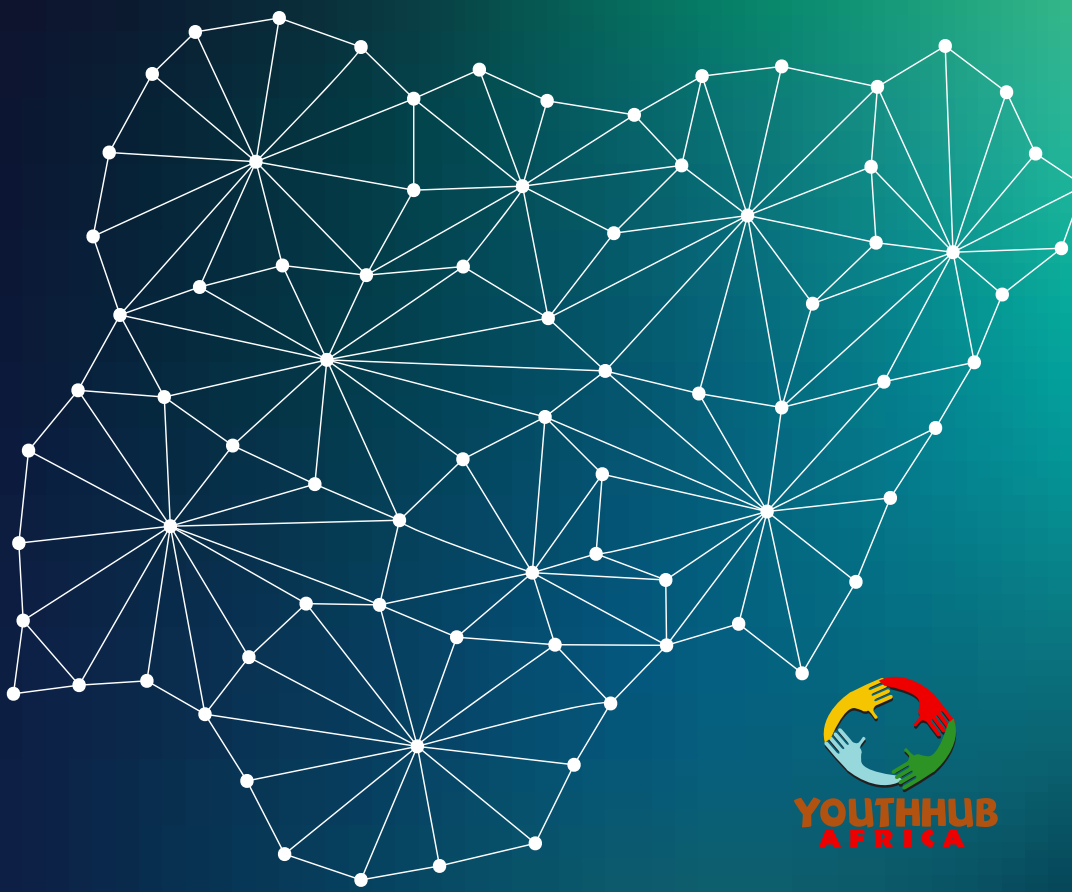


TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE
**NATIONAL YOUTH
POLICY
REVIEW**
I N N I G E R I A



TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE
NATIONAL YOUTH
POLICY
REVIEW
I N N I G E R I A





Abbreviations

NYP: National Youth Policy

FMYSD: Federal Ministry of Youths and Sports Development

NYPD: National Youth Policy Dialogues

CSO: Civil Society Organisation

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisations

PLWD: People Living with Disabilities

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

NYRHW: National Youth Review Harmonisation Workshop

Acknowledgement

I will like to profoundly extend gratitude to our funders, the International Institute of Education as well as the Ford Foundation who believed in our ability to help drive the National Youth Policy review process. Your faith in us allowed us to cast our net wide in enabling an inclusive process.

My gratitude also goes to the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports for the cooperation on this project especially ensuring that we have access to the draft National New National Youth Policy in order for us to use it as the basis for our input

Immense appreciation also to the six (6) cardinal partner organisations representing the 6 geopolitical regions in Nigeria, as well as the fifteen (15) other organisations that volunteered to host youths for this review in their respective communities. Without these 21 mostly youth-led organisations, the review of the youth policy would not have been possible

I am grateful to: my colleagues at YouthHubAfrica for their input which contributed to the success of this project, and also to Temitayo Olofinlua who linked the jigsaws of these process into a document, as well as our facilitators at the conference in Abuja namely Samson Itodo and Wale Ajani.

Huge thanks to the Board of Trustees of YouthHubAfrica for their constant support, prodding where necessary and guidance.



Rotimi Olawale
Executive Director,
YouthHub Africa

ISBN : 978-978-938-094-7

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO



PHOTOGRAPHY

Teni Angulu, Toluwanimi Onibokun, Etinosa Osayimwen

DESIGN

damaroystudios

www.damaroystudios.com

Table of Contents

2	Executive Summary
3	Introduction
5	Our Approach
14	Key Pillars on Emerging Issues & Considerations
18	Obligations of Different Organisations to Youth Development
21	The National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN)





Executive Summary

Nigeria's first National Youth Policy¹ (NYP), the framework that guides all matters related to youth development in Nigeria, was first formulated in 1989. This was followed up with a new National Youth Policy under a democratic dispensation in 2001 by the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports. The 2001 NYP made provision for a review every 5 years. A revised one was developed and adopted by the Federal Ministry of Youth Development in 2009. In 2016, the Federal Ministry of Youths and Sports Development (FMYSD) — the ministry responsible for youths in Nigeria — kick-started a review process that is two years late. Nevertheless, for such a document to be comprehensive, it is important that Nigerian youths, for whom the policy was originally designed, are part of the process.

In the first quarter of 2017, Ford Foundation and YouthhubAfrica began a process to ensure that the ongoing review of the 2016 NYP is inclusive of the diverse representation of Nigerian youths, across creeds, occupations and social strata. Invariably, this will reflect Nigeria's diversity and advance the cause of Nigerian youths. Beyond this document being just "another" policy, it becomes pertinent for the ongoing review to consider emerging issues within the polity and also accommodate evolving global trends importantly, from the youth's panorama.

To achieve this, a four-pronged approach was used: a review of the 2009 NYP; a call for applications for youth-based organisations across the federation; National Youth Policy Dialogues (NYPDs); and a harmonisation workshop with representatives of each of these participating organisations. There were a total of 21 National Youth Policy Dialogues (NYPDs), styled as consultation meetings in 16 states, across six geopolitical zones of the federation. After the consultative NYPDs, representatives of these organisations participated in a National Harmonisation Workshop. At the meeting, key observations from the submissions made by these different groups represented were analysed and recommendations were developed. It was an avenue to assess the NYP, its merits and demerits; and also an opportunity to devise an action plan that states the responsibilities of several ministries, departments and agencies towards the execution of the NYP.

This document is a guide that shows the democratisation process, of the road to the new NYP, in anticipation that it will serve as a roadmap for any youth or youth-based organisation interested in engaging with youth policies in the future.

Introduction

Nigeria is central to Africa's wellbeing. More than 1 in 9 Africans are Nigerians. According to Euromonitor,² by 2030, the population of Nigeria will reach 263 million, making it one of the fastest growing countries in the world. Due to high birth rate and low life expectancy, Nigeria will remain one of the youngest countries in the world, the report states.

By then, the Next Generation Report³ states that Nigerian youth will be a greater resource than oil. This underlies the critical role youths can play in the development of Nigeria, Africa and the world at large. Perceptively, it is expected that government must deliberately invest in youth development to realise significant socio-economic growth which is often parallel to human capital.

The last NYP reviewed in 2009 had the following priority areas: Education, Health, Agriculture, Women & Girls, Peace-Building, HIV/AIDS, Migration & Human Trafficking, Poverty and Participation. Due to Nigeria's dynamic nature, it was stated that the NYP will be reviewed every five (5) years which indicates that the 2016 review is late.





YouthHubAfrica led a process that initiated wide consultations to make the NYP youth-focused, youth-driven and also importantly promote inclusiveness for a fully integrated society. For Nigerian youths to be relevant and instrumental to the fulfillment of Nigeria's full potentials in the future, there are several development issues that need to be tackled while reviewing the youth policy, these include:

- Increasing brain drain and migration of economic refugees;
- Radicalisation and the rise of violent extremism (which has led to unrest and devastating crises with over 2 million people displaced, and over 10 million out-of-school children);
- Pervading inequalities (economic, social, political).

Our Approach

Through partnerships with stakeholders in youth development, youth organisations and young Nigerians, we reached diverse groups of young people. This process is built on the foundation that youths are instrumental to the development of Nigeria. This is not only because they constitute the highest single population (58%) but they are the building blocks upon which our nation's sustainable development can be attained.

65

Youth organisations that responded to calls for the NYPD

21

Youth organisations that held the NYPD

30

Average attendance at each NYPD

36

The number of youths at the harmonisation conference

630

Youths that participated in the NYPDs

16

States where NYPDs held

200,946

Twitter accounts were reached during the social media chat on Twitter

150,000

estimated number of persons reached via 2 radio discussions

step 1 The Review of the National Youth Policy

Access to the NYP review document is important to this process. In order to set this process in motion, we obtained a copy of the revised draft of the NYP from the FMYSO. This was carefully studied, before copies were disseminated to the team leads of partner organisations for the NYPD. This is important in order to provide engagement points during the NYPD. Emerging developments in the country that the NYPDs should focus on were also mapped-out for this purpose.







step 2 The Call

On the 5th of May, 2017, YouthhubAfrica initiated a call on their website and social media platforms titled: Integrating Youth Voices in the Ongoing Review of The National Youth Policy Dialogue. It was aimed at youth-based organisations interested in voluntarily conducting youth policy dialogues among young people in their states. This would be a way to feel the pulse of young Nigerians, identify their current challenges in a fast-changing world, and develop strategic and sustainable solutions to such.

The purpose of the call was also to assess the level of interest of youth-based organisations in the youth policy review process. Being a document that guides youth development in the country, any serious youth organisation should be interested in being a part of the process that would shape its future. It was also a way of democratising the policy review process.

We received over sixty (60) expressions of interest from youth-based organisations across the federation. Selections were based on the reach and past achievements of these organisations. We asked: can these organisations reach a variety of young Nigerians? What sector of youth development is the organisation focused on? What is the organisation's proximity to another youth organisation hosting NYPD in the state? Do they have the capacity to moderate a meeting that will generate conversations around youth issues?

YouthhubAfrica had partnered with six of these in the past and could trust their capacity to deliver. For our selection in the North-East, it was important to pick an organisation in Borno, the heart of the Boko Haram terror crisis, it was also important to work with an organisation working in that area. These six (6) organisations—Onelife Initiative for Human Development, Borno Women Development Initiative, Skills Outside School Foundation, Youth Initiative for Health, Environment and Community Development, Young Activists Initiative of Nigeria, and Every Girl Every Woman Initiative — got a direct support fund from YouthhubAfrica. Eventually, a total of twenty one (21) organisations hosted NYPDs in sixteen states of the federation and the FCT. Most laudable is the fact that 15 out of these 21 youth-based organisations voluntarily took part in this entire process without any funding which reflects their ability to take responsibility and contribute gainfully to the wellbeing of all young Nigerians. At the end of this process, our records indicated that at least every region of the federation held a youth policy dialogue, thereby allowing for well-rounded conversations. Consequently, possible recommendations that could drive an inclusive policy that adequately caters for Nigeria's diverse youth population were developed.



step 3 The National Youth Policy Dialogues

The NYPDs provided an avenue for elaborate consultations with the young people. They were organised voluntarily with backend support – in the form of organisers' toolkits, which contained precise guidelines on how to hold and report a successful session – provided by YouthhubAfrica.

The different organisations listed below convened young people drawn across different sections of their states to identify and deliberate on vital issues young Nigerians are dealing with on a daily basis. Further, support programmes/initiatives that will respond to these concerns and identify structures that need to be put in place to cater for these needs were developed. These activities came up with strategies for promoting youth participation in governance, and at the same time created a sense of ownership of the NYP among the youths.

North- Central

Lafia Nassarawa Young
Professionals Association

Abuja Hip-City Hub
Skills Outside School
Foundation

North- East

Maiduguri Borno Women
Development Initiative

Damaturu African Youth for Peace
Empowerment &
Development Foundation

North-West

Sokoto Every Girl, Every
Woman Initiative

South-West

Oyo Hopel-Goodness Foundation
Onelife Initiative for Human Development
Aid for Rural Education Access Initiative
Global Future Redemption
Empowerment Foundation

South-East

Abakaliki Youth Initiative for Health &
Community Development
Young Activist Initiative

South-South

Ikeja Hacey Health Initiative

Akure African Revolution Academy

Osogbo Value Re-Orientation for Community
Enhancement

Ado-Ekiti Foundation for Sustainable Health &
Development

Abeokuta Iranwo Foundation

Uyo Greater Tomorrow Initiative
Young Activists Initiative

Calabar The Bridge Leadership Foundation

Sapele Rural Development & Reformation
Foundation

The deliberations at the different states produced the following outcomes and recommendations that we hope will influence the ongoing 2016 NYP review document through liaising with the FMYSO:

People Living with Disabilities

Priority must be given to Nigerian youths living with disabilities. Government must be deliberate in creating an all-inclusive society that caters for their special needs.

Youth Age Definition

18-35 years remained the most preferred age definition for the youth bracket.

Education System

Emphasis was placed on restructuring the entire educational system as a tool for preserving our cultural values and national development. Huge investments must equally be made on research and development with key focus on out of school youths.

Youth Friendly Centres

Activate existing centres by various government agencies across the federation using a public-private partnership model that will allow for effective utilisation of such facilities in the positive development of youths potential in a supervised environment promoting social interaction amongst different age groups.

Rehabilitation Facilities

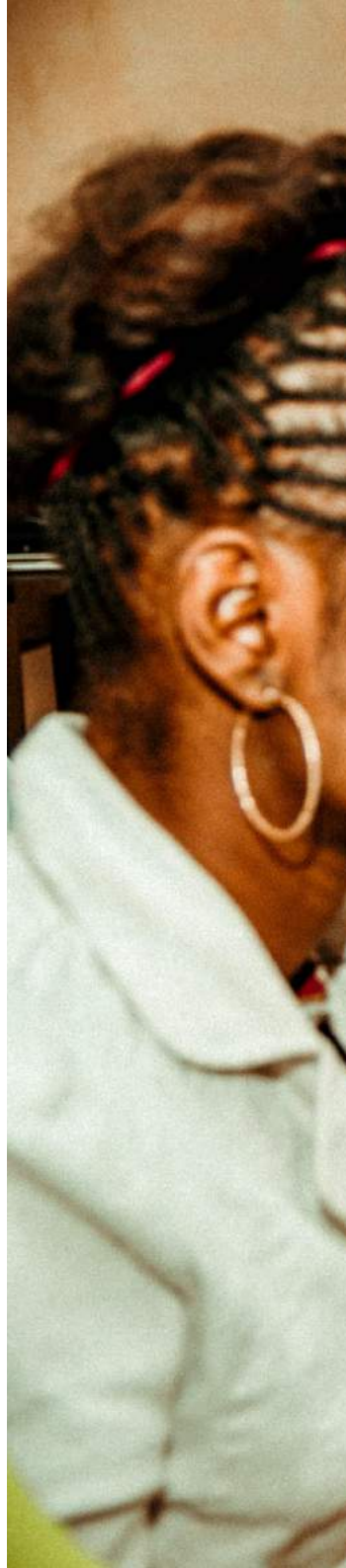
These are essential to support the high percentage of Nigerian youths dealing with drugs/alcohol abuse.

Recreation Facilities

This important aspect of youth development must be strategically developed to redirect youth energy and get the youth involved in productive after school programmes.

National Youth Volunteer Scheme

This will be an avenue to cultivate the spirit of community develop-





ment through volunteering amongst Nigerian youths. It will also be a way to encourage youths to contribute selflessly to society. Again, attention should be placed on out-of-school youths, especially the block transitioning between secondary and tertiary institution.

Employment Creation

This is a pivotal part of youth development which can be supported through empowerment initiatives that ensure easy access to grants/loans, technical skills acquisition/development. They should also incentivise agricultural schemes and ICT development in order to enhance youth participation in these sectors.

National Values

Redefine, promote and have a deliberate conversation around developing collective national values that will define youth existence; drive patriotism and guide Nigerian youths belief in Nigeria as a people with a unified purpose and creed.

National Annual Sporting Festivals

Broaden the existing festivals with deliberate focus on developing other sports beyond football. Again, strategic private partnerships will elevate the standard of these events and eventually attract global attention. It will also serve as a platform that hones individual talents giving them a chance to excel through sports without any limitations.

De-radicalisation Programmes

To counter violent extremism, it is critical for these programmes to be tactfully introduced to help de-radicalise suspected youths caught engaging in terrorist activities. Another group that is often times neglected is the Community Joint Task Force (CJTF); its members must also go through a rehabilitation programme if they are to be fully integrated back into society. These programmes must include steps to engage these individuals in activities that fully re-integrate them into the society.

step **4** The National Youth Review Harmonisation Workshop (NYRHW)

The 2-day workshop was the climax of the NYPDs held across the federation earlier in the year aimed at youth engagement towards a better NYP. It featured activities like debate sessions, a keynote address, a tweetathon, brainstorming and Q&A sessions. The National Youth Review Harmonisation Workshop had the following aims:

- To review the current draft (NYP) and harmonise findings from locally held NYPDs;
- Make recommendations with consideration from the NYPDs;
- Entrench such recommendations into the NYP;
- Set-up mechanisms for tracking implementation.



Key Pillars on Emerging Issues & Considerations

For Nigeria to advance as a force to reckon with on the continent and the world, its youth development must be strategic, and embrace the evolving issues in the nation and the entire globe. At the NYRHW, the recommendations discussed included



1. Economic Reform:

Attempts to diversify the economy should involve youths. It should also embrace; encourage and support technology development, enterprise, innovation, and competition.

2. Public Expenditure:

To develop a youth population that is vibrant, it is important to cut down on unnecessary public expenditure and waste. To make this a reality, accountability mechanisms at all government levels and across government agencies committed to youth development, must be set-up and adequately monitored.

3. Quality Education:

Education is the foundation of every great nation's development. It is an important pillar that will prepare the Nigerian youth to take responsibility in the future securing them a remarkable place among the comity of nations. Based on this premise, emphasis must be placed on developing a robust and inclusive curriculum and improving teacher quality.

4. Investment in Health:

To encourage Nigerian youths to practise high standards of hygiene, government must provide adequate health facilities and care as only a healthy society can drive change.



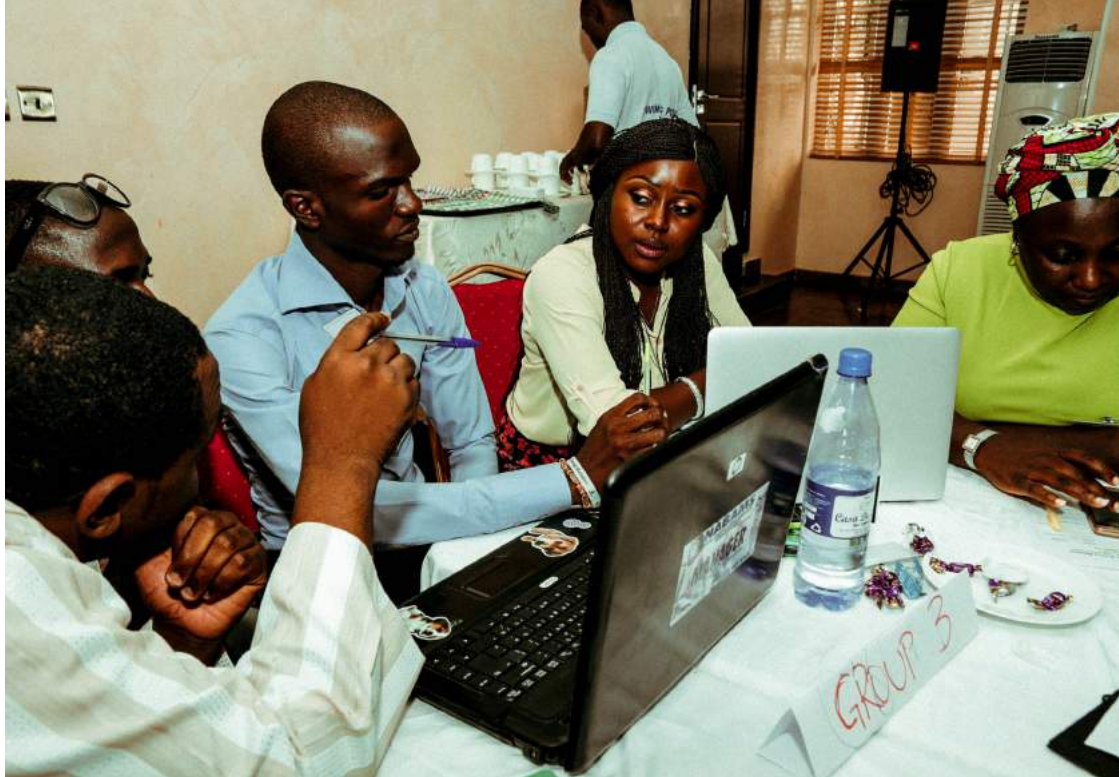
5. People Living with Disability (PLWD):

More attention must be paid to PLWD and a first step would be in government passing the PLWD Act which has been long overdue for legislation. Ensure PLWD are key participants in implementing the NYP, especially aspects that relate to PLWD.

6. Towards the Implementation of the NYP:

The NYP should not be seen only as a document that is reviewed every five years. In order to make it a functional document, more needs to be done by all the stakeholders involved in youth development in Nigeria especially towards implementing the laid down plans: youths, youth organisations, and government at all levels. To actualise an effective implementation of the NYP we propose, the following:

- Make the NYP an Act of Parliament;
- Make the NYP a social contract: It should be a scorecard to measure performance according to key performance indicators (KPIs). It will be a way to measure how government at different levels performed during their



administration according to specific youth indices;

- Situate every government policy within the NYP;
- Strengthen institutional mechanism to ensure the implementation of this NYP.

7. Finance:

It becomes pertinent to set up accountability mechanisms that monitor youth budgets and expenditure. Additionally, we should consider devising innovative ways for financing the NYP. The FMSYD should make public its budget and accounts of stewardship on a quarterly basis.

8. Youth Collaborations:

Promote youth networks and collaborations at both vertical: youth organisations—government, and horizontal level of partnership: youth —youth organisations.

9. Youth Research:

It is important to cultivate a research culture wherein analyses, decisions, and everything done will be data and evidence driven. It is also important to break down the NYP into more easily understandable and relatable formats as well as translated into local languages.

Obligations of Different Organisations to Youth Development

To actualise provisions and principles of the NYP, different organisations have to work to ensure commitment to it, in order to see an active youth population contributing to meaningful national development. Organisations identified include the National Youth Council of Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Sports and Youth Development and Youth Organisations.

The Federal Ministry of Sports and Youth Development (FMSYD) has the following obligations:

- The FMSYD should keep an online database of youth organisations in Nigeria. It should be easy for youth organisations to register online;
- FMSYD should make public its budget and accounts of stewardship regularly;
- FMSYD should set up programmes to train the youth on M&E;
- The capacity of FMSYD needs to be strengthened to be able to implement the NYP. Young people should hold meaningful and strategic positions at the ministry;
- There should be a cluster/coalition of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to focus on the NYP and its implementation at all states of the country;
- A specified percentage of the budget should be allotted for youth development yearly;
- Adaptation of the NYP in all states of the federation.

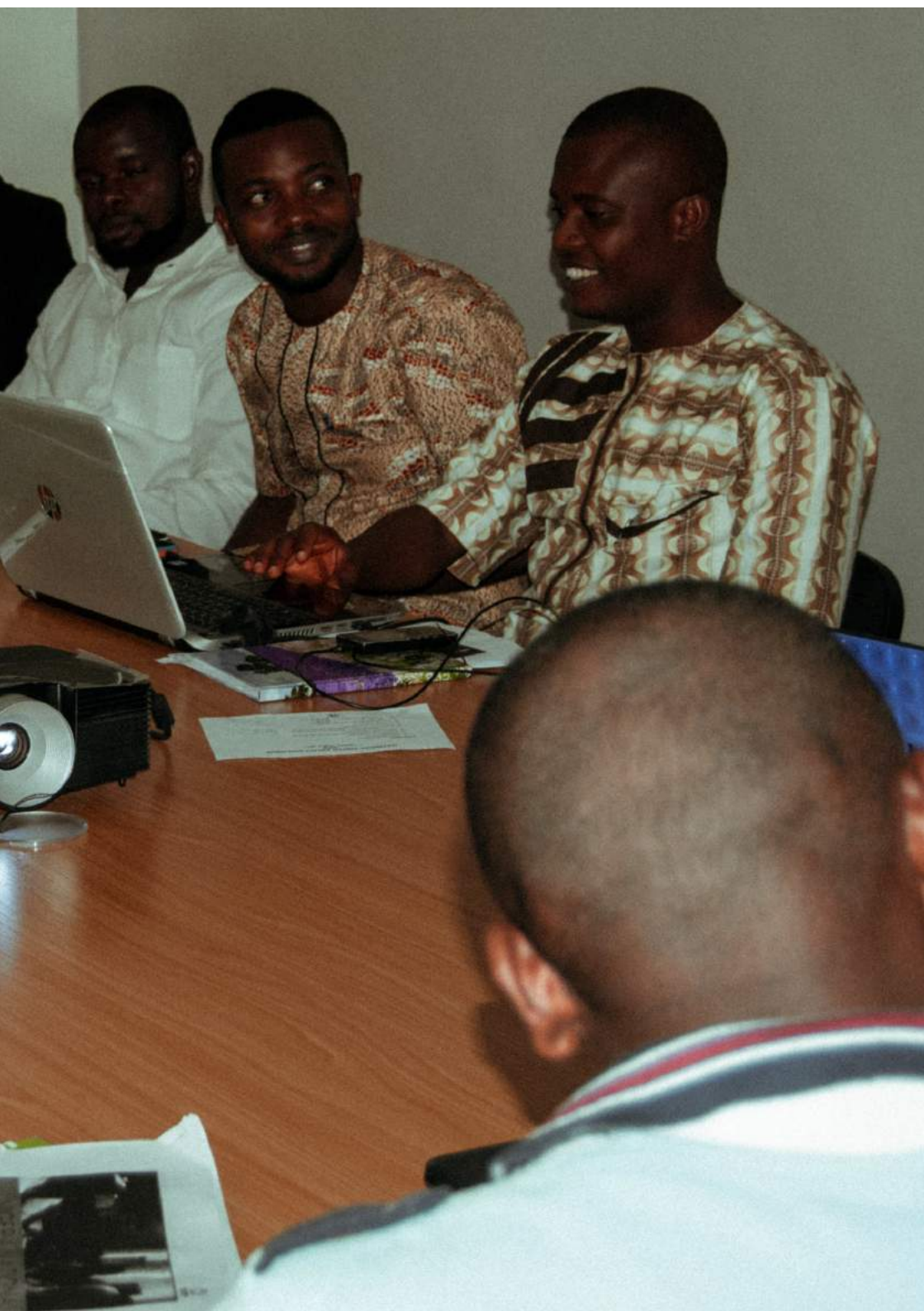




The National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN)

The NYCN, the umbrella body for the various youth organisations in the country, is made up of 160 voluntary youth organisations.⁴ There are 37 state chapters of the council (including one in the capital territory). The NYCN has the potential to impact the NYP in various ways, however it faces diverse challenges. In order to improve the NYCN's impact on the NYP, the following suggestions were made:

- The government should refrain from interfering with NYCN elections, and using the NYCN as a political tool. Government should focus on supporting the NYCN as an advocacy platform;
- More young people with fresh innovative ideas and perspectives especially those with CSO/NGO knowledge should take responsibility of the NYCN by running for office, and determining how the NYCN is run;
- More credible youth-led and youth-focused organisations should be encouraged to enroll as part of the NYCN;
- Membership enrollment in the NYCN should be on an ongoing basis, not only during congresses. There should also be provision for e-voting;
- All Nigerian youths should be eligible to attend NYCN meetings and congresses as observers at their own cost. Hence, NYCN should focus more on communicating information about their projects to Nigerian youths and should embrace social media to have a wider reach.





Conclusion

The entire process was able to galvanise a wide representation of Nigerian youths, majority of whom voluntarily took responsibility to partake in this process. It created a wider spectrum of perspectives which emphasizes the integral role of youths in our national development. Further, we were able to draw insights from these varying perspectives across a broad range of existing issues while simultaneously, developed resourceful recommendations from our conducted nationwide National Youth Policy Dialogues and the National Youth Harmonization Review. We believe the over-riding purpose of this document will be found worthy of inclusion in the ongoing 2016 review process of the National Youth Policy before its final presentation.

References

(All documents were accessed in September, 2017)

1. National Youth Policy: www.youthpolicy.org/national/Nigeria_2009_National_Youth_Policy.pdf
2. Euromonitor: <http://www.euromonitor.com/nigeria-in-2030-the-future-demographic/report>
3. Next Generation Report: www.nextgenerationnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/Next_Generation_Report_Pub.pdf
4. National Youth Council of Nigeria: acdn.tigurl.org/images/resources/tool/docs/762.pdf

TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE
**NATIONAL YOUTH
POLICY
REVIEW**
I N N I G E R I A

With Special thanks to



ISBN : 978-978-938-094-7

Prepared by



6 Magarza close, off Crown Court estate,
behind VIO Headquarters,
Mabushi, Abuja.

Nigeria

Telephone: +234 909 804 4444 ; +234 909 764 4444

email: info@youthhubafrica.org

www.youthhubafrica.org