



2020 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

NIGERIA
SEPTEMBER 2021



2020 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

For Nigeria
September 2021

Developed by:

United States Agency for International Development
Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance

Acknowledgment: This publication was made possible through support provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Cooperative Agreement No. AID-OAA-LA-17-00003.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed herein are those of the panelists and other project researchers and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or FHI 360.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A publication of this type would not be possible without the contributions of many individuals and organizations. We are especially grateful to our implementing partners, who played the critical role of facilitating the expert panel meetings and writing the country reports. We would also like to thank the many CSO representatives and experts, USAID partners, and international donors who participated in the expert panels in each country. Their knowledge, perceptions, ideas, observations, and contributions are the foundation upon which this Index is based.

LOCAL PARTNER

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION (CRD), KANO

Dr. Ahmed Mohammed
Umaru Ibrahim Yakubu, Federal University Dutse
Hassan Muritala Babatunde, Federal University Dutse

PROJECT MANAGERS

FHI 360

Michael Kott
Eka Imerlishvili
Alex Nejadian

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR NOT-FOR-PROFIT LAW (ICNL)

Catherine Shea
Jennifer Stuart
Marilyn Wyatt

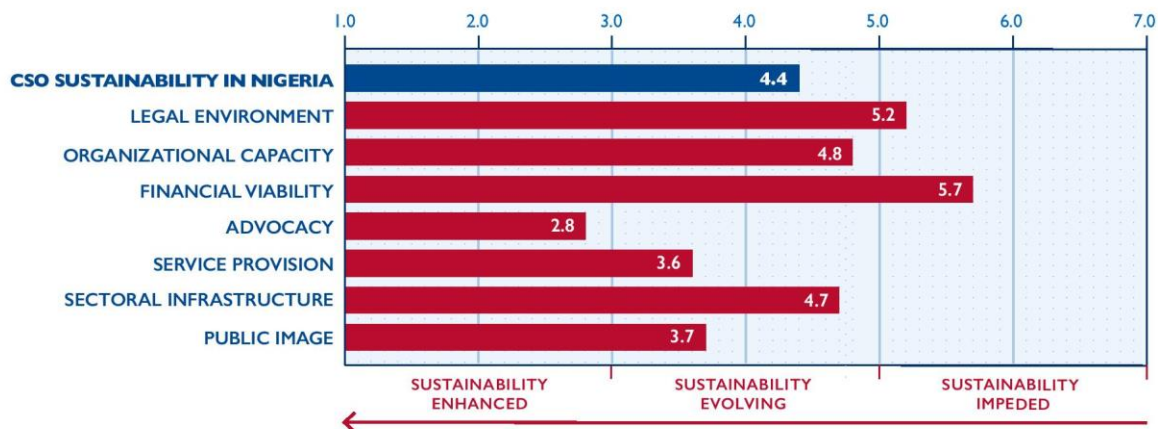
EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Frank Brumfit, Irene Petras, Mariam Afrasiabi, Kellie Burk, Julie Snyder, Tara Thwig, Joseph Sany, Keith Aulick, and Kadidia Dienta

NIGERIA

Capital: Abuja
Population: 219,463,862
GDP per capita (PPP): \$5,136
Human Development Index: Low (0.539)
Freedom in the World: Partly Free (45/100)

OVERALL CSO SUSTAINABILITY: 4.4



On February 27, 2020, Nigeria recorded its first case of COVID-19. The federal government introduced lockdowns in Lagos, Ogun, and Abuja in March and later extended them to other parts of the country. CSOs responded vigorously to the pandemic by distributing protective equipment and food and conducting public-awareness campaigns. In parts of the country affected by persistent violence, CSOs working with the government and international organizations faced the difficult task of preventing the spread of the virus while providing humanitarian support.

Nigeria's political scene was relatively peaceful for most of 2020. In contrast to national elections marred by violence in 2019, state elections in Edo on September 19 and Ondo on October 10 unfolded without incident. But in October, Nigeria was rocked by nationwide protests demanding an end to police brutality and the dissolution of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), which was known for its corruption and abusive treatment of civilians, especially young men. Tagged #EndSARS and led in part by CSO activists, the peaceful protests escalated into violence on October 10 when the police and military attempted to disperse protesters using tear gas and live ammunition. Over the next two weeks, dozens of protesters and bystanders were killed and as many as 1,500 people arrested. Although the government responded by disbanding SARS and setting up a commission to investigate police brutality, many observers were not convinced that these steps would deal effectively with the roots causes of the protests.

Conflicts continued unabated in the northeast in 2020, as Boko Haram attacked and killed civilians and military personnel and have displaced over 2.9 million people since 2009. In the northwest, bandits abducted more than 300 school children, and at least 1,100 people were killed by bandits in the first six months of the year, according to Amnesty International. Aid workers in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states were increasingly at risk in 2020. In January, Boko Haram attacked a United Nations (UN) housing facility in Ngala, Borno State, and killed twenty internally displaced people. In June, five aid workers were killed after they were abducted from an illegal checkpoint set up by the insurgents in Borno State. In December, one aid worker and two local officials were abducted by the Islamic State West Africa Province in a village in Borno State.

Many CSOs called on the government in 2020 to sack the country's top military leaders and strengthen its security architecture to stem the violence. A few state governors, particularly from the main opposition political party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), blamed the central government for the widespread insecurity. For example, the governor of Benue State in Northcentral Nigeria called on the central government to allow citizens to bear licensed arms to defend themselves, since the central government has failed in its responsibility to protect the people. This proposal was rejected by the central government. On January 9, the governments of six southwestern states formed the Western Nigeria Security Network, an action that the central government declared unconstitutional. The issue was later resolved after the central and state governments met, and the state governments agreed to give legal backing to the network in their various states. The network is now operational.

The pandemic coincided with tremendous economic strains, especially falling global prices for oil, Nigeria’s main export. In the third quarter of 2020, Nigeria plunged into its second recession in four years, potentially pushing another 5 million Nigerians into poverty, according to World Bank estimates. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that the number of people in need of urgent assistance in Nigeria rose from 7.9 million at the beginning of 2020 to 10.6 million after the pandemic took hold. The situation improved slightly in the fourth quarter of the year as the country exited recession with a 0.11 percent growth rate, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

Overall CSO sustainability in Nigeria deteriorated slightly in 2020. The legal environment was moderately weaker as harassment increased and the president signed the Company and Allied Matters Act (CAMA) 2020, which introduced stringent new provisions to regulate CSOs. Organizational capacity deteriorated slightly as the pandemic forced many CSOs to become inactive. The pandemic also resulted in cuts in funding, moderately undermining CSOs’ financial viability. At the same time, advocacy improved moderately as CSOs recorded significant successes despite challenges posed by the pandemic. Service provision was strengthened slightly by CSOs’ engagement in the pandemic response. Better information-sharing through mobile and online platforms helped improve the sectoral infrastructure slightly. CSOs’ public image was unchanged.

Nigeria’s CSO sector is diverse and in 2020 included more than 500,000 organizations registered at various levels. Nearly 94,000 CSOs were registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) in 2020, a slight rise from 93,000 organizations registered in 2019. The number of CSOs registered with state and local governments is difficult to determine. Many CSOs operate without formal registration.

LEGAL ENVIRONMENT: 5.2



The legal environment for CSOs deteriorated moderately in 2020 as government harassment of CSO activists increased, especially during the #EndSARS protests, and the president assented to CAMA 2020, which introduced stringent new provisions to regulate CSOs’ activities.

The regulatory environment for CSOs changed in August 2020 when CAMA 1990, the main act regulating CSO registration and operations at the national level, was repealed and replaced with CAMA 2020. The new act aims to improve the ease of doing business in Nigeria. Although CAMA 2020 contains most provisions of CAMA 1990, its enactment renewed apprehension in the CSO sector that the government was seeking to stifle CSO operations. In particular, new provisions in Part F of

CAMA 2020 authorize the state arbitrarily to withdraw or revoke CSO certificates and dismiss CSOs’ trustees and appoint interim managers. The new act places an additional reporting burden on CSOs by requiring them to report semi-annually rather than annually to the Federal Inland Revenue Services; empowers the CAC to order the involuntary merger of associations without a showing of necessity or due process; authorizes excessive interference by the CAC in the affairs and management of associations; permits warrantless searches of association premises; authorizes the dissolution of associations holding “dormant” bank accounts without adequate findings or due process; and authorizes dissolution of associations on open-ended grounds without affording an opportunity to rectify violations. CAMA 2020 was slated to take effect on January 1, 2021. CAMA 2020 still requires national-level CSOs to register with the CAC and foreign CSOs to register with the CAC and the National Planning Commission. The CAC retains excessive discretion to reject registration applications.

Because of the pandemic lockdown, the CAC provided only skeletal services in 2020, thereby limiting the ability of new CSOs to register. The CAC’s online presence was minimal, and it rarely responded promptly to CSOs’ requests for information about registration. The CAC withdrew the registration certificate of Ohanaeze Ndigbo, a socio-cultural group, in June on the grounds that the group had switched from socio-cultural affairs to acting as a political organization, therefore violating the purpose for which it was registered. The organization lodged an NGN

500 billion (approximately \$1.4 billion) lawsuit against the commission and later withdrew the suit after the commission restored its certificate.

The CSO sector vehemently opposed the CSO Regulatory Commission Bill 2019, which, if passed into law, would stifle CSOs' operations by allowing legislative scrutiny of their activities, imposing a code of conduct, and creating a database for registration renewal, which CSOs fear could be used to deny registration to organizations perceived to be critical of the government. The sector heaved a collective sigh of relief when, in March 2020, the Senate withdrew the bill after CSO advocacy. However, many observers view CAMA 2020 as containing equally restrictive provisions. In March, the Senate also organized a public hearing on the Protection from Internet Falsehood and Manipulation Bill 2019, commonly referred to as the social media bill, which criminalizes the online spread of falsehoods viewed as damaging to the country's security, public health, or public safety. CSOs believe that the bill, if passed into law, would violate their right to freedom of expression and its ambiguous definition of falsehood could be used to victimize individuals and organizations perceived to be critical of the government. CSOs strongly opposed the bill and, under the leadership of the Center for Liberty and Concerned Nigerians, staged a protest calling on the Senate to withdraw the bill, which did not happen. At the state level, Adamawa became the latest state to approve a policy to generate a database of CSOs operating in the state.

Because of the lockdown, the state restricted protests in most parts of the country during the year. Government harassment of CSO activists and journalists increased, especially during the #EndSARS protests in October. The police and military forces dispersed peaceful protesters with tear gas and live ammunition, and armed thugs suspected of working for politicians attacked protesters and vandalized the facilities of several media outlets in Lagos. According to Amnesty International, fifty-six people were killed during the protests. Rumors spread that the federal government had ordered the military to kill protesters at the Lagos Lekki Toll Gate. The inspector general of police reported 1,500 arrests, and the bank accounts of several CSO leaders of the protests were blocked by the Central Bank of Nigeria based on allegations that they had financed terrorism. At least twelve journalists covering the protests were assaulted, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

While tax legislation governing CSOs did not change in 2020, a new Finance Act was passed, due to take effect on January 1, 2021, under which CSOs will continue to be largely exempted from income tax. Because of the significant fall in government revenues, the federal and state governments searched for internal sources of revenue in 2020, including from the CSO sector. For example, in Delta State, CSOs were required to file delinquent tax returns from 2016 to 2020.

CSOs are legally allowed to earn income from the provision of goods and services, engage in fundraising campaigns, and compete for government contracts. CSOs may receive funds from foreign sources but must register with the Special Control Unit on Money Laundering. Many organizations have yet to do so because of poor enforcement.

CSOs in major cities continued in 2020 to enjoy pro bono legal services from the Legal Aid Council and several human rights organizations, including Lawyers Alert, Human Rights Law Service, and the Legal Defense and Assistance Project.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: 4.8

CSOs' organizational capacity was slightly weaker in 2020 as the debilitating effects of the pandemic forced many organizations to become inactive for most of the year.

The year was challenging for CSOs across the country. During the lockdown, only CSOs involved in health care or the distribution of pandemic-relief materials could engage directly with their beneficiaries. As other CSOs, such as the Parent-Child Intervention Center based in Enugu, were unable to work directly with their constituents because of restrictions on public activities and outreach, their relationships with beneficiaries deteriorated. Eventually, the state government involved the center in distributing food items to local communities, which helped it maintain contact with constituents. Few CSOs maintain databases of the beneficiaries of their programs or update their information when new beneficiaries are added.

CSOs' abilities to use their missions and strategic plans to guide their work were significantly weaker in 2020. Large organizations in major cities continued to pursue clearly defined missions and strategic plans. But many other organizations were unable to follow their missions and plans because they could no longer access grants for that

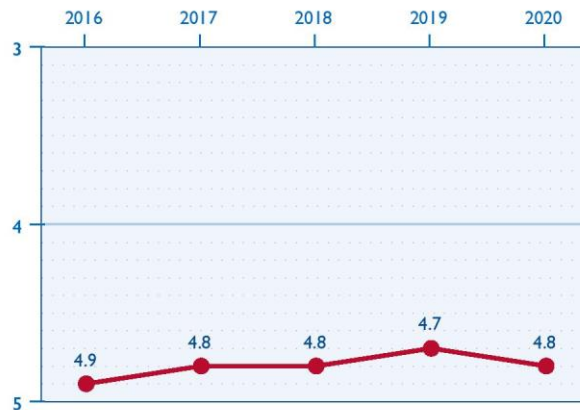
purpose, and instead had to adjust or wind down their activities. For example, for the first time in its existence, the Center for Gender Economics engaged in the distribution of food and protective materials in communities in the Southeast to bring in income. CSOs' access to support for strategic planning also suffered. Large CSOs normally offer training on planning to community-based organizations (CBOs). But after training twenty-nine CBOs on strategic planning in January, ActionAid Nigeria was unable to hold similar trainings for the rest of the year.

CSOs' internal management structures did not change significantly in 2020. Only a few large CSOs maintained active boards with responsibilities clearly distinguished from those of staff. Because of the pandemic, many boards were unable to engage in governing their organizations, especially if they lacked the capacity to organize online meetings. Large CSOs in major cities continued to maintain written policies and procedures to guide their operations and avoid conflicts of interest in line with donors' accountability requirements. But these good management procedures went unimplemented in 2020, since many CSOs were largely inactive for most of the year.

CSOs' staff and volunteer capacity deteriorated moderately in 2020. Because of their difficulty attracting grants during the pandemic, CSOs were often unable to pay employee salaries, which led to staff attrition at many organizations. Because their programs were inactive, CSOs' volunteer recruitment was significantly lower than in 2019, when a large number of volunteers took part in election-related activities. CSOs also reduced their reliance on professional advisors such as lawyers as the pace of registrations slowed down. Despite these difficulties, most CSOs maintained adequate human resource practices, including job descriptions, contracts, and personnel policies.

Leading CSOs at the national and state levels continued to have modern office equipment, such as computers, printers, and cell phones in 2020. During the lockdown, staff at many urban-based CSOs worked from home, using social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and online communications platforms, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Skype. Their ability to move their operations online allowed these CSOs to remain fairly well managed. In contrast, rural CSOs lacking internet access were hit hard by the pandemic. For example, they had limited access to online training programs that could help their operations. Cybersecurity remains uncharted territory for most of the CSO sector.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY IN NIGERIA



FINANCIAL VIABILITY: 5.7

FINANCIAL VIABILITY IN NIGERIA



CSOs' financial viability deteriorated moderately in 2020 as donors cut or shifted their funding in response to the pandemic and many grantmaking activities stalled. Apart from support for the distribution of pandemic-relief materials, CSOs had limited funding opportunities, and many CSOs, especially in rural areas, had no access to any funding during the year.

CSOs continue to depend mainly on foreign sources of funding. CSOs typically receive support from a diverse range of donors, including private foundations and bilateral and multilateral agencies. The major foreign donors to CSOs in 2020 included USAID; the United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO); the European Union; and the MacArthur Foundation. U.S. aid to Nigeria increased slightly in 2020, with a large portion going to health care

and population services, humanitarian relief, and governance. The UK's aid to Nigeria declined about 10 percent, with health care, the government, civil society, and disaster relief receiving the largest portion. During the year, many donors shifted their focus to pandemic-related activities and put on hold projects requiring face-to-face activities such as meetings or research. For example, the FCDO-funded Child Development Grant Program temporarily suspended activities such as baseline data collection and conducted only activities that could be performed remotely.

The government contracts with CSOs largely for service provision. In 2020, government agencies, ministries, and philanthropic organizations focused on engaging local CSOs and CBOs to distribute pandemic-relief materials and monitor the distribution of these materials during the lockdown. The governments of Kwara, Lagos, Kogi, Ebonyi, and Cross Rivers states also engaged CSOs to provide COVID-19-related services to vulnerable populations. However, the income realized from these activities was marginal in comparison to foreign donor support. Transparency was limited in the procurement process for pandemic-related services.

Nigerian CSOs have access to a few local sources of funding, including the TY Danjuma and Tony Elumelu foundations. During the pandemic, local philanthropic organizations, such as the Cuppy and Dangote foundations, supported CSOs' services to poor and vulnerable populations or provided these services themselves.

CSOs continued to use crowdfunding to fundraise for their activities during the pandemic. For example, CSO activists used crowdfunding to raise funds for the #EndSARS protests in October. Urban-based CSOs such as ActionAid Nigeria also relied on crowdfunding to raise funds. Social media platforms, including Facebook and WhatsApp, served as valuable tools in these efforts. Membership and professional organizations continued to rely heavily on members' dues to finance their activities.

CSOs' ability to earn income by providing services and products was severely undermined by the pandemic, since many CSOs were either completely or partially closed and thus unable to pursue income-generating activities.

Large CSOs typically have sound financial management systems. Small CSOs in rural areas have more rudimentary financial management practices. The pandemic coupled with CSOs' dwindling revenues hampered their ability to hire professional management services or retain skilled financial management staff. However, most large CSOs continued to operate in a transparent manner and in line with donor accountability requirements in 2020. Larger organizations often produce annual reports with audited financial statements, although overall this is not a common practice.

ADVOCACY: 2.8

Advocacy improved moderately in 2020 as CSOs recorded significant successes at the national and state levels despite challenges posed by the pandemic. In fact, the pandemic provided new opportunities for CSOs to collaborate with governments at the national and state levels in 2020. Connected Development (CODE) and BudgIT worked with the federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management, and Social Development to monitor the distribution of food and hygienic supplies to vulnerable persons. The Center for Gender Economics collaborated with the federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development to ensure that women were included as members of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19. At the state level, the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) collaborated with the Delta State government in the distribution of palliatives to indigent persons.



Collaboration and communication between the government and CSOs are increasingly inclusive of CSOs, as both the federal and local governments consider them to be important stakeholders in the development process. Some government projects and programs, such as the Open Government Partnership and the National Cash Transfer

Program, are designed to include CSOs specifically to hold government accountable. The National Cash Transfer Program, for example, has a grievance redress mechanism that allows CSOs to monitor the program and report irregularities to program implementers. CSOs are usually invited to attend public hearings on appropriation bills and other bills at the federal and state levels. Although Nigeria has been relatively slow to adopt digital technologies to ensure open government and public access to government information, large CSOs such as BudgetIT and CODE use such technologies to demand accountability from the government, especially in the budgeting process.

CSOs achieved several important advocacy successes in 2020. At the national level, one of the most effective advocacy campaigns was the #EndSARS protests against police brutality in October. The campaign eventually led to the dissolution of SARS, which was known for its high-handedness and victimization of Nigerian youth. After the protests, CSOs worked with the Human Rights Commission, Citizens Mediation Center, and youth representatives in judicial panels of inquiry set up to investigate alleged human rights violations by SARS agents. The police filed a lawsuit claiming that the panels were unconstitutional but later withdrew the suit.

Another important advocacy campaign in 2020 fought rape and gender-based violence (GBV). Women Against Rape in Nigeria, ActionAid Nigeria, Connected Development, Education as a Vaccine, Girl Child Africa, and other organizations involved in this effort succeeded in persuading the federal Ministry of Women Affairs to declare GBV a national emergency, which obliged the government to commit additional resources to curbing the menace. CSO advocacy also encouraged fulfillment of the federal Ministry of Health's project to establish one functional primary health-care facility in each ward. CSOs in Niger-Delta continued to call for a stop to pollution by oil companies.

At the state level, CSACEFA urged the Lagos State government to close down schools because of the pandemic. CSOs also led advocacy campaigns that resulted in the appointment of more women to government positions in Zamfara State and the provision of public toilets in Anambra State to eradicate open defecation. Other achievements included the initiation of a high-level bilateral discussion between CSOs and the Jigawa State government on the 2021 budget and the inclusion of CSOs in the Kwara State social audit scheme, which allows contracts to be awarded to contractors only after clearance from CSOs.

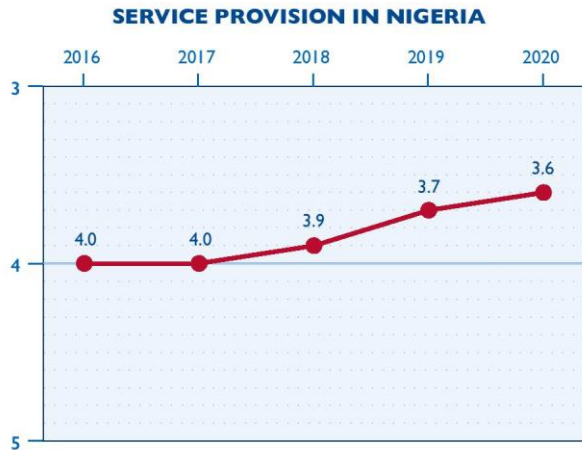
CSOs continued to achieve important lobbying successes at the federal and state levels in 2020. Action Group on Free Civic Space, a loose coalition of CSOs, lobbied against the Control of Infectious Disease Bill 2020, which they perceived as infringing on basic rights in proposing universal compulsory vaccination without informed consent. CSOs' strong opposition to the bill led to its withdrawal. Advocacy efforts by Partners West Africa Nigeria and other CSOs resulted in the enactment of the Nigeria Police Force (Establishment) Act 2020, which seeks to make the police force more effective, transparent, and accountable, and the completion and signing into law of the 2021 national budget in 2020. On the state level, lobbying successes included the introduction of a bill on the welfare of the elderly and social protection in Enugu State and a bill on a youth development commission in Nasarawa State. CSOs also lobbied successfully for the adoption of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act in Benue, Delta, Ebonyi and Nasarawa states.

CSOs have always been apprehensive about government efforts to reform legislation affecting the sector, even though CSOs themselves have yet to initiate positive reforms. Although the CSO sector was relieved when the Senate, in response to CSO advocacy, withdrew the CSO Regulatory Commission Bill 2019 in March 2020, many CSOs view CAMA 2020 as containing provisions that are just as restrictive as those that the sector rejected in the withdrawn bill. Many CSOs strongly criticized sections of Part F of the newly enacted CAMA 2020, believing that they allow the government to arbitrarily control and dissolve CSOs that it deems hostile to its agenda.

SERVICE PROVISION: 3.6

Service provision improved slightly in 2020 as the pandemic forced many CSOs to focus on meeting health-related and humanitarian needs.

Nigerian CSOs typically provide a wide range of services in education, health, environment, humanitarian relief, economic development, and governance. After the pandemic emerged in Nigeria, many CSOs re-focused to provide pandemic-related services. For example, the Women Environmental Program (WEP) began producing face masks and hand-washing materials, and CSACEFA, Center of Gender Economics, Center for Democratic Studies, Mambayya House, and many other CSOs distributed supplies and food to indigent people and sensitized the public



about the need to protect themselves from the virus. With funding from the Cuppy Foundation, Save the Children supplied personal protective equipment and infection-prevention and -control materials worth NGN 50 million (approximately \$135,000) to the Lagos State government and Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation Program funded fifty-eight CSOs in Kano, Lagos, Sokoto, and Abuja to carry out campaigns against the spread of the virus. Many CSOs assumed that because of the pandemic, communities would automatically welcome their services and materials to fight the virus. But this assumption was not always correct. In Enugu State, for example, a community rejected face masks and hand sanitizers offered by the Parent-Child Intervention Center, demanding food instead.

CSOs continued to provide services that reflect the needs of their constituents and communities in 2020. In the northeast, CSOs distributed materials and food items to internally displaced persons in camps. The Community Emergency Response Initiative received funding from the Nigeria Governors' Forum to construct public toilets in several states. In Katsina State, the Cuppy Foundation trained 295 people on feeding infants and young children.

Although international organizations and large local CSOs usually conduct assessments to determine community needs and monitor their interventions to determine how well they met those needs, few organizations were able to conduct needs assessments in 2020 because of the pandemic. State-level and rural CSOs do not normally conduct assessments. In November, the Borno State government launched a twenty-five-year Development Plan meant to ensure, among other things, that CSOs' activities correspond to community needs. CSOs are required to align their activities and programs with the plan.

CSOs continued to provide services to communities beyond their members in 2020. Most organizations deliver services in a non-discriminatory manner. Professional organizations such as the Nigeria Medical Association were actively involved in widespread COVID-19 sensitization efforts. WEP provided training on face mask and hand sanitizer production to CBOs in Benue, Zamfara, Nasarawa, and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, which went on to benefit more than 100,000 people.

CSOs are legally allowed to earn income from the provision of goods and services, but few organizations could do so in 2020 because of the lockdown. A large portion of CSO services is donor funded and provided to beneficiaries at no cost. CSO services are mostly driven by community needs rather than market concerns. Some CSOs operate business units that charge fees for services. For example, in 2020, BudgIT continued to provide infographic services to media organizations such as *The Guardian* newspaper and other clients for a fee. WEP has a business unit that focuses on renewable energy.

The government at all levels in Nigeria continued to recognize the value that CSOs add to service provision and the monitoring of social services in 2020. The federal government engaged Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth, and Advancement Africa in COVID-19 palliative distribution, and during the #EndSARS protests in October, the government asked independent CSOs to help diffuse public tensions. Likewise, CSO representatives were appointed as members of the panels of inquiry that the government set up in many states to investigate allegations of police brutality.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: 4.7

The infrastructure supporting the CSO sector improved slightly in 2020. More information was shared within the sector thanks to increased use of online platforms and training opportunities were plentiful.

Services offered by resource centers and intermediary support organizations were mostly online at no cost to participants in 2020. For example, the Center for Democracy and Development facilitated information sharing among CSOs through online platforms. This growing reliance on the internet made it relatively easy for many

urban-based organizations to attend trainings and share information. However, rural CSOs were often unable to benefit from such opportunities because of poor or non-existent internet services.

The regranting of funds increased in 2020 because of the inability of many large CSOs to access the communities in which they normally work. Instead, they relied on CBOs to distribute supplies and carry out sensitization activities. Large organizations such as WEP continued to re-grant donor funds to CBOs, and the TY Danjuma Foundation re-granted donor funds to organizations working in health care, education, and humanitarian relief. The Cuppy Foundation provided financial support from locally raised funds to a few international and local CSOs, including Save the Children, Angel for Life Foundation, and Kaffy Foundation.

Existing CSO coalitions continued to facilitate information sharing among their members in 2020. Major coalitions include the Nigeria Network of NGOs, Kano Civil Society Forum, and CSACEFA. A loose coalition of CSOs known as the Action Group on Free Civic Space was formed to oppose the Infectious Disease Bill 2020. CSO coalitions typically complement the work of their members and serve as valuable platforms for information sharing and accountability. Overall, cooperation within the sector improved slightly in 2020 as the use of online platforms increased.

CSOs continued to enjoy many training opportunities in 2020. The Center for Leadership, Strategy, and Development, Center of Information Technology and Development, and several other resource centers provided online training on pandemic-related topics, such as strategic development during the pandemic and monitoring approaches in the COVID-19 era. The Center for Democratic Studies, with support from the MacArthur Foundation, organized workshops on budget tracking and monitoring and evaluation. In February, Integrity Organization, in collaboration with ActionAid Nigeria, organized a training program on engaging with the private sector. ActionAid Nigeria also organized training for members of the Child Rights Implementation Committee on network management and advocacy as well as capacity building for effective service delivery. Several other training workshops on various topics took place in 2020, largely online. Training materials are offered in English.

Collaboration between CSOs and other sectors improved slightly in 2020. The government at all levels as well as the private sector recognize the advantages of partnering with CSOs to achieve common objectives. In 2020, they often relied on CSOs' expertise and community reach to conduct sensitization activities and distribute pandemic-relief supplies. For example, the Center for Gender Economics worked with the central Ministry of Women Affairs to push for the inclusion of women in the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19.

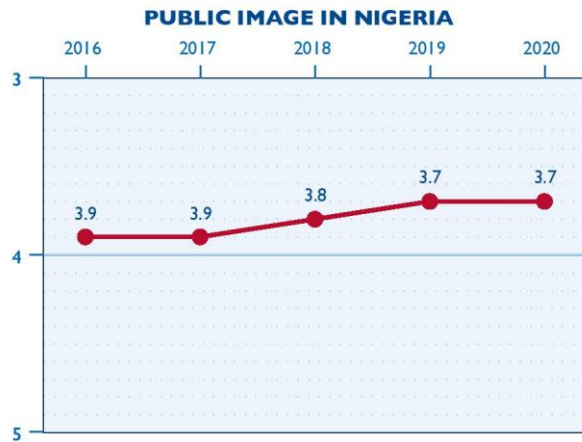
CSOs also collaborated extensively with the media in 2020. The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) cooperated with media across the country to raise awareness about COVID-19, and Yiaga Africa worked with media in Edo and Ondo states to disseminate accurate information before, during, and after their elections. Civil Society Scaling-Up Nutrition in Nigeria facilitated partnerships between health-focused CSOs and media organizations in Lagos for advocacy to help end malnutrition. CSACEFA and various media partnered to raise awareness in Edo and Ondo states about the need for girls to have access to quality education.

SECTORAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN NIGERIA



PUBLIC IMAGE: 3.7

CSOs' public image did not change in 2020. They continued to enjoy a positive public image and received considerable media attention, mainly in private outlets but also in government-owned media. For example, WEP attractive positive coverage of its gender and climate-change project. *Daily Trust* newspaper, SolaceBase.com, DailyNews24, and *Stallion Times* reported on the launch event of the 2019 CSO Sustainability Index report on Nigeria. CSO practitioners continued to be featured as analysts and commentators on television and radio programs. Online news outlets provided positive coverage of CSO activities, especially their awareness-raising on COVID-19 and the #EndSARS protests. For example, In July, *Solace Base* reported on CSOs' engagement in the



pandemic response in Kano State, and in October, *Premium Times* covered the #EndSARS protests, including CSOs' call on the government to stop attacking the protesters. Negative stories in government-controlled media focused on the CSO activists behind the #EndSARS protests. In most cases, private media cover CSO activities at no cost, while government-controlled media, especially at the state level, demand fees to cover CSOs' activities.

As a result of CSOs' effective advocacy and service provision, the public has generally positive perceptions of the sector. Many people consider CSOs as effective intermediaries with the government. In Enugu State, the people as well as the government have a high regard for CSOs. Local CSOs in Borno State continue to enjoy

tremendous acceptance among the people, although international CSOs are still viewed with suspicion.

The government at all levels as well as the business sector regard CSOs as a source of expertise. Although the relationship between international CSOs and the government of Borno State is not always cordial, the state government considers CSOs as important partners. For example, the government consulted with development partners while drafting its twenty-five-year development plan. The military in the troubled northeast area is still suspicious of international CSOs. The federal government often has negative views of CSOs that are critical of its policies and actions. For example, in 2020, the federal government criticized Transparency International for the country's low ranking in its annual corruption index.

CSOs continued to create awareness of their activities and advocate through various media in 2020. For examples, in Jigawa State, the Civil Society Forum and media worked together to raise public awareness of CSO activities. ASUU engaged the media extensively to create awareness about its decision to call a strike in 2020.

CSOs did not develop or adopt a sector-wide code of ethics in 2020. However, coalitions continued to push their members to operate in a transparent manner. Large CSOs publish their annual reports on their websites, but this is not a common practice among most CSOs.

Disclaimer: *The opinions expressed herein are those of the panelists and other project researchers and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or FHI 360.*

U.S. Agency for International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20523

Tel: (202) 712-0000

Fax: (202) 216-3524

www.usaid.gov