

Analysis of Findings

REPORT

LNB National Dialogue

Identifying communities and groups of people most in need

Participants at a glance

110 Participants
52 men and 58 women
Government, Private Sector,
NGOs, Academics, Trade Groups,
Media and People with Disability

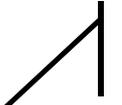
About the Analysis

The Analysis of Findings is based on discussions at the Leave No One Behind National Dialogue held on November 16 with 110 experts from 16 Nigerian States holding senior leadership positions within Government, NGO, University, Corporate Organisations, Women Groups, Disability Groups, Cooperatives, Research Institutes/Think Tank and Media Agencies.

Acknowledgement

NNNGO thanks all the participants who took time to participate at the national dialogue. The analysis benefited mainly from their input.

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Introduction

Between September and November 2016, the Nigeria Network of NGOs partnered with Civicus, Development Initiative, and Project Everyone to conduct both online and in-person consultations as well as a national dialogue to identify and understand communities and group of people most in need and to galvanise stakeholders to deliver key commitment of the SDGs to be inclusive and transformative in a way that respects indivisibility, universality and equity.

The research highlights that women, children, people living with disabilities, aged, people living in rural communities and internally displaced persons are the most left behind in Nigeria and they confront a wide range of developmental challenges that pose direct threats to the lives and the stability of their environment.

This report provides an analysis of discussions held at the November 16, 2016 national dialogue in Lagos, Nigeria with 110 experts from 16 Nigerian States, including representatives from Government, Private Sector, NGOs, Academics, Trade Groups, Media and People with Disability sharing their experience and thoughts on seven guiding questions that shaped discussions at the dialogue.

1. Who are the groups and communities in your country that are being left behind?
2. Where are people being most left behind? Is there a particular region/locality?
3. What are some stories or testimonies from those furthest behind?
4. What are the main obstacles that these disenfranchised groups are facing?
5. What can be done to remove these obstacles?
6. Which goals, targets and indicators need particular focus in your country and why?
7. What steps, as a coalition, are you planning on taking in the next few years to ensure the inclusion of disenfranchised groups in policy decisions?

The report further compared outcomes of the national dialogue discussions with that of the Leave No One Behind online consultation findings produced by the Nigeria Network of NGOs in September 2016 and country profile analysis developed by Development Initiatives towards the national dialogue.

The developmental challenges faced by Nigerians know no religion, nationality, border, sexual orientation or gender. Yet again, the results from this survey points to the magnitude of marginalisation that exists in Nigeria and the urgent need to fight with determination discrimination in all its forms in accordance with national and international laws, purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

Findings

In Nigeria these groups and communities are left behind.

A little over a year ago, the United Nations agreed to an ambitious agenda to better the lives of the over 7 billion people around the world without leaving anyone behind. While the goals are just gaining momentum, experts in Nigeria are of the opinion that these group and communities are left behind when asked “who are the groups and communities in your country that are left behind?”

Children, people living with disability, widows, women, unemployed, slum dwellers, ethnic minorities, illiterates, youths, women in rural communities, adolescent and teenage girls, mentally challenged, men with strong cultural and religious beliefs, Niger Delta and North East communities, the aged, and internally displaced persons. This is not far from the results of the LNB online consultation survey report published in October 2016 by the Nigeria Network of NGOs.

As the LNB online consultation survey report illustrates, two-thirds (66.9%) of those interviewed say women are more likely to experience poverty when compared to other groups of people. Children ranked next with 60.2% respondents confirming this. Furthermore among the top group of people likely to be marginalized thereby experiencing more poverty are people with disabilities (45.9%), Unemployed (39.2%) and older persons (38.7%).

Left behind regionally.

The Country Profile developed by Development Initiatives shows that poverty rates vary in Nigeria across zones. Based on 2010 data, the highest rates of poverty were found in the North East (69.0%) and North West (70.0%) zones. This confirms participant’s opinion at the national dialogue on their submission that people in the North East region are left behind. Further to this they noted that people living in rural areas, urban poor, slums and in the Niger Delta are also left behind.

Stories on those furthest behind abound.

- An old woman was recently brought out of the internally displaced camp unattended to and deserted by family and relatives.
- Slum dwellers in the Makoko community in Lagos State were recently evicted from their communities which led to loss of livelihood, land rights and violence
- Okpoko community in Anambra State has no sign of government presence – lack of infrastructure and total neglect
- Gbagi ethnic group in Abuja, the nation’s capital displacement and denied their rights
- Boys in the Eastern part of the country now drop out of school for business
- In a school without public toilet facilities, girls defecate in the bush and are taken advantage of, as a result when on menstruation, the girls do not attend school
- Women leasing land from their husbands and not having rights to property
- Abuse of 1st menstrual cycle in the northern part of the country has led to more teenage pregnancies infringing on the rights of the girl child in that region.

Obstacles faced.

When asked what the “main obstacles these disenfranchised groups are facing?” participants mentioned the following:

- Insecurity
- High rate of illiteracy
- Endemic poverty
- Stigmatisation
- Incest
- Lack of skills
- Low level of participation and involvement in decision making
- Violence against women and children

When linked with findings from the country profile for Nigeria, the primary school net attendance declined from 71.0% in 2012 to 68.7% in 2014. In a similar trend, primary six completion rate decreased from 87.7% in 2012 to 74.0% in 2014. This further confirms participant’s opinion on the high rate of illiteracy and lack of skills listed as obstacles disenfranchised groups face.

Participant’s confident obstacles can be removed.

National dialogue participants are confident that if government, civil society and the private sector can work together to improve on the quality of education then Nigeria as a country would have laid the foundation for removing the obstacles faced by its disenfranchised population. This is well summed in one of the panelist’s (Professor Lanre Laniyan of the University of Ibadan, Center for Sustainable Development) response when asked what can be done to address the obstacles faced by children.

“The development of any country is dependent on its children and the best way is to empower them and this is can be done through the type of education we give them. One is scared at the type of education system that runs in our public schools. Pupils in public schools are not acquiring any knowledge meaning the types of skills they need to have are absent and this affects productivity, income and everybody. The idea of inequality also reinforces itself because those that are to give these children adequate knowledge have taken their wards out of the public schools. We need to take a second look at how we run our education system it is not about change in curriculum as being taunted”

Providing adequate information on issues and effective communication according to participants is also important to addressing the obstacles. For example issues of discrimination can be addressed if people are well informed and adequate communication provided. Ms. Crystal Chigbu, Founder and Executive Director at Irede Foundation reinforced this in her input to discussions at the national dialogue when she said “in addressing issues of discrimination among people living with disability, people need to be cultured to understand that persons with disability need to be included. Once we stop seeing them as beggars our mental shift and framework helps us to begin to work as a people to deal with those with disability and this will enable policy and frameworks to work leading to a national shift in attitude towards persons with disability”.

Added to this according to participants, is the urgent need to carry out sensitisation, awareness raising and advocacy related activities towards addressing the obstacles especially on issues of inequality and the growing trend of violence against women.

Emphasising the need for sensitisation and awareness raising, Ms. Shade Bembatoum-Young, Council Member, Lagos Chamber of Commerce opined that “It is within the family setting that we teach our children and it is the responsibility of the mother and father. If we do not by our actions show them (children) what is right and wrong we will not address the issue of violence against women. Statistics have shown that men violate the women more, so when you have meetings about gender violence bring the boys and girls into the discussion”.

Experts want development stakeholders to prioritise the SDGs.

During their group work participants differed on which goals should be the particular focus in Nigeria, Group 1 would like to see the focus on all the goals excluding 11 and 17, Group 2 thought goals 1-6, Group 3 wanted Goals 1-5 and 10 while Group 4 said all goals are important but focus should be placed more on education.

The preference for goals 1-6 including 10 by participants can be gleaned when reviewed against the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)’s Human Development Index (2015), where out of 188 countries, Nigeria is ranked 152 on with a score of 0.514 (countries profile report, developed by Development Initiative). The health and educational outcomes for Nigeria according to the report is also declining.

Asked why they wanted focus on the goals, participants cited reasons such as high level of poverty, weak health care systems and infrastructure, corruption, huge income disparities and inequality amongst others.

Next steps

Asked “what steps, as a coalition, are you planning on taking in the next few years to ensure the inclusion of disenfranchised groups in policy decisions?” participants agreed to the following in the communiqué issued at the end of the dialogue:

“ We will continue to fight with determination discrimination in all its forms in accordance with national and international laws, purposes and principles of the UN Charter”.

“ We are committed to the formation of a leave no one behind Alliance convened by the Nigeria Network of NGOs in order to take forward outcomes of our dialogue and the full implementation of our resolutions. We urge all participating organisations and the wider civil society community to sign up to the membership of the Alliance. Through the Alliance we will develop a stronger and more consistent approach to prioritisation, better linking of our political and strategic priorities with resource requirements to attaining the SDGs without leaving anyone behind”.

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