

Elevating Youth Voices, Building Trust, and Civic Cohesion (CLiP)

Project Overview

The Elevating Youth Voices, Building Trust, and Civic Cohesion (CLiP) Project was funded by LEAP Africa and the Nigeria Youth Futures Fund (NYFF). It aimed to drive meaningful youth engagement in governance by increasing youth participation in local democracy, enhancing civic education, and building trust between young citizens and their elected officials. The project was implemented by NGYouthSDGs in Enugu south, Enugu North and Nkanu West of Enugu East Senatorial District, Enugu State, South-East, Nigeria.

Objectives

The objectives focus on building the capacity of young civic campaigners to influence and engage both peers and lawmakers, fostering civic cohesion in areas of apathy through education and collaboration, bridging the trust gap between youth and lawmakers to empower communities, and documenting impactful lessons to support accountability and transparency initiatives for young people and civil society organizations.

The Approach (Strategies)

Recruitment of five community based young civic champions who were trained to lead project activities in their community. They were taken through a one-week comprehensive virtual capacity building session facilitated by carefully selected experts, and a 2 days residential training to equip these young civic champions with the knowledge and skills necessary for active citizenship.



Each civic champion recruited five young people as volunteers in their respective local government areas to cascade the knowledge gained on civic responsibilities and meaningful engagement with the government to develop their community. This was done through a peer-to-peer step down training.

Identification and engagement with legislators to increase the confidence of civic champions to mobilise and engage with decision-makers.

Conduct insight gathering with young people to understand their perceptions on civic engagement, the reason for civic desert and civic apathy in the communities and ideas how to facilitate civic cohesion. Also lawmakers to understand their perception of young people and the reason for the low meaningful youth engagement in local democracy

Town Hall meeting involving young people and lawmakers to disseminate, discuss and establish an actionable major ask based on findings

Organise an impact sharing session with Civil Society Organizations, Youth Groups and Youth Stakeholders across Nigeria to enhance their ability to replicate and scale similar initiatives in their communities.



Quick Facts

Timeframe: March to December 2024

Funders: NYFF and Leap Africa

72%

of youths interviewed across Enugu North, Enugu South and Nkanu West do not know the lawmaker representing their constituency.

For the remaining 28% of youths (n=26) who know their lawmaker, only 3 have ever reached out to their lawmaker. **This shows a disconnect between lawmakers and the youths.**

Perception of Lawmakers:

Indifference dominated with nearly half (**48.4%**) of the youths being neutral in their perceptions. A combined **38.7%** of respondents perceive their lawmakers as either somewhat ineffective (**23.7%**) or completely ineffective (**15%**).

Positive perception of the local lawmakers is minimal with only a small fraction (4.3%) of respondents viewing them as effective and responsive, and 8.6% see them as somewhat effective.

The indifference and negative perceptions point to a need for better communication, visibility, and accountability from lawmakers. It highlights the urgency of building stronger relationships between youths and their representatives to rebuild trust and encourage active civic participation.

Project Reach

5 civic champions **25** volunteers were recruited.

40,000+ listeners reached through radio programs.

Engagement and collaboration

4 community leaders

3 honourable members of the State House of Assembly.

5 Partnership with other CSOs

2 Partnership with media houses

27 youth participated in the International Day of Democracy event

135 youth engaged for insights gathering.

40 youth attendees for town hall meeting

39 youth engaged during the impact sharing session.

533 Youtube views



Lessons learnt

- The town hall meeting was the first deliberate citizen engagement interaction between youth and the elected lawmakers from Enugu East Senatorial District. It served as a groundbreaking platform and one of the lawmakers pledged to host a similar engagement in the near future.
- Its success indicated that the youths are ready to drive change provided they have access to the right tools, education, and opportunities.
- The insights gathering activities helped the project understand issues like governance, youth disengagement, and community needs. Listening to people ensured the project was relevant and effective.
- Involving persons with disabilities (PWDs) made the project more inclusive and showed the importance of diversity in youth-led civic initiatives.
- Although it was challenging to reach lawmakers, meeting with them directly helped gain their support for youth-focused initiatives. This showed the value of building connections between young people and decision-makers.
- Economic hardship drives youth to focus on financial survival over civic involvement, highlighting the need for programs linking civic engagement with economic empowerment.



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