

Narrative Report for Sub-Grantees

A. Grant Information

1. Grant Agreement Number: **INSPIRES.2021.NNNGO**
2. Implementing Partner: **Nigeria Network of NGOs**
3. Location of Planned Activity: **Nigeria**
4. Grant Start Date: **January 26, 2021**
5. Grant End Date: **November 30, 2021**
6. Amount of Award: **\$25,000**
7. Contact Person for Grantee: **Oyebisi B. Oluseyi**
8. Email: seyi@nnngo.org
9. Address and Phone Number: **No 8, Oba Akenzua Crescent, Onireke, Ibadan/ 08028367748**
10. ICNL Project Code: **10421- 0131.932**
11. Report Due Date: **November 2021**
12. Report Submitted on: **November 30, 2021**
13. Report Type (Interim v Final): **Final Report**
14. Attachments:

B. Narrative: Please describe the main activities that you conducted during the reporting period and their impact on promoting an enabling environment for civil society in your country. Specifically, please provide:

- A description of each activity conducted under the grant. Include (i) type of activity, (ii) planned versus actual date/timeframe of activity, (iii) location(s), (iv) number of individuals/groups participating, (v) number of materials produced, (vi) outreach activities, if any, and (vii) any other relevant information.
- Key outputs or deliverables produced during the grant period, e.g.:
 - Supportive interventions to help address civil society law reform, including the convening of meetings among stakeholders, trainings on law or advocacy, etc.;
 - Legal analyses of national legislation relating to FoAA/FoE;
- A comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives established for the grant period, and the reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate;

At completion of the ICNL-sponsored COVID-19 project, the Nigeria Network of NGOs presents this report detailing the amount of work done in the 11 months of the implementation of the project. The overarching goal of the project was to monitor state officials' enforcement of legislative measures and conduct analysis of the impact of response measures on civic freedoms in line with recommendations for a human rights-based approach to COVID-19 from human rights mechanisms.

This report is an attempt to relay what we have done, successes and challenges drawing on daily work of the project team through:

- Monitor state officials' enforcement of legislative measures and conduct analysis of the impact of response measures on civic freedoms in line with recommendations for a human rights-based approach to COVID-19 from human rights mechanisms.

- Sustaining a portal that integrates all state and federal COVID-19 emergency frameworks and related measures in all 36 states in Nigeria and highlights implications for fundamental rights and civic freedoms. The information collected will also be used to update and feed into ICNL's global COVID-19 Civic Freedom Tracker.
- Undertaking advocacy and policy engagement by drawing upon the information collected to produce evidence-based advocacy materials targeting government officials and legislators at both the state and federal levels and undertaking targeted policy engagement, holding advocacy meetings with government and the legislature to share monitoring results and provide technical advice
- Organising virtual stakeholder forums and media campaigns to foster dialogue on emerging civic space challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and recommend strategic actions as well as empower civil society on existing human rights obligations for states during emergencies
- Holding a conference on legal preparedness for pandemics, bringing together stakeholders across state institutions and the civic sector to take stock of important lessons for protection of civic freedoms during and after pandemics, and emerging contextual issues for future learning.

Overall, the specific objectives of the project were achieved. This project was a good platform for NNGO to create awareness on salient issues around governments' response to covid-19, civil society responsibility to participate in governance in periods of emergencies and educate citizens on obligations of relevant authorities during health emergencies while also gathering concrete data on these issues for documentary purposes.

The report of activities implementation is as follows;

- A. Monitored state officials' enforcement of legislative measures and conduct analysis of the impact of response measures on civic freedoms in line with recommendations for a human rights-based approach to COVID-19 from human rights mechanisms.

1. Managing COVID-19 with a Focus on Civic Freedoms:

(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ueq2cvDMWynYQqhwBuyquinhNJBdulBv/view?usp=sharing>)

As Nigeria emerged from the lockdown following the COVID19 crisis, NNGO began monitoring and collecting data on governments' enforcement of legislative measures and conducting analysis of this data to the impact of these measures on civic freedoms in line with recommendations for a human rights-based approach to COVID-19 from human rights mechanisms.

The research analysed the human rights implications of governments' responses – communication, crisis management and policy responses in its different dimensions: health, economic and social using indicators based on the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and Assembly's report on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the Open Government Partnerships (OGP) guide to open government and the coronavirus: misinformation and protecting freedom of expression. It provides data on the actions undertaken by national and subnational governments to help mitigate the territorial effects of the crisis and offers lessons on managing future pandemics based on these. The research report served as the main advocacy material developed for the specific purpose of engaging government on actions and policies undertaken to mitigate against the effect of the pandemic.

The research report is NNNGO's work on the first set of data to measure government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The processes of gathering data for this report revealed several key insights for governments, advocates, development partners and citizens who are committed to open civic space: focus on civic space at the sub-national level. The process revealed that while many states are interested in curbing the pandemic, far fewer are collecting and sharing proactively or in real time information on the disease.

2. Focus Group Discussion/Data Validation Workshop on the Impact of COVID-19 on Civic Freedoms in Nigeria

A data validation workshop/focus group discussion was organized by the Nigeria Network of NGOs on Thursday 14, October 2021 in Oyo state, Nigeria, in line with the requirements of a qualitative research being conducted by the Network on "The Impact of Governments' Response to Covid-19 on Civic Freedoms in Nigeria".

The main purpose of the workshop was to give key stakeholders particularly, civic actors from different parts of the country, who during the heat of the pandemic's initial phase that necessitated stringent restrictions of citizens' movement by government, were on ground to provide much needed first response to their beneficiaries, an opportunity to review and validate data gathered during the research being conducted by the Network along with and was targeted at receiving concrete feedback from participants on data accuracy, credibility and validity.

About 26 participants from 6 states including local communities representing civil society organisations working in the areas of health, poverty alleviation, food and nutrition etc. participated in the workshop.

- The workshop provided an opportunity for the stakeholders to discuss the:
 - a) Main findings from the data presented by the NNNGO research team
 - b) Review research methodology and itemize data collection gaps
 - c) Provide insights on other areas of concentration to broaden the depth of the research
 - d) Provide background to some of the data from their experience in their local communities
 - e) Provide feedback as to the validity and accuracy of the data gathered.

In particular, the workshop featured targeted conversations around data gathered on each of the States in the country as the NNNGO research noted that accessing concrete data from the 36 states on specific issues relating covid-19 protocols as dictated by indicators employed for the research proved cumbersome and almost impossible using open-source data.

Find Data Validation Workshop report here https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y9ND4yq_mZxLV5-CRRu1ZZUGaPtugsWg/edit?usp=sharing&oid=102819130259445722787&rtpof=true&sd=true

- B. NNNGO established and sustained a portal that integrates all state and federal COVID-19 emergency frameworks and related measures in all 36 states in Nigeria and highlights implications for fundamental rights and civic freedoms. The information collected will also be used to update and feed into ICNL's global COVID-19 Civic Freedom Tracker.

1. Established a COVID-19 Measures Tracking Portal <https://covidmeasure.nnngo.org/>

The research employed qualitative research methods which primarily involved desk review to capture data from the Coronavirus dashboard of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) website, <https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/> open-source online search for information on government website and social media handles, desk reviews of covid-related legislations, news articles published by reputable news organisations, government's social media handles and that of citizens' organisations. Further data were gathered from a Focus

Group Discussion and data validation exercise conducted among civil society organisations hosted by the Nigeria Network of NGOs in Ibadan, Oyo state.

NNNGO developed a tracker which serves as a portal for hosting all data gathered during the project. The portal helps to curate data on how states across Nigeria have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic using the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and Assembly's report on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the Open Government Partnerships (OGP) guide to open government and the coronavirus: misinformation and protecting freedom of expression.

The portal is an interactive website with tabs which open to information about the research, the data gathered, indicators used in data gathering along with locations from which the data were curated. These all follow the filters to understand how each state responded since the COVID-19 crisis began.

2. Updating the NNNGO COVID-19 Tracker <https://covid19.nnngo.org/>

Data gathered also served to update the NNNGO Covid-19 tracker launched in 2020, a repository of information on governments' response to covid-19 since its introduction into Nigeria. The tracker mines up-to-date information about actions taken by state governments ranging from legislative frameworks, work restrictions, limits on gatherings, school closure, closure of non-essential business, curfew, reopening plans, inter-state travel limitations, stay at home orders and mask requirements.

- C. Undertook advocacy and policy engagement by drawing upon the information collected to produce evidence-based advocacy materials targeting government officials and legislators at both the state and federal levels and undertook targeted policy engagement, held advocacy meetings with government and the legislature to share monitoring results and provide technical advice.

1. Civic Space and Covid-19 – Lessons from Governments' Response: <https://nnngo.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/civic-space-Covid-19.pdf>

Earlier in the project implementation, an issue brief Covid-19 and Civic Space was developed from preliminary data gathered from the initial baseline study of the impact of COVID-19 on civic space specifically looking out how civil society organisations responded to the pandemic and their role as recognized by government.

This brief along with letters introducing the project were circulated to Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, Nigeria Governors' Forum, Private Sector Coalition Against Covid19, Office of the Vice President of Nigeria, Office off the Senate President, the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Presidential Task Force on Covid-19. The brief was sent via email to all NNNGO members and is currently published on the Nigeria Network of NGOs' public website which makes it accessible to the public.

2. Managing COVID-19 with a Focus on Civic Freedoms: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gS4ymC-38Oif8vGssdoSaPED6MVqhbOn/view?usp=sharing>)

As Nigeria emerged from the lockdown following the COVID19 crisis, NNNGO began monitoring and collecting data on governments' enforcement of legislative measures and conducting analysis of this data to the impact of these measures on civic freedoms in line with recommendations for a human rights-based approach to COVID-19 from human rights mechanisms.

The research analysed the human rights implications of governments' responses – communication, crisis management and policy responses in its different dimensions: health, economic and social using indicators based on the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and Assembly's report on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the Open Government Partnerships (OGP) guide to open government and the coronavirus: misinformation and protecting freedom of expression. It provides data on the actions undertaken by national and subnational governments to help mitigate the territorial effects of the crisis and offers lessons on managing future pandemics based on these. The research report served as the main advocacy material developed for the specific purpose of engaging government on actions and policies undertaken to mitigate against the effect of the pandemic.

3. Advocacy Visits and Government Engagement During Project Implementation

Engagement with government on the project commenced with NNNGO sending publications and advocacy materials developed during the project to relevant authorities to create awareness about the project and the issues it seeks to investigate. Letters which included request for visits and participation at the National Conference on Legal Preparedness for Pandemics were sent in October 2021 to the following offices: Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, National Orientation Agency, National Human Rights Commission, National Primary Health Care and Development Agency and to the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation. Find copies of letters sent here <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/18WnuWTWylRpvY-N4eRbZobt9DC7VIJ6I?usp=sharing>

Between November 14-19, 2021, NNNGO led by its Executive Director, Oyebisi Oluseyi, led a party of 5 comprising 2 Executive Directors from civil society organisations; The Irede Foundation and Street Child Care and Welfare Initiative, Nigeria along with 2 staff of the Nigeria Network of NGOs on courtesy visits to the following government agencies: Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, National Orientation Agency, National Human Rights Commission, National Primary Health Care and Development Agency and to the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation.

These visits were strategically scheduled to keep relevant agencies updated on findings from the research conducted on governments' response to covid19 as it affects civic freedoms and human rights, while also ushering in governments' participation at the "National Conference on Legal Preparedness for Pandemics; a look at the impact of COVID-19 on Civic Freedom"

The NNNGO party met with the Director General, National Orientation Agency who provided a brief background into activities of the Agency during and since the introduction of covid-19 into Nigeria.

<https://fb.watch/9igB5Thnoj/>

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=262364445919306&id=100064372584634&sfnsn=scwspwa

Unfortunately, the team was unable to visit other agencies and offices due to the following reasons: For the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, the office expressed willingness to join the conference but advised that a visit to the NCDC office was not necessary at the time due to the office's busy schedule. Find here a letter detailing a response from NCDC <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16RK3L2xyAly5n00lOAG6-jvYL28RHU7f/view?usp=sharing>. For the National Human Rights Commission, the team was informed of the Executive Secretary's unavoidable absence and was promised a rescheduling for a later date at which the project's funding could not permit. At the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, the NNNGO team was denied entry into the office and informed that the Office does not honour unsolicited requests for visits. The team was urged to do a reminder letter and request for audience with the office on a later date. Find attached here the reminder <https://drive.google.com/file/d/14eo2adJ5JlxG6lmusPzkloTQXltwaSKh/view?usp=sharing>

4. Communications Campaign Around Project Activities

NNNGO employed the use of our social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp along with emails and text messaging to circulate information on project activities to our 3,399 members who are on the Network's database and other members of the public. **See link to statistics of social media impression here**

<https://us.docworkspace.com/d/sIP3TvaM267SEjQY> <https://us.docworkspace.com/d/sIEftvaM23pmEjQY>

- D. Organising virtual stakeholder forums and media campaigns to foster dialogue on emerging civic space challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and recommend strategic actions as well as empower civil society on existing human rights obligations for states during emergencies

1. Stakeholders Virtual Session on Human Rights Obligations During Pandemics

Nigeria Network of NGOs with support from International Center for Not-For-Profit Law (ICNL) hosted a virtual stakeholder forum on October 27, 2021, to foster dialogue on emerging civic space challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, recommend strategic actions and empower citizens and especially, civil society on existing human rights obligations for states during emergencies to sensitize them about the status quo.

The 90-minute virtual event hosted on the zoom platform was attended by about **28** participants from across different sectors ranging from public, private, media and civil society and followed an expert presentation format along with a Q and A session to deepen conversation around the COVID-19 disease, the response of government to the disease along with lessons on obligations of all stakeholders during the current pandemic to allow for a solution-based approach for future health emergencies.

Panelists and participants called on civil society to recognize its role of ensuring that states exercise their emergency powers with appropriateness as recognized by law. They recommended that civil society must remain vigilant to vet every legislation or regulation introduced by government during emergencies to check their alignment with the law. They also called that civil society must test government measures whether the extraordinary measures introduced by government are in alignment with human rights provisions as dictated by law.

Find event report here https://docs.google.com/document/d/1V0rBUV-69GExJtvaAA8gi_MD3HSurnnM/edit?usp=sharing&oid=102819130259445722787&rtpof=true&sd=true

- E. Holding a conference on legal preparedness for pandemics, bringing together stakeholders across state institutions and the civic sector to take stock of important lessons for protection of civic freedoms during and after pandemics, and emerging contextual issues for future learning.

1. NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEGAL PREPAREDNESS FOR PANDEMICS; Lessons from the Impact of Covid-19 on Civic Freedoms.

On 17th November 2021, the Nigeria Network of NGOs with support from the International Centre for Not-For-Profit Law (ICNL) convened civil society organisations, government representatives, the media, and citizens from across different sectors at a national conference held in Abuja, the federal capital territory of the country to discuss lessons learnt from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on civic freedoms in Nigeria. The hybrid event was attended by **44** physical participants, about **42** online participants joining via video-teleconferencing and more than 1,000 citizens across the 36 states of the country listening in on the event via live radio broadcast.

The National Conference on Legal Preparedness on Pandemics was an avenue for the Nigeria Network of NGOs to officially launch the final report of the research on the Impact of Governments' Response to Covid-19 on Nigerian

Citizens. The research report titled, “Managing Covid-19 With a Look at Civic Freedoms” captures how Nigerian citizens continue to bear the intended and unintended effects of governments’ actions at the different levels, in the fight against the spread of the pandemic, looking at the stringent measures employed by government to curb the spread of the disease as well as provisions made to cushion the resulting effects on the populace.

The conference also provided an opportunity for government to respond to the report, provide a background to governments’ actions in the wake of the pandemic while also establishing a process for government-citizen dialogue at a time when citizens are still reeling from the shock of the pandemic.

See conference report here (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/13txJyw-5SBmCLrG0oxlkiIMwSXQKqyl/edit?usp=sharing&oid=102819130259445722787&rtpof=true&sd=true>)

- **Key impact produced by the grant activities on the legal operating environment for civil society. For example, did the grant activities influence laws that were drafted or enacted?**

-The grant activities helped to bring to fore communication gaps overlooked by government in its covid response as data indicated that government primarily placed the responsibility of communicating covid information on the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control, an agency without the required communication expertise to reach local communities who form most of the Nigerian population. This left the National Orientation Agency, the organization concerned with information dissemination and many citizens in local communities, playing catch-up.

- **Discuss any problems, challenges and lessons learned from this project that you plan to use in the future.**

- The project required targeted engagement with government agencies, some of which had specific protocols for engaging with organisations. These protocols were not taken into consideration at the point of seeking requests for visits to the offices of the Secretary to the Federal Government and National Primary Healthcare Development Agency because prior engagements with other government agencies had not necessitated the need to follow any specific kind of protocol to request audience.
- A lesson from this process is that before implementing any project in the future that may require engagement with these specific offices, the offices will need to be initiated into the process from the very beginning and communication with them must be strategic to allow adequate response time from them.
- Another challenge encountered in the project implementation was in data gathering. Because of the novelty of the pandemic, it was difficult to find a lot of reference and the data looked different between national and subnational governments in that some parameters which were available for federal government were just not available for state governments.
- The project helped to reinforce the importance of advocacy visits and engagements especially to stakeholders like government agencies as it helped to provide concrete information which proved useful for data validation and update. The visit to the National Orientation Agency proved especially crucial in correcting some misconceptions about the agency’s work around covid-19 because although focus group discussions revealed that citizens noted that the NOA was not active in information dissemination during the pandemic, the advocacy visit revealed that in fact, the agency had done quite a lot to check fake news, promote information dissemination and citizens engagement during the pandemic.

- **List other organizations, if any, which conducted similar programming on these issues during your project.**

During project implementation, it was revealed that some member organizations of the Nigeria Network of NGOs also conducted research on issues relating to the impact of covid-19 on civic space and human rights perspectives. They are:

- **Aspire Coronation Trust Foundation:** Impact of COVID-19 on social change organizations in Africa
https://actrustfoundation.org/html_main/images/portfolio/pdf/ACT_Covid_19_Research_Report.pdf

- **Human Rights Advancement, Development and Advocacy Centre:** Human Rights Perspectives of COVID 19 pandemic in West Africa <https://www.huridac.org/the-covid-19-report.html>
- **Conclusions, recommendations and plans for future advocacy on this issue.**

The project has opened up conversations around how civil society can better carry out its roles of holding government accountable to its responsibilities of keeping citizens safe while also respecting their fundamental human rights even during pandemics; with reports and interactions held because of data gathered from research conducted during the implementation of this project, NNNGO will continue to work with government and government agencies, specifically, the National Orientation Agency, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Office of Deputy Senate President on ways for government to better include civil society in information dissemination, social protection delivery and citizens engagement to mitigate some of the effects of governments' actions to contain the spread of covid-19.

Advocacy Materials developed during project implementation have been circulated to all relevant agencies and more engagements are expected to follow the receipt of these materials which provide concrete data on citizens' perception of governments' response to COVID-19.

2. Gender Aspects: If you held any events or trainings, please provide the following information regarding the gender of participants.

- How many people attended the consultation?
 - The Data Validation Workshop – Stakeholder Discussion on the Impact of Covid-19 on Civic Freedoms, was attended by **26** participants
 - The virtual event – Rights Obligations During Emergencies was attended by **30** participants
 - The National Conference on Legal Preparedness for Pandemics; Lessons from the Impact of COVID-19 on Civic Freedoms in Nigeria which was a hybrid event was attended by **44** physical participants and **42** online participants
- How many people in attendance were women?
 - The Data Validation Workshop – Stakeholder Discussion on the Impact of Covid-19 on Civic Freedoms had **16** women in attendance.
 - The virtual event – Rights Obligations During Emergencies had **17** women in attendance.
 - The National Conference on Legal Preparedness for Pandemics; Lessons from the Impact of COVID-19 on Civic Freedoms in Nigeria which was a hybrid event had **18** women in attendance physically and **15** virtually.
- How many organizations were represented (if applicable)?
 - **24** organisations were represented at the Data Validation Workshop – Stakeholder Discussion on the Impact of Covid-19 on Civic Freedoms.
 - **28** organisations were represented at “Rights Obligations During Emergencies.”
 - **41** organisations were represented physically and **30** were represented virtually at the National Conference on Legal Preparedness for Pandemics: Lessons from the Impact of COVID-19 on Civic Freedoms in Nigeria.
- How many organizations were represented by women (if applicable)?
 - **14** organisations were represented by women at the Data Validation Workshop – Stakeholder Discussion on the Impact of Covid-19 on Civic Freedoms.
 - **17** organisations were represented by women at “Rights Obligations During Emergencies.”

- **18** organisations were represented physically and **15** virtually by women were represented virtually at the National Conference on Legal Preparedness for Pandemics: Lessons from the Impact of COVID-19 on Civic Freedoms in Nigeria.
- How many organizations had a gender-oriented focus, a gender component, or women as the majority of their membership base and/or staff (if applicable)?
N/A
- Were there obvious differences between the frequency of inputs between men and women?
 No
- If so, which gender (in your opinion) contributed more frequently? Male / Female
- What issues were raised that have gender implications?
 - Since the project was focused on the impact of covid-19 on citizens and paid specific attention to the effect of government measures on Nigerian citizens, issues around the impact of the lockdown on women and children were discussed and data revealed that the lockdown period witnessed a spike in cases of gender-based violence with women being at the receiving end. It was also revealed that women who work in the informal sector were especially affected by restriction of movement that occurred during the partial lockdown in the country which further plunged households into poverty since many of these women did neither had alternative sources of income nor male counterparts to support them.
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____