CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION:

A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE TO

CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION:

A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FOREWORD

Since Nigeria's transition into a democratic system of government, increasing active engagement of the grassroots in civic spaces for improved political participation remains a challenge. Fundamentally, the struggle begins with helping citizens understand how impactful their active participation can be in the society. Interestingly, the conventional forms of democratic involvement through political parties and voting no longer suffices as the yearning for new spaces to participate in public life and policy making increases.

This twist is fueled by general observable trends which include the failure of governments to ensure the grassroots fully participate in decisions affecting them, restrictive legal frameworks which shrink civic space and freedom of expression, decreasing levels of trust in political institutions, culture of violence and impunity, unabating and protracted crises resulting in unprecedented rising levels of insecurity, just to mention a few. All these have weakened social cohesion as well as respect for and protection of human rights thereby exacerbating inequity and exclusion in many parts of the country.

This training manual was developed to give more precision and direction to communities on Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) for community development. It will also serve as a tool for civil societies in the HRBA space for improved results. This will enable the grassroots to sustainably undertake their civic engagement programmes while adapting it to their own environment.

It is our hope that this manual will facilitate increased understanding of learners to be citizens who know their rights and responsibilities and understand their political system functions including how they can be engaged. Furthermore, the manual is expected to give learners the opportunity to experience school as a micro-society that respects the freedoms and equality of its students as they would have learnt to exercise their rights and respect the rights of others.

If communities can organize and present quality evidence to challenge the poor quality of government services, there will be increased confidence in community processes by governments and institutions. The manual is indeed expected to cultivate a sense of collaboration amongst stakeholders in the private and public sectors, and civil societies with a view to empowering communities to hold governments and service providers accountable for their own development.

We, therefore, present this training manual as a tool for social cohesion towards breaking the vicious cycle of inequalities in Nigeria.

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Country Director
Christian Aid (UK) Nigeria, 2023

Part I

A.   GETTING READY AS A TRAINER

The training sessions should be planned and organized in advance before carrying it out. This prior planning supports easier management of trainings. Even though the training does not require complicated planning and formality, leaving arrangements till the last minute is not the best practice.   Hence the following prior steps should guide the trainer's preparation:

i)   Getting Information About the Participants

The trainer should know:

- How participants for the training are to be selected or if they had been selected, and the type of participants expected at the training. Above all, s/he should find out the number of persons that will be attending the training.
- How many participants are to be invited to the training - This is important for determining your sitting arrangements and for deciding whether to limit attendance per session to ensure the comfort of the participants.
- If there would be participants that require reasonable accommodation e.g., sign language interpreter for the deaf, documents in braille for the blind, accessible training environment for persons of wheel chair, tactile communication for the deaf-blind etc.
- The typical educational level of your participants. If they are low literate, it is important to know this in advance to ensure that the materials are delivered in a low literate friendly format and language that is relatable to them.
- How to pass information to the participants about your arrangements and possible changes should the need arise for one.

ii)   Getting Acquainted with the Location

- A visit to the community by the trainer or organizational representatives prior to the training is important. This is when to ask the community leaders the best location for the training and the best way to inform the expected participants. Also seek their buy-in and support for the training on Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA-CBP).
- Find out the available facilities in the training location such as power source, furniture for sitting, access for persons with disabilities, lighting and ventilation and the possibility that participants would understand the trainer and would also be understood during activities that involve their role-playing or speaking.
- Understand the local language and make arrangements ahead to bridge the language barriers that may exist.

iii)   Security of the Training Venue and Location

- Check with the existing security system to ensure that the training location is safe for participants and even the trainer(s).
- Consider whether there is need for special security arrangement.
- Consider what to do and whom to contact in event of security problems.
- Protecting the participants and trainer(s) should be a priority.

iv)   Transport Arrangements

- Ascertain whether there is need to arrange for transportation of participants to and from the training venue.

v)   Consider whether there is need for the provision of refreshments and how it would be done.

vi)   Organise timing and agenda for the training. This helps to organize the entire process to a known duration. So, it is important to decide date(s) and time that is convenient for the training. Note that beyond a certain length of time, participants' attention span drops.

vii)   Organise the training materials. This is done by way of ensuring that the materials required for the training are ready before the session starts and this will include:

- The HRBA-CDP manual
- Flipcharts
- Marking pens
- Visual aids
- Others as may be required in relation to each module.

viii)   Personal Preparation by Trainers

- Read through this manual and any other relevant material thoroughly.
- Consider the circumstance of the trainees.
- Are they knowledgeable about human rights, participation etc?
- Are they literate? This helps the trainer to determine whether they will rely less on writing, use of flipcharts or sharing of leaflets.
- What type of job they do? This helps the trainer to relate to their lived experiences.
- Consider what time each session would take.

B.   CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRAINERS

- Show friendliness, courtesy and patience. The trainees may not have as much education and exposure, so they may be slow in understanding new ideas or even accepting ones that vary from their culture. They may also ask questions that may not be relevant. Gently explaining and patiently working them through processes of understanding the concepts is expected.

- Punctuality is important. Keep to the scheduled date and time for the training activities. Late evening sessions in a rural community would hardly draw support from the local people. Showing sensitivity by jointly agreeing on dates and time of training is a way to show their community that you do not want to interrupt their working hours. Be careful to avoid being harsh or strict with latecomers. If some of the community members turn up late, gently welcome them.

- Your trainees may seem to enjoy arguments which sometimes are not relevant to the training. In such a situation, skilfully redirect them to the subject under discussion. Avoid getting into arguments with the participants or losing your temper if, in any event, their conducts are not appropriate.

- Note that some individuals are given to dominating public discussions. The way you moderate the training session would help in giving equal space for every participant to speak and contribute to the training. So as the trainer, you should consciously involve everyone. Make the sessions participatory.

- Note that your duty is a service for better and improved governance. So, you have a duty to assist your fellow citizens to understand your training contents. Ensure you are audible and that training materials are made available to all participants and in accessible formats. **DO NOT READ THE TRAINING MANUAL WORD FOR WORD TO THE TRAINEES.** Master the contents ahead. It is important to understand the cultural context in which you work. Requirement of respect for age and tradition is a common African phenomenon. Have respect for your audience and always respect their perspectives. Where they differ with your contents, explain with tact and diplomacy to ensure that no one feels unhappy.

- Avoid treating your learners like big children. It would lower their self-esteem and undermine the sharing of experiences and perspectives. Therefore, it is advised that you adopt theRIC principles in relating with the participants namely:, Respect, Inclusion and Connectedness (RIC).

- Keep all your records including attendance and all the evaluations. Provide contact information that the community members could use to reach you and or your organization.

Part II
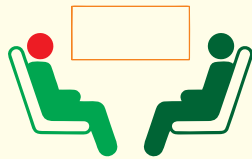
SITTING ARRANGEMENT

Before the session commences, ensure that the trainees are all seated. Do your best to prevent any hierarchical and or gender imbalanced sitting arrangement. A sitting arrangement like a circular sitting pattern where participants see one another face to face supports a more interactive session. Avoid the traditional classroom sitting pattern that sets the facilitator out as a teacher. It creates a mentality of teacher and student relationship.

When the participants are comfortably seated, introduce yourself by stating

a) Your name

b) Your organization

c) The goal of your organization and its interest in the training programme

d) The reasons for providing training on human rights-based approach to community development. The format below may be followed:

"My name is ………… I work for ……… (the name of the organization in whose auspices you are delivering the training). My organization (mention its name) is interested in helping communities to understand human rights and the duty obligations which the government owes the citizens. We are interested in helping communities understand how these duty obligations are part of the rights of citizens and how citizens can present their needs to governments at different levels as rights. Overall, we intend to support access to development services for the communities."

Introduce special guests like fellow resource persons and local officials who are present. Explain why any local official is present and their relevance to the training. Then go ahead and request the participants to introduce themselves. If anyone is unwilling to, move on to the next person. Make the introduction as informal as possible to create a relaxed atmosphere for participants to open up for free participation.

Explain why they are being trained on Human Rights Based Approach

Explain the goal of the training as being borne out of making Nigerian citizens able to:

* Understand the idea of human rights which allows certain entitlements to citizens as members of a political community.
* Understand the duties of government to citizens.
* Understand obligations of the citizens to the state.
* Make the participants see the connection between human rights and the duties of service delivery which the government owes the citizens.
* Understand the ways and means through which the citizens can organize and send information to the government to fulfil its constitutional obligations to citizens.

The above goals give a clue to the participants about their possible expectations from the training. It therefore helps the trainer to set the climate of the training atmosphere by asking the participants also to express their expectations from the training. After the expectations, the trainer may choose to relax the atmosphere further by beginning with an energizing exercise to relax the participants or use some jokes and skits before commencing the business of the day. You may also ask if anyone have any questions or concerns at this point.

Show the agenda with clear timing and details.

Example

Module 1. Rudiments of Human Rights Based Approach to Community Development

* Understanding human rights
* Development of human rights
* Connection between human rights and governance (Global, regional and domestic human rights instruments).
* Reasons and core principles of HRBA in community development
* Integrating HRBA for service delivery in community development

Module 2. HRBA and the Constitution

* Chapter two of the Nigerian Constitution (1999) – Social rights.
* Chapter four of the Nigerian constitution (1999) – Fundamental human rights

NOTE: Consider the level of your trainees' understanding and the most important sections of the training manual that would be presented to them. Also, the language of presentation is important. The use of local dialect for participants in rural communities with low literacy level is recommended. But care must be taken that the message of the training material is not lost in the translation process. If there is need to present the materials in Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba or any other language, a prior translation of the contents needed for the training and adequate preparation by the trainer is very important.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Set the ground rules together with the participants. Ground rules are the order to guide the training session. When you involve the participants in the preparation, there is usually a sense of ownership and acceptance of the rules. Secondly, it is the first step towards making the session participatory.

Examples

- Every participant is encouraged to speak and share their opinions during the sessions, and nobody must be heckled on account of their views.
- Participants are free to ask questions at any point during the sessions.
- Every participant must respect the rights of other participants.
- Only one person should speak at a time, unless the training requires breaking up into groups. But even in the groups, one person speaks at a time.
- Participants should be mindful of how long they speak in order to accommodate others who also have views to share within the time frame of the training.

B.   ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION.

It is important to appraise the learning performance of participants, relevance of the training material and effectiveness of delivery. For each session delivered, the trainees should have an opportunity to provide feedback on their experience. This would help to determine how much the objectives of the module/session had been met. In the end, an overall picture of lessons learnt would be drawn from the assessments made from the sessions of training. The value is that it helps the trainer to be mindful of areas of improvement and even areas that may be considered for revision or integration into the programming of the organization and the training manual in the future. Indeed, the raw material for monitoring and evaluation for this manual and even the training sessions would also draw from the post-training assessments and evaluations.

Part III

OBJECTIVES

In this module, the participants would be taught rudiments of the HRBA. At the end, they are expected to:

a) Understand the concept of human rights and the HRBA and be able to apply them in engaging with duty-bearers.
b) Know how human rights evolved and how it became a basis for citizen demand on government.
c) Have knowledge of the roles of the duty bearers (usually public officers at various levels) and rights holders (citizens or community members).
d) Understand the connection between human rights and service provisioning by the government.
e) Understand the core principles of the human rights-based approach.

1.2. TRAINING TOOLKIT

- A comfortable training space – could be a hall or an open space, provided there are good shades and ventilation and absence of interfering sources of noise.
- White board
- Flip chart
- Flash papers
- Markers
- Masking tapes
- Copies of global, Regional and Sub-regional human rights instruments
- Nigerian constitution (1999)
- Laptop
- Projector
- Others as may be required for reasonable accommodation

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The way to deliver the contents of the module would be a combination of:

- Workshop – involving presentations, group activities, discussions and sharing of experiences

- Document analysis – of selected aspects of the human rights instruments and their applications. It is encouraged to explore instruments that relate significantly with social policy and governance. Selected case studies should be ones that are relevant to the experiences of the participants in each training situation.

- Short lectures from trainers

1.4. UNDERSTANDING HUMAN RIGHTS

- Introduce the key concept (human rights) and explore learners' understanding of the concepts (including their types – examples: political rights, civil rights, economic rights, socio-cultural rights). This could be written out in Flashflash cards or in flip charts.
- Introduce human rights instruments domestic, regional and global.
- Motivate trainees to brainstorm on common violations of human rights.
- Break them up into groups and share Flashflash cards to them to draw up the types of human rights and their violations. The trainer is at liberty to determine how to share the groups. Every group may be asked to deliberate on all forms of human rights and their violations. The groups may also be divided according to the types of human rights or any other innovative way that the trainer wishes to do it without losing the contents.
- Trainer tasks the participants to name a few international and regional human rights instruments and briefly present a history of development of human rights and how it links with global, regional and domestic laws of states.

DEFINITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

According to the United Nations definition, "human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion or any other status" (United Nations, nd). They are rights that every human person should have as a matter of requirements for decent humanity and such rights must not be separated from them. Human rights include right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of thought, opinion and expression, right to work and education among several others elaborated in different international and regional instruments.

1.5. DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE CONNECTION

Human rights had been integral to the age-long struggle of humanity for freedom. It has culminated in several historical movements and documents such as the Magna Carter, the French Revolution based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, English Revolution and American Revolution. In fact, the American Revolution precisely recognizes that human beings are created equal and that certain rights are inalienable to everybody. These are entitlements that are due to the human person because of his humanity and must not be separated from the person as long as they exist. In later years, following the end of the World War II and corresponding efforts at achieving global peace, some general principles were articulated and presented under the auspices of the United Nations as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. This landmark document has become the global standard of reference for human rights. Other international instruments were made to further the frontiers of human rights. Some of them include: The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (United Nations, 1966), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations, 1966), Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989), African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights 1981, ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (ECOWAS, 2001) among very many others. These international and regional documents were not only acceded to by countries, but also the contents of the instruments have been integrated in different ways into the constitution of member states of the international institutions that made the instruments. In Nigeria for instance, chapter 2 of the constitution titled fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy is actually dedicated to social rights, though they are made as mere aspirations of governance rather than as justiciable rights. Nevertheless, the Nigerian state and its institution can still be engaged based on directions that it has defined as its fundamental objectives.

Accordingly, the human rights instruments are classified into:

i) **Global Human Rights Instruments:** they deal with global concerns such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Their contents may be used to lay claim to universal rights of human persons.

ii) **Regional Human Rights Instruments:** These are human rights instruments that are regionally created, usually by regional or continental organisations. For instance, we have African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1981), ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001).

iii) **Domestic Human Rights Instruments:** are instruments on human rights which are made within national boundaries as part of the laws/policies supporting the human rights of citizens within a country. Human rights provisions of national constitutions and specific laws that give effect to different aspects of human rights even if not embodied in the constitution all illustrate such domestic instruments.

- *Following the brief on development of human rights, the trainer asks the participants to consider how the contents of selected international human rights instruments relate to community development. For example, Articles 16 and 17 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights are on the rights to healthcare and education respectively, Article 24 of the same Charter on environment, and Article 26 of ECOWAS Protocol on good governance and democracy. The contents of each of these articles is made available and considered around how it affects the local community of participants. They should reflect on what difference it can make to demand these services because they are the right holders.*

- *The idea is to let the participants see areas of needs covered by these articles as human rights.*

- *At this point, the trainer encourages the participants to brainstorm on whose responsibility it is to support the implementation of these instruments to which the government is a voluntary signatory.*

- *If the participants are able to point out that some of the contents of the instruments are responsibilities that the government has to support or even wholly undertake, the trainer should explain that they (trainees) have made the governance connection with service delivery. Centrally, this is about a dialogue on the duties and services that the state owes the citizens; and it is important to establish the human rights governance nexus.*

- *This discussion on governance connection with human rights should be anchored on social contracts.*

1.6. WHY DOES GOVERNMENT EXIST?

- The above question is meant to explore the relationship between citizens and government. The response of the participants should lead the trainer to distinguish between duty bearers who work on behalf of the government and recipients of services who are the right holders.

- Some of the possible responses about why government exists may include:

- Provision of security for protection of the public

- Provision of healthcare infrastructure

- Provision of functional road network, railways, bridges

- Funding for education

- Provision of electricity

- Provision of potable and safe water for the citizens

- Provision of standards for the maintenance of safe environment

- Guaranteeing the constitutional freedoms/rights of citizens

1.7. GOVERNANCE, SERVICE DELIVERY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONNECTION

- The trainer should pick some of the services or duties identified by the participants on the functions of the government especially those that fall under social rights usually covered by the various international and regional instruments, e.g., education, environment, clean water and various other aspects of human security, and link them to the international and regional instruments.

- In showing the participants the services that should be done by government which are covered by the international and regional legal instruments, lead them to see that in carrying out these services, the government is fulfilling human rights provisions of laws that it is a signatory to. Therefore, such services are rights to be guaranteed by the government going by the laws that established them. Some of the provisions of the international and regional instruments are also domesticated by national laws. Give examples of some of the domesticated instruments such as child rights law.

1.8. DISTINCTIVE FEATURES AND CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

A few features set the human rights-based approach apart from other approaches to engagement for a better service delivery.

The major features are:

a) HRBA sees services as entitlements of rights holders to be provided to the best capacity of the government.
b) HRBA sees that because they are social rights, they could be demanded from duty bearers
c) Government has a moral duty to respond to demands for social rights
d) Citizens' empowerment is a major tool for the functionality of HRBA.

The Core Principles of HRBA

Based on United Nations documents, the principles of human rights which underpin the Human Rights Based Approach include universality, inalienability, indivisibility, interdependence and inter-relatedness, equality, non-discrimination, participation, inclusion, accountability and rule of law. These principles are briefly explained below:

Universality – All people in every part of the world are entitled to human rights.

Inalienability – This implies that human rights cannot be separated from the human person because it is inherent in them by virtue of their humanity.

Indivisibility – It is not possible to divide human rights into parts. That is, to fulfil some and ignore others. This is because, when one aspect of human rights is violated, other aspects are inevitably affected. Hence, they cannot be ranked in any order of importance.

Interdependence and inter-relatedness – The realization of one right often depends on the realization of others. For instance, the realization of the right to clean and decent environment may lead to the realization of the right to good health just like the realization of the right to education supports the right to decent work, rights to information and human dignity.

Equality – The principle of equality means that all human beings are equal in relation to human rights. The rights of the rich are equal to those of the poor. There are no hierarchies in the implementation of human rights.

Non-discrimination – There must not be any priority or preference of persons over others by whatsoever criteria whether it is race, religion, social background or any other means in matters of human rights.

Participation - Every member of a community is entitled to taking part in an active, meaningful and empowered manner in the socio-political life of their community.

Inclusion – Ensuring that all those affected by an issue have opportunity to participate in taking decisions about how best to deal with what affects them. This requires providing equal opportunity and resources to empower everyone to take part in public life of the state either as right holders or duty bearers.

Accountability – The quality of clear and honest presentation of transactions by duty bearers to right holders in line with what the law stipulates.

Rule of Law - Refers to making the law the most important decisive instrument in social relationships. It requires that every person is accountable based on the law of the society and its inherent character is that equal law applies equally to citizens. Also, in HRBA, the power of the rule of law makes it the basis for demanding services from duty bearers.

> After explaining the above principles, the trainer should randomly pick ten participants and assign one principle to each of them to reproduce them in their best understanding to the entire group. Where possible, the local language could be encouraged for this presentation if everyone understands it. The idea is to support deeper understanding.

1.9. ASSESSMENT

> After this session, the trainer should conduct a brief assessment on how much its learning objectives were achieved. The participants should fill out a questionnaire to answer the following questions.
>
> • What they understand by human rights

- Five examples of human rights

- One example each of a) international human rights instruments b) regional human rights instruments c) domestic human rights instrument

- Three reasons why government exists

- One reason why citizens should place demands on government about their needs.

- The part of the training they understand most

- The part of the training they think requires further explanation

In this module, specific attention is paid to the Nigerian constitution and how it integrates human rights concerns as the guiding principle of governance practice. Provisions of the constitution that spell out human rights as the inherent rights of people that must be respected would be explored as well as the directive principles of governance which is human rights based.

OBJECTIVES

This module is meant to enable trainees:

1)   Have an understanding of chapter 2 of the present constitution (1999 Constitution as amended) and chapter 4 of the constitution. Chapter 2 deals with the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy while chapter four deals with fundamental human rights.

2)   Have understanding of how chapters 2 and 4 of the constitution are linked with international human rights instruments, e.g., Universal Declaration of Human Rights, African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights etc., and how the constitution seeks to fulfil them.

3)   Identify the role of duty bearers and rights holders regarding the constitutional provisions on people's rights in governance.

4)   Have capacity to identify human rights violations through governance neglects and abuses.

5)   Be able to identify groups that are most vulnerable to human rights violations in the Nigerian context.

2.2.   TRAINING TOOLKIT

1.   A copy of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
2.   Copies of selected international human rights instruments

2.3.   METHODOLOGY

The training workshop on this module should apply:

- **Plenary presentations** especially on the key provisions of chapters 2 (social rights) and 4 (fundamental human

3. Laptop computer
4. A projector
5. White board and markers
6. Flash cards of different colours
7. Masking tapes
8. A training space, preferably a small hall depending on the size of trainees.
9. Flipcharts.

Encourage the role players to consider whether the rights holders have actually done enough in leading the duty bearers to see the problems of their community. This role should be an important focus in the role-playing process because the idea is to set out legitimate public demands as a right of citizens. Exploring solutions must emphasize the role of rights holders in making input as demands and sending feedback in form of satisfaction and pointing out of gaps in the programmes of government based on how it affects them. The outcome of this role playing is presented in a plenary.

rights) of the 1999 constitution; also, a plenary on the core provisions of selected international human rights instruments. Encourage learners to spot the provisions of the constitution and compare how they reflect corresponding provisions in the international instruments. Important provisions of international and regional human rights instruments should be written out and pasted round the walls for all participants to see. For instance, the provision of African Charter on People's rights on education, healthcare, etc. could be selected for such highlights.

- **Discussions** – learners are to spot the areas that the government conform to the constitution and the international human rights instrument. The learners are to also spot the areas that the government does not conform to the constitution and requirements of the international human rights instruments in governance; they should identify the common violations of these human rights instruments. This should happen in the form of group discussions. One group may be assigned to discuss governance compliance while another would discuss violations of the provisions. The trainees should break out into groups, brainstorm on their assigned part and write down the major points they agreed on. After their discussions, a nominee of each of the two groups would present what they agreed on.

- **Role playing** – Another group activity in which the participants are broken up into two groups. One group is to act as the duty bearers while the other acts the rights holders. The rights holders are to point out to the duty bearers how and where they are failing in human rights-based approach to governance while the duty bearers try to defend such lapses or explains the reasons for the lapses. They are to point out the gaps and jointly explore solutions.

2.4. THE NIGERIAN CONSTITUTION (1999) AND GOVERNANCE – CHAPTERS 2 AND 4:

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria adopted in 1999 integrated the social rights elements carried over from the 1979 constitution and this is presented in chapter 2 of the 1999 Constitution. The Constitution confers sovereignty on the people in section 14(2) (a) and goes further to provide in 14(2)(b) that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government. Further, in section 17(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (e), to provide for the equality of rights obligations and opportunities; sanctity of the human person and their dignity, humaneness of government, rejection of exploitation, independence and integrity of the courts. The trainer should read extract of these sections from the constitution and possibly show in a slide during presentation.

More concrete social rights covered in chapter two of the constitution include section 18 provision that the government shall when practicable provide (a) free, compulsory and universal primary education (b) free secondary education (c) free university education (d) free adult literacy programme. In addition, social rights of the people which the government undertakes to direct its policy in section 16 include: balanced economic development, suitable and adequate shelter, reasonable national minimum wage, old age care, unemployment and sick benefits, welfare of the disabled. The trainer should emphasize the clause when practicable to the participant. This means that these rights are not justiciable. For not being justiciable, the government cannot be taken to court for not fulfilling them. But also, the trainer should advise them that the mere provision of these rights in the constitution is enough bases for the people to engage the government in matters relating to them since they are important elements of social rights provisions of the Constitution. Besides, they are important ideals that the state has promised to pursue.

Other dimensions of social rights including right to clean or healthful environment is covered by section 20 in chapter two of the constitution, right to safe water and other such details that may not be found in the Constitution are contained in international human rights instruments and special legislations. This includes Child Rights, right to safe water, etc.

Chapter four of the 1999 Constitution deals with Fundamental human rights. The chapter which comprises sections 33 to 46 of the Constitution comprises motley of rights which are fundamental entitlements of citizens. In summary, the fundamental human rights provided for in chapter four include: right to life, right to dignity of human person, right to freedom from forced labour; right to personal liberty; right to fair hearing before a properly constituted court of law; right to personal privacy; freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; freedom of expression; freedom of movement; freedom of association. It is the duty of government to ensure as part of its service provisioning that these rights and freedoms are not violated.

Regarding how international human rights instruments affect our local policy environment, the signing of the treaty itself makes its content important considerations for local policies and can by that fact, be a basis for demanding the fulfilment of the rights it contains. Besides, a specific law may be made in the light of such treaty or international instrument in order to properly domesticate the instrument. In this regard, the Constitution provides in section 12 (2) that, the national assembly may make laws for the Federation or any part with respect to matters not included in the Exclusive List for the purpose of implementing a treaty. In other words, treaties may lead to special legislations for their implementation.

The trainer should have copies of such special legislations to show the participants and demonstrate with a few provisions.

2.5. ASSESSMENT

To check whether the objectives of this module are achieved, issue a questionnaire to each of the participants to:

- Mention 3 key provisions of fundamental rights and 3 key social rights in the constitution.
- Mention 3 ways that social rights and fundamental human rights are violated
- Mention 3 examples of groups that are most affected by neglect of human rights in governance
- Mention 3 steps that rights holders can take in calling the attention of duty bearers.

This module introduces the practical steps for engaging the policy process and governance with the problems of community members.

To engage with governance or the policy process, we need to understand public policy as a problem-solving framework with different dimensions. Also, we need to know the various stakeholders in each aspect of the policy process so that when each problem and the associated actors around it are properly identified, the policy design for addressing them would easily spell out roles for the actors or stakeholders involved. Of course, it is in understanding a problem that the right type of instrument or tool of policy engagement could be properly determined.

OBJECTIVES

After this session, the participants are expected:

- To understand public policy and its aspects (problem, origins, effects and solutions)

- To know who should participate in the policy process in a democracy and why.

- To understand the meaning of participation and engagement.

- To know the tools/framework, and targets of engagement.

3.2.   TRAINING TOOLKIT AND METHODOLOGY AS SPECIFIED IN 2.2 AND 2.3 ABOVE COULD BE USED.

Understanding the policy process

Public policy "is a course of action (or sometimes deliberate inaction) taken by a government using its various powers and authorities to shape the world around it" (Scot and Baehler, 2010, p 11). This suggests that what the government does or deliberately choose not to do are parts of the governmental public problem-solving behaviour or policy. Overall, as Amosa (2018) noted, public policy is aimed at resolving a problem or taking advantage of opportunities. In effect, public policymaking and implementation is the way that the government reaches out to the citizens through problem-solving designs and actions. Some examples of public policy are: education policy, child rights policy, primary healthcare policy, foreign policy, agricultural policy, rural development policy, etc. The contents of these policies provide a guide for solving public problems in the various sectors they relate to.

Generally, public policy shows what a government does, who is served by particular actions of the government and the order by which things are done. It is expected to be in the best interest of the public even as some individuals may not be well served by such policies. Thus, in every analysis of public policy, the extent to which it addresses a problem without hurting other public interests is important.

To engage with a policy problem, particularly at the community level, an understanding of the dimensions of policy is important. It is the capacity to explore these aspects of a problem and analyse them properly that would support the position of a community or group in their claims about the existence of a problem. With such evidence, communities can reach out to public authorities for solutions. In engaging with policy, the affected stakeholders should be able to identify the problem that a policy sets out to solve or should set out to solve. They should also be able to trace the origins of the problem. The next point of interest should be the manifestations or symptoms of the problem and finally, the solutions.

3.3. WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC POLICY PROCESS IN A DEMOCRACY AND WHY?

In a democratic setting, it is believed that sovereignty belongs to the people. This is provided in many constitutions that aspire for democracy including the chapter 2 of the Nigeria's 1999 constitution, as amended. If sovereignty truly belongs to the people, it means that power must flow from them. Democracy sees every human being as equal. This equality gives them the right of equal participation in deciding what affects their lives. That is why in voting for instance, one person is entitled to only one vote. Also, in deciding what is to be done in communities, every person's opinion matters. Accordingly, there must be ways of involving those who are affected by public policy, so they contribute to decisions that affect their lives. This means that the participation of stakeholders is essential for public decision-making. A stakeholder is anyone who is affected in anyway by what happens in a community. So, every member of the community is a stakeholder on issues affecting the community. Therefore, in a typical community, we are likely to have men, women, young people, persons with disabilities, children and youths. It is necessary to actually designate persons with disabilities as a special group that needs attention and therefore treated also as stakeholders in community conversations for development. When NGOs engage local communities, persons with disabilities should be involved in the ideation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, procedures and practices that promotes and protects their rights. A problem is hardly properly understood until it is defined by or together with the stakeholders or communities where they obtain. Also, the options for solving any problem may come to a head with one or a few groups in a community because it does not take their peculiarities into account. Not only that, participation helps to achieve a buy-in of persons who would have opposed a programme or project. Involving the communities support information gathering for the policymakers. At the community level, participation should also be integral in the sense that community efforts to solve a problem must not be a concern of a few powerful persons. Centrally, participation is about jointly defining a problem and the need to solve it, jointly exploring alternative solutions in order to determine the best fit, circumventing conflicts or non-cooperation that may arise from lack of inclusion and making effort to solve the problem in a collective partnership of the people and or with the government.

DISCUSSION: After the above presentation, the trainer should ask the participants to mention the important groups in their community e.g., youth, women etc. After listing them, they should identify which group is generic for youths, for women, PWDs and men. These identified groups are the core stakeholders in the community.

Further group conversation should focus on how men, women, youths and Persons with Disabilities relate when it comes to taking public decisions. Are they free to talk in the general community gathering or do they generally feel safer in their various groups? What accounts for this? Are the young people given voice during collective deliberations? If yes, how does it happen? The trainer should not be judgmental even if the current practice of the community does not align with what they know. After the conversation, the trainer should take the participants back to democracy and its features that include popular decision making, accountability, inclusion, one person one vote, human rights, equality etc. and ask them to know whether they consider democracy acceptable in the light of their values and customs taking into account what they have discussed in the training. If they agree with democracy, the trainer should lead them to deliberate on the value of equality in participation. Special care must be taken here by the trainer to explain that equality in democratic relations is not meant to diminish the worth of persons who are considered culturally important. Instead, democratic equality adds value to what improves the general progress of the society.

Also, they should indicate whether there is anyone, platform, or context in which the entire community meets to discuss and take important decisions e.g. town hall meetings. If not, let them deliberate on whether creating such a context would be acceptable to the community. Ask them to deliberate on how broad community association could accommodate this context of general discussion or how an acceptable one may be created.   In each of the points of conversations, the main ideas should be written down on the flip charts. Collate their major contributions and jointly consider with them how each agrees with the rights of participation, equality and inclusiveness.

3.4.   PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT WITH PUBLIC POLICY – THE MAJOR STEPS

Participatory policy engagement is no doubt the most democratic approach to dealing with issues of community development that bear on public policy. It is in participation that public ownership of a programme is achieved. The idea of popular power is that the use of power impacts on the same people on whom power is said to belong to decide what the government does. But apart from contributing towards a policy, participation is essential for articulating a problem which could be presented to the duty bearers for policy attention.   Such problems may include lack of potable water, lack of healthcare facilities, absence of adequate and qualified teachers, lack of equipment and other logistics in schools, locust infestation, marginalization of some stakeholders (e.g., teenagers, rural women in hard-to-reach communities, people with disability, children), outbreak of an epidemic etc. While the problems are varied, the same set of steps may be taken for articulating them as a public policy problem. In the following discussion, we concentrate on the problem of outbreak of cholera as an epidemic.

For policy engagement to take place, the primary steps to be taken include:

1) **Define the Problem:** E.g., cholera epidemic. Be sure to find out the indicators or symptoms of any problem that is being defined. When, for instance, you claim a cholera epidemic, there is need to have information from the confirming medical authority, number of infections and rate of spread of the disease based on verifiable evidence.

2) **Quantify with Evidence:** Sequel to 1) above, you need to mention the number of persons infected so far based on official records. Also refer to the rate of increase in infections. If the first reported cases over a regime of say one month were two infections and in a month period there were about 230 infections, the rate of spread is easily calculated based on this number. This data must again have a verifiable source. For demand driven engagements from a local community, they can depend solely on data from their local health centres. Where there are no such data, community engagement groups should use leaders of hamlets to collect information about the disease in different parts of the community. Such collated information should be used as their preliminary baseline data for engagement.

3) **Effects of the Problem:** The effects of the problem should be presented in a quantified manner. If we continue with the cholera example, it would be worthwhile to see that it causes death with figures attached to the number of known deaths, overstretch of medical facilities using data of the number of admitted persons and persons seeking out-patient treatment for the same epidemic, increasing expenditure on health and of course effects on family income.

4) **Cause of the Problem:** Oftentimes, some of the manifestations of the problem may appear like its own cause. If for instance, there are no medical facilities within a community for quick access and   intervention, it could facilitate deaths and spread of the epidemic. However, the absence of health facilities is not the primary cause of disease outbreak. It is to be placed at the intermediate level of causation after the primary problem of lack of safe water and adequate sanitation. Thus, it is important to set out how the problems are interlinked and what links to what. This way, a causal chain is set up in order to trace the root of the problem. This process is called Root Cause Analysis (RCA). The importance of giving attention to the causes of the problem is that in exploring solutions, the causes are to be targeted.

Note that for this process to be truly participatory, the relevant stakeholders must be involved. Care must be taken to establish that the identified causes of the problems are real. Tracing the cause of some problems or its full dimensions may not be easy for local community members. But they would have seen the problem develop and are the ones that feel the impact. So, such stakeholders are important in the definition and tracking of the causes of the problem. (See Bardarck, 2005 cited in Amosa, 2018).

The above process is commonly designated as problem tree analysis. Though it is a standard tool in policy analysis, it is amenable to contextual adaptation. The problem tree schema is illustrated below.

PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS
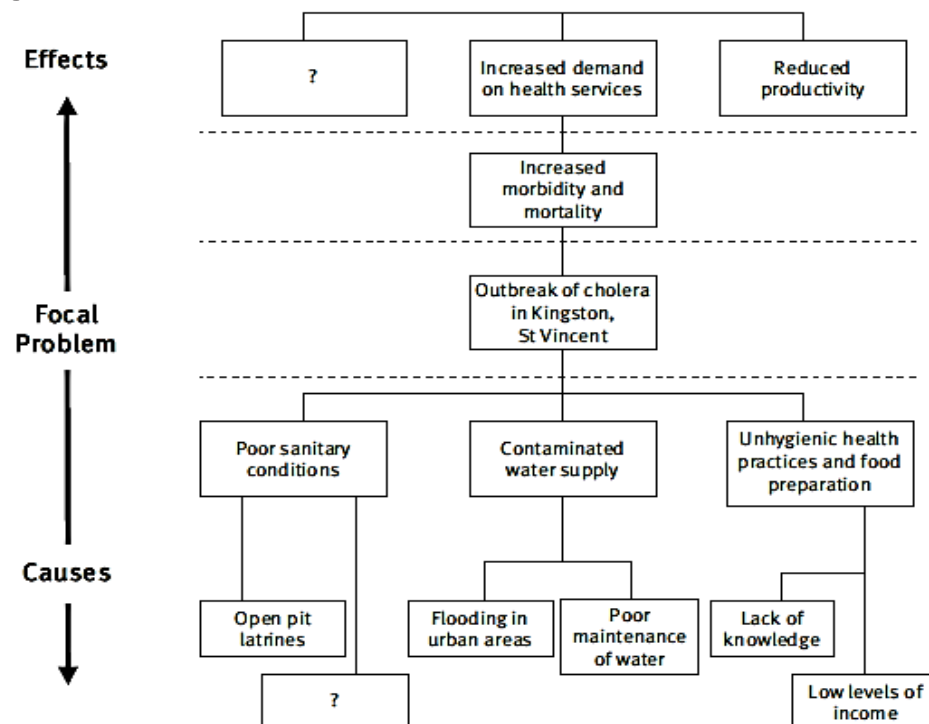
It is important to add here that in some places, obtaining statistics is quite challenging. Another approach that may be adopted is that an affected local community may be empowered to do a video of the problem as part of their engagement tool to be handed over to the duty bearers.

5) **Explore Alternative Solutions:** From understanding the problem, its manifestations, effects and causes, the next step is to search for possible solutions to the problem, especially ones that would fit the context of the problem. Usually, the stakeholders in the local communities can provide meaningful clue. For instance, in an Enugu state community that suffers elephantiasis and river blindness as a water-borne disease, an engagement with them and a few brief on what causes elephantiasis and river blindness made them to indicate that their major source of water is a nearby river and that they defecate in their farms for the excrement to serve as manure, without knowing that the disease-causing organism is washed down the river during rainy season. As they continued to use the river as their main source of water for cooking and drinking, river blindness and elephantiasis continued to spread in the community. The intervention led them to identify the provision and use of latrines in their homes as one of the solutions. Other solutions included the need to provide the community with potable water in the form of a borehole. But the behaviour change dimension about open defecation and water treatment were as important as a borehole. The point is that all of them are sets of solutions that are relevant to the different dimensions of the problem. Exploring alternatives should normally be a two – way traffic. This is to suggest that there are things that the citizens may be required to do especially if it is a problem that requires behaviour changes. But also, there are aspects of the responsibilities that the duty bearers are expected to fulfil.

6) **Explore Possible Outcomes of the Proposed Solutions:** Usually, analysts are stuck on what they consider best, and this may affect their full appreciation of the problem and a corresponding holistic solution. In exploring solutions, the stakeholders should try to build scenarios by imagining the potential impact of a given line of solution for the future. Each alternative proposed as a solution must be considered in terms of its outcomes, benefits, who benefits, who is going to be adversely affected and material cost.

7) **Evaluate the Effect of the Various Solutions and Decide on the Most Appropriate:** Evaluate the proposed solutions to find which of them is/are the most realistic, feasible, fitting and most likely to produce the desired outcome and least negative consequences. On the basis of this step, take a decision on which one to adopt. Again, as a participatory process, the decision is equally participatory. Supposing that it is an NGO that is leading the process of change, community members must be integral to the entire process. If it is trained members of the community that organize this process for their community, care must be taken to ensure that every segment of the community is well represented.

8) **Decide Whom to Engage:** The dimensions of a problem, in terms of its causes, effects and bodies responsible for solution determine who is to be engaged. Engagement is supposed to be holistic so that no single relevant point of cause, effect and solution are neglected in the engagement process. Taking the community with the problem of river blindness and elephantiasis referred earlier, we can note the putative causes of the water borne disease as follows: use of contaminated water for bathing, cooking and drinking, open defecation, lack of alternative sources of water, lack of medical facilities for the treatment of the disease, lack of facilities for water treatment and non-treatment of water used domestically. The effects may be identified as continued spread of river blindness and elephantiasis, poor health conditions etc. In exploring the solutions, each of the levels of cause needs to be addressed. Some of them are likely to be on behaviour change. For instance, treatment of water for domestic use by boiling is a behaviour change solution. But the provision of alternative source of water that is clean is a public service to be provided by the state. Each of these solutions requires different stakeholders. For the behaviour change solutions, those affected should be engaged, namely, the members of the community.

9) **How to Engage and Tools of Engagement:** for the aspect of the problem that affects community members, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) together with community mobilization may be combined as tools of engagement. For the aspect that concern public duty bearers, the tool of advocacy is recommended. "Advocacy is a process to bring about change in the policies, laws and practices of influential individuals, groups and institutions" (cited in International HIV/AIDS Alliance, nd). One important and self-sustaining tool that emerged recently to strengthen participation in decision making processes and advocacy is the Community Charter of Demand also called Community Development Charter. Normally directed at the state, Community Charter of demand is "a written document containing the development needs of a community listed in order of priority as agreed by all groups within the community" (Christian Aid, 2021, p11). Community Charter of demand is gathered and compiled in an inclusive way by all stakeholders in the community. Usually, the men and women groups articulate the community needs in their separate meetings. Similarly, the youths and people with disability in their separate meetings also articulate the community needs. The entire groups then gather in one meeting to present their list of community needs. Jointly, they prioritize the needs and itemize them based on degree of urgency and importance. The most important ones are selected and presented to the government for inclusion into the state budget. To make the point that the process was bottom up and sequential, the minutes of meetings of the various groups where they drew up their list of community needs as well as the minutes of the joint meeting in which the prioritization that yielded the Community Charter of demand is attached to the final document which is used to engage the government. The leaders of the community including traditional ruler (where applicable; women leader, youth leader and President General of the community) endorse the document for advocacy regarding the needs of the community.

The idea of Charter of demand sits well with the Human Rights Based Approach because its democratic manner of preparation and endorsement suggests that citizens are aware of responsibilities owed them as rights holders by the duty bearers.

Overall, engagement is often not unidirectional. Whom to engage and how to do it depends on the nature of the problem and the kind of stakeholders affected and the options selected as the best solutions to the problem.

3.5.   ASSESSMENT

After this session, the trainees should fill out a questionnaire to answer the following questions to test the achievement of the learning objectives:

- What is the course of action taken by government to solve a societal problem called....?
- In a democracy power belongs to the ....?
- In a democracy who should be involved in the policy process...............?
- What are some of the important steps to be taken for presenting a community's problem to government or policy makers?
- Who should be involved in making a Community Charter of Demand?
- Who should sign the Community Charter of Demand?
- Who should the charter of demand be submitted to?

The budget is a special policy document, and its process bears special attention and systematic engagement from the citizens. Budget is the framework through which the state indicates its expected revenues and how it plans to spend the revenue within one year. Most revenue expenditures are meant to either support public services or build infrastructure. Usually, when people think about the reward of good governance, they relate such governance to how public expenditure affects their lives.

Considering that the budget process is the heart of value allocation, emerging thinking in budgeting should not be abandoned to cloistered bureaucrats (Nwosu, Amakom & Isife, 2021). There should be roles for citizens and even communities in the process. Accordingly, we consider the points in which communities could have roles in the four budget pillars.

The four pillars of the budget process include:

The
preparation
phase

The
approval
phase

The
implementation
phase

The
audit
phase

01

02

03

04
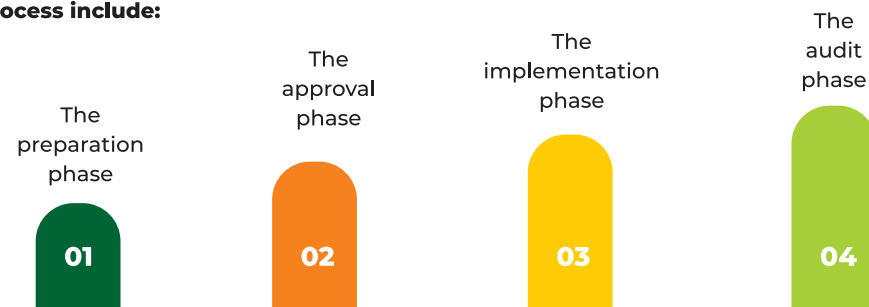
In these four phases of the budget, the community can engage the process in two crucial phases, namely, the preparation and audit phases. The main frameworks of engagement are Community Charter of Demand at the preparation phase and community budget monitoring or social audit at the audit phase.

OBJECTIVES

This module is aimed at introducing the budget as the core of practical policy processes that citizens can engage with. After the training, the participants are expected to be familiar with the following:

• The four pillars of the budget and what happens in each pillar
• That the budget has room for civic engagement and intervention
• How communities can engage with the budget preparation phase through the charters of demand
• How communities can engage the audit phase of the budget through budget monitoring (social audit)

4.2. TRAINING TOOLKIT

- A spacious room or small hall
- Laptop and projector
- Flipchart
- Masking tape
- Markers
- Copy of a budget
- Others as may be relevant for reasonable accommodation

4.3. METHODOLOGY

- Workshop lecture
- Plenary discussions
- Group activities
- Role playing

4.4. ENGAGING WITH THE BUDGET PREPARATION PHASE USING COMMUNITY CHARTERS OF DEMAND

Budget preparation usually starts with the distribution of call circulars by the budget departments. These call circulars based on current practice in Nigeria are required to be made publicly available. Call circular is an invitation by the government for the submission of areas that people expect the budget to cover for them. Hence, communities can take advantage of this call to make submissions to government based on their areas of needs. The community charter of demand is a major engagement framework that a community can use to put its needs before the government. So, this component of the training requires meticulousness.

The trainer begins by explaining the meaning of the budget and its phases. He identifies the phases of the budget in which the community can engage the state. The next step is to prompt the participants to discuss how decision-making process is structured in their communities, namely, who takes decision for the community and how. The participants are to express the specific context in which every major group in the community freely express their needs and interests. For instance, in some cultures, women speak more freely in their own groups than when brought together with men. The same thing applies to youths. So, the trainer should ask whether such spaces of free expression exist for the different groups in the community including people with disability. The trainer should further explore whether there is a point of collective meeting for the members of the community. If no, let them brainstorm on how best one could be organized. If such context of collective meeting exists, the trainer should indicate it as one of the important centres of civic engagement on budget issues.

Role Playing for Creating a Charter of Demand: The trainer should split the participants into men, women, youth, and if there are persons with disabilities, s/he should quietly obtain their permission to create them as a community group for simulation of Community Charter of Demand. Tell each group to appoint a leader and a secretary. Also, inform each group that the government had just issued a call circular for next year's budget and the community leader (president general if in the South-East of Nigeria) received a copy and passed to their various groups. They should sit in their various groups to discuss which

of their community needs should be transmitted to the government for inclusion in the next budget. Tell each group to raise items of needs that they think that government should do for their community. In Anambra State Nigeria where the Charter of Demands model is used, communities draw up the charter based on education (primary/secondary), health (primary/secondary healthcare), agriculture, infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts and drainages), water, sanitation and hygiene. The communities could however draw up needs that are not based on these mentioned sectors, and so could choose their priorities in accordance with the community development needs. The secretary of each group is to take the minutes of the meeting. This should last for about 20 or 30 minutes.

When they finish the meeting, they should gather in a plenary. The trainer should inform them that the plenary is to be regarded as a general community meeting where each group should present their five items prioritised that the government should solve for the community. A participant is appointed to act as the traditional ruler, another as president general of the community. Some cultures may rather have other titles different from president general positions. In such contexts, the substitute for the president general should be used. One participant is appointed to serve as a woman leader and another as the youth leader. (Someone should be appointed to act as the chairman of the local government while another is to act as the member of the House of Assembly or parliament representing the community). A secretary should be appointed to take the minutes of this joint community meeting. Each group presents the needs together with minutes of the meeting in which they deliberated the contents.

After the presentations, the trainer takes them to the next stage of preparation of the Charter of Demand and that is ranking. Collectively, the community members rank the needs in their order of importance and urgency to the community. After ranking the needs collectively, the trainer now informs them that the government exists for different other communities as well. Therefore, it is only some of their expressed needs that the state can meet; therefore, it is reasonable that they select the most important and most realistic four or five. Again, they will collectively make this choice as is most acceptable to the community. The logical thing at this point is to select the first five items based on the outcome of their ranking exercise. The ranking process may use a score card or any other convenient to that can produce a fair outcome and not very open to the influence of powerful groups. The selected needs from the ranking process should be used to draft a demand charter expressing that the listed items are what the community wants the government to do for them in the forthcoming budget. After drafting the charter of demands, the minutes of all the meetings at the two different stages in which the list of needs were concluded are attached to the charter of demand. Finally, it is signed by the community leaders. Ideally, the traditional ruler would sign, the president general of the community would sign, woman leader and youth leader are also to sign the demand charter. The endorsed Community Charter of Demand is transmitted to the budget department (Usually Ministry of Budget and Planning) while a copy is given to the local government. They should also send a copy to their representative in the parliament or House of Assembly to keep him/her abreast of their needs. Note that this engagement could be for the local government budget as well. For the local government budget, the Community Charter of Demand is submitted to relevant budget and planning office if it's the local government.

When this role playing is completed, the trainer should hold discussions about the effect it generates on duty bearers when rights holders take it upon themselves to make demands about what the government should do for them. Secondly, questions may come up about how serious the budget department may take community submissions. This is where the last step of the engagement comes, in namely, that depending on the response received on their demands, the community is to follow up with the relevant government department to ensure that their charters are included in the budget and implemented. Generally, demand for responsibility from government is the beginning of demand for accountability. It would send a strong signal if every community in a local government comes up with a charter of demand. If the process follows the above steps, it would have solved the government the problem of needs identification during budget preparation. In summary, the engagement steps with the Community Charters of Demand include:

·   Step one: Release of budget call circulars by the government (could be local or state government)
·   Step two: Community mobilization for collective action about development and awareness about the charters of development.
·   Step three: Needs assessment in separate community groups
·   Step four: Prioritization of needs.
·   Step five: Harmonization and prioritization at community or ward level meetings.
·   Step six: Presentation of needs to various authorities and agencies.
·   Step seven: Follow up for inclusion in the budget and implementation.

Charters of Demand is just one of the tools that a community could utilize for participating in and engaging with the budget process. In addition, the community can take part in the process through the monitoring of budget implementation which is the next stage of training.

4.5. ENGAGING WITH BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE (AUDIT PHASE): COMMUNITY BUDGET MONITORING (SOCIAL AUDIT)

Community budget monitoring is a variety of social audit which is designed to bear the same oversight essence as financial audit. Social audit verifies how programmes or services were carried out. Social audit process systematically evaluates public records especially the budget and other relevant documents side by side with practical efforts to meet needs. This is with a view to exploring how budget implementation meets the objectives of the community and those of the budget documents (cf. Transparency International, 2016).

Community budget monitoring should normally focus on the budget of the particular year which the community intends to monitor. More importantly, community budget monitoring normally concentrates on the areas of budgetary allocations that are supposed to be implemented within their community. Also, the target of budget implementation monitoring should be the areas that have more focused effects on poverty like education (primary and secondary education), health (primary and secondary healthcare), agriculture, infrastructure such as culverts, bridges and roads, water, sanitation, and hygiene.

The process of budget monitoring is fairly complex but to reduce it to a level the community participants can handle, the following steps may suffice:

Step One: The trainer should select the budget of the year to be monitored and together with the participants select relevant sectors and check aspects of capital budget projects that are due to the community. Capital project is the only one that may be disaggregated into communities and easier to monitor. So, they should focus on capital projects because it is easier for them to monitor. Jointly identify projects assigned to the community for implementation monitoring.

Step Two: Work the participants through the methodology, beginning with the importance of transparency and accountability in governance and why the role of the grassroots including community is very important for supporting accountability. They should be taught that the years of quietude by local communities created opportunities for lack of accountability (where it exists) and diversion of funds meant for projects that should serve them. Budget monitoring is therefore to be presented as an essential step to prevent such losses to the community and even to help public officials not to engage in misappropriation of funds because they would know that those that are to be served by each project now engage in project monitoring. When the community projects are all identified, the project numbers should be pulled out from the budget as well.

Step Three: Identify parts of the community where project(s) is/are located.   Instruct participants on what is to be monitored and reported on each project namely:

1. Project number from the budget
2. Local government of Project location
3. Community of Project location
4. Project state/status or level of completion
5. Challenges regarding commencement, speed or completion of project
6. Community opinion
6. Contractor's/ their representative's opinion if available
7. Photos of the project and or project site.

The photo should also clearly show any signpost on the project to reveal which government owns the project (Federal/state/LGs). It should also show the name of the contractor. If there are machines on the project site, it should be captured in the photograph too.

Step Four: The findings from project site should be documented and used to engage the responsible duty bearer. The community should hold a meeting and draft a request to the government to come and fulfil a part of its budget that affects their lives. Again, the request is endorsed by the traditional ruler, president general, woman leader and youth leader of the community. After submitting to the ministry involved, the community should also submit to the member representing them in the House of Assembly (if a state budget or councillor if a local government budget) and of course the chairman of their local government. This is done as a form of information to the government that the community is still in need regarding this area of service provisioning and is therefore requesting the government to complete the project.

4.4. ASSESSMENT

The achievement of the learning objectives for this session should be tested with the following questions:

- A document containing the expected revenue and expenditure plan of a government within one year is called ....
- The four phases or pillars of the budget are a) preparation phase b) .... c) implementation phase d)............... Phase
- What is the major tool that a community could use to engage the budget preparation phase ....?
- Social audit or budget monitoring is used to engage with .... phase of the budget?
- Name any five things that should be monitored and reported on each project during community budget monitoring.
- After monitoring the budget implementation and compiling it, why do we apply advocacy for neglected or uncompleted projects?

OBJECTIVES

- To create an understanding of democracy as a system of people's power, rights and duties.
- Understand why we need to vote - Voting as a duty and power of citizenship.
- Understand electoral cycle and some fundamentals of a free and fair election.
- Understand the rights and challenges of the Nigerian voter
- Participants would understand the importance of voter education, who should do it and the avenues of the education.

5.2. TRAINING TOOLKIT

- Nigerian Constitution (1999)
- Relevant electoral laws
- Flip charts
- Experimental ballot paper
- White board Markers
- A laptop and a projector

5.3. METHODOLOGY

The approach to be used in voter education training include
- Workshops
- Plenary presentation
- Discussions, sharing of experiences, relevant case studies)
- Group activities
- Role Playing

5.4. DEMOCRACY AS A SYSTEM OF PEOPLE'S POWER, RIGHTS AND DUTIES

Training approach: *The trainer should present this section of the training to the participants but should make it very interactive by encouraging the participants to ask questions and make input where they deem necessary.*

Democracy is most commonly defined as government of the people for the people and by the people. At the core of democracy is that the will of the people is the central guide to the policies and acts of government. In modern days of representative democracy, duty bearers who occupy public positions should primarily see themselves as occupying positions of trust on behalf of their people for doing the will of the people.

In a democracy, power belongs to the people primarily because it is by decision of the majority that the leadership is hired. That decision of who becomes the leader is made through free and fair popular voting in which all or at least a majority of qualified individuals express choices about who should be their leader. Thus, in a democracy, leadership emerges by the decisive choice of a majority. The same leadership could be rejected in another election if the people feel that it did not represent their interest during its previous tenure. So, one of the most important powers of the people in a democracy is the power to decide who governs. This power is an essential democratic right. In fact, democracy is a system of powers that flow from the people and rights tied to those powers.

In a democracy we have the following range of rights:

- Political Rights
- Civil Rights
- Social Rights.

Political rights and civil rights are broadly categorized as fundamental human rights. These two sets of rights are provided for in section 7 (4) and chapter 4 of the 1999 constitution. Examples of the political rights under the fundamental human rights include: the right to vote and be voted for, the right to freely assemble with others including membership of a political party, the right to freedom of opinion, to receive and impart ideas without interference. This includes the right to canvass for votes based on legitimate political beliefs. Other range of rights provided for in chapter four of the 1999 constitution are mostly civil rights such as: the right to life, right to dignity of human person, right to personal liberty, rights of equality in access to justice and public goods in the country.

Social rights are the range of rights including rights to education, affordable healthcare, clean and safe water, clean environment, decent jobs, unemployment benefits, old age care, etc. In fact, most of the contents of chapter two of the 1999 constitution are within the rubric of social rights. A democratic state is one which is committed to the pursuit and fulfilment of civil political and social rights in line with the will of the people.

Democracy is therefore characterized by the following features:

- Periodic free and fair elections
- Right to vote and be voted for by qualified adults.
- Respect for rights of citizens
- Transparency and accountability
- Popular participation in the policy process
- Free speech including rights to criticize and oppose the government
- Independence and fairness of the judiciary

Beyond the entitlements that citizens have in the form of their rights, the justification for these rights is that they perform some duties that support the continuity of the state and societal order and such duties include:

- Payment of taxes to the government
- Obedience to the laws and properly constituted authorities
- Participating in government through input in the policy process via the windows available to the citizens (refer to charters of demand, advocacy, and social audit above)

- Voting in elections
- Other forms of national service

(The trainer may decide to pose this section as a question whose responses s/he fits into the broad categories above or create new categories provided they are correct duties of citizens)

5.5.   ELECTIONS

Elections can mean different things to different people and people experience elections differently. However, elections can simply be described in the following ways.

1)   Election is a process where the people select their preferred candidates to represent their interest in government.

2)   Election is a process that allows the people in a given country to vote for leaders to represent their interests for a period of time and in line with the law.

3)   Election is a process that ensures that the people peacefully determine who and which policies will govern them through a credible process.

4)   Election is a process that happens periodically to ensure voters have the freedom to change their representatives in government. This allows for different outcomes over time to prevent permanent winners and permanent losers.

KEY FEATURES TO NOTE:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has established a basic consensus on the power of the people in a democracy and the features of the election. Most importantly, Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, states that:

"The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections, which shall be by equal suffrage and shall be held by secret votes or by equivalent free voting procedures".

This implies that elections must be periodic, genuine, organized according to universal suffrage, and must be held by secret vote or other determined free voting procedures.

5.6. WHY DO WE NEED TO VOTE?

- Since voting is the process of deciding who manages the political system and process of decision-making that affects the people, it provides the citizens an opportunity to hire the type of leadership they want.
- By voting the type of leadership they want, citizens invariably take control of their lives.
- Rather than physically fight for who takes charge in the society, voting is the alternative and peaceful way of contesting for public authority.
- During voting, electors select from alternatives among competing political parties and interests depending on which promises to make their life and circumstances better.

5.7. WHO IS QUALIFIED TO VOTE?

In Nigeria, the qualification to participate in the ballot includes the following:

a) Nigerian citizenship
b) Attainment of 18 years of age
c) In addition to 1 and 2 above, the person must have residency within the electoral ward in which he/she exercises a voting right.
d) Registration in the register of voters maintained by the country's election management body (Independent National Electoral Commission – INEC).

5.8. ELECTION AND ELECTORAL CYCLE

The Electoral cycle in Nigerian mainly consists of:

- A pre-election period: this includes activities, processes and procedures happening before Election Day. For example, voter registration and collection of Permanent Voters Card (PVC), Civic and Voter Education, the nomination of candidates (party primaries), campaigning and electoral preparations all play a role in determining the integrity of the elections.
- Election Day: accreditation and voting, counting and the tally of results, and announcement of election results.
- Post-election period: such as dispute and complaint resolution in court, the transition of power, reviewing the election and electoral reform, are all part of the overall electoral process.

Characteristics of free and fair elections

i.   An independent, nonpartisan electoral management body to administer the process;
ii.   Guaranteed rights and protection through the constitution;
iii. Conformity to the constitution, electoral laws and regulations in force;
iv.   Clearly defined universal suffrage and secrecy of vote;
v.   Timely and accurate corrective measures taken to resolve disputes;
vi.   Equitable and balanced reporting by media;
vii. Equitable Opportunities for the electorate to receive political and voter information;
viii. Accessible polling units;
ix.   Equal treatment of voters, candidates and parties by election officials, the government, the police, the military and the judiciary;
x.   An open and transparent ballot process; and,
xi.   A process not influenced by bribery, violence, intimidation, or coercion.

Some basic questions that should be asked to determine if an election was free and fair:

    i.   Were the election laws fair to all parties and candidates?
    ii.   Were all eligible citizens allowed to register as voters?
    iii.   Were the political parties allowed to campaign, raise money and hold meetings free from intimidation and violence?
    iv.   Did all the parties have access to government-owned news media?
    v.   Were government resources misused to favour certain candidates or particular parties or parties?
    vi.   Were voters able to cast their votes in secret and without fear or violence?
    vii. Did voters have information about the candidates and were they informed about the voting process?
    viii. Was the election process transparent?
    ix.   Did citizens have information about how the election officials were selected?
    x.   Were international and domestic observers permitted to observe every aspect of the process?

5.9.   STAKEHOLDERS IN AN ELECTION

Stakeholders in Nigeria's election includes the Election Management Body which in Nigeria is the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for national elections, the State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC) for State and local government elections, Political Parties, Voters, candidates, Media, Security, Religious and Traditional Institutions, Civil Society Organization, Election Observers (Domestic and International Observers).

    i.   The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC): The body mandated to organize, conduct and supervise elections in accordance with provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Electoral Act.
    ii.   Political Parties: They identify and present suitable candidates for various positions in an election through party primaries, they deploy polling agents at polling units, they observe how the electoral process is being conducted, they mobilize and encourage voters to participate in the electoral process.
    iii.   The Media: The media play a major role in the electoral process by bringing news and information on electoral matters to the people and also raising awareness on electoral issues. The media help to provide voters with the information they need to make an informed choice on Election Day. The media can also provide information on the day of the election, duration of the election and location of polling units. The media most times influence the electoral process by the type of news and feature stories they carry. The media places important roles in the electoral process including observing the process, providing voter education and peace building.
    iv.   The Security: The primary role of security in elections is to protect the integrity of the electoral processes and to protect the participants and institutions. The Nigerian Police is the lead agency that provides security for elections and the electoral process as recognized by the constitution. They are often supported by other sister agencies such as the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and other paramilitary agencies.
    v.   Religious and Traditional Institutions: They help to mobilize the people to participate in the electoral process, and being devoid of partisanship.
    vi.   Civil Society Organizations: The CSOs play important roles in building and strengthening democracy. Civil society means the entire range of organized groups or institutions that are independent of the state, voluntary, and at least, to some extent, self-generating and self-reliant. This may include non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations.
    vii. Election Observers: Observers are non-partisan and independent individuals or groups either local or international who are accredited by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to observe the electoral process. The essence is to enhance the credibility of the elections.
    viii. Voter: Participation of voters in the electoral process is fundamental to the functioning of any democratic society. Voters are expected to register and encouraged to participate in the electoral process. Voters are expected to turn up to vote on Election Day. Citizens who do not vote should not complain about bad leaders.

5.10. WHAT CAN CITIZENS DO TO SUPPORT PARTICIPATION IN VOTING?

- Registering to vote in elections.
- Encouraging others to go and register for the balloting.
- Promoting group discussions about the need to vote the best candidate and avoid voting according to the inducements received.
- Communal campaign against electoral malpractice and violence
- Going to actually vote on the election day

Registering to Vote: the trainer should inform the participants that at the moment, Nigerian voter card is an electronic type and is normally a permanent card. This means that a registered voter does not need to bother him/herself going to the election management body to register in every electoral cycle. Then he should ask whether there are participants who have the Permanent Voter's Card (PVC). If there are, let them explain the process of obtaining PVC. When they finish, re-emphasize the process as follows:

Voter registration requirements

In Nigeria, to be eligible to register as a voter, a person:

i.   Must be a citizen of Nigeria;
ii.   Must have attained the age of 18 years on or before the registration day;
iii.   Is resident, works in, or originates from the LGA/Area council or RA/Ward covered by the registration centre;
iv.   Is not subject to any legal incapacity to vote under any law, rules or regulations in force in Nigeria;
v.   Must present him/herself to the CVR officers for registration and is able to provide proof of identity, age and nationality if requested (i.e., people must register in person for themselves – someone cannot register for someone else);

Online Pre-Registration

A person qualified for registration can pre-register online. The Online Voter Registration System will allow a prospective voter to submit his/her enrolment information. The information will be accessible at all registration centres at the LGA /Area Council and State/FCT Offices where the biometrics of the prospective voter will be captured to complete his/her registration process.

i.   The prospective voter can access the online voter registration portal and create an account. A confirmation email will be sent. The prospective voter can also access the online pre-registration portal using his/her social media account.
ii.   The prospective voter fills his/her personal data and delimitation information. The portal will capture the prospective registrant's passport photograph.
iii.   The application is submitted and a slip with a unique identifier is generated.
iv.   The generated slip MUST be presented at the designated State/LGA/Area Council Centre to complete the registration.
v.   The prospective voter MUST present himself/herself to the designated INEC LGA/State/ Area Council office within 14 DAYS of submitting the application with a valid means of identification to complete the registration.
vi.   The Registration Officer will retrieve the prospective voters' application using the Unique Identifier in the slip generated.
vii.   The Registration Officer will compare the passport photograph from the retrieved application with the prospective voter that presents himself/herself to confirm if he/she is the same person.
viii.   If the Registration Officer confirms that the person present is the same as the person on the online application, the Registration Officer will proceed to capture his/her fingerprint and photo. A confirmation email will be sent.
ix.   Once the fingerprint and photo are captured and submitted, a Temporary Voters Card (TVC) is generated and issued.

Physical Registration

The following steps should be followed for each person who comes to the registration centre seeking to register to vote:

i.   The person arrives and waits in the queue (if there is one) until called by a registration official.
ii.   The person goes to the Registration Area Officer I (RO 1) who will ask the voter what he or she wants to do. For a new registration, RAO 1 will direct intending registrants to RO II; The RO1 also assigns voters to the nearest Polling Unit (PU) to his/her chosen residence or location.
iii.   For a new registration, the person is directed to Registration Area Officer II.
iv.   RAO II checks the person's cuticles for indelible ink (if the person has indelible ink on his cuticles, it means he/she has already registered to vote and should not be permitted to register again).
v.   The RAO III issues CVR Application for Inclusion form for every intending registrant to complete in order to confirm the status of the voter
vi.   If the person has no indelible ink on his/her cuticles, then the RAO II enters his/her name and details into the IVED system – name, date of birth, gender, occupation, address, National Identification Number (if any – a National Identification Number is required to register).
If the prospective voter has commenced pre-registration online:
·   Using the unique identifier, the registration officer retrieves the prospective voter's submitted application.
·   The registration officer compares the photo from the retrieved data with the prospective voter that presented himself/herself to confirm if it is the same person.
·   If the registration officer confirms the person present is the same as the person on the online application, the registration officer proceeds to capture the voters' fingerprint and photo.
vii.   Registration official takes a picture of the person with the IVED system.
viii.   Registration official captures the fingerprints of the person using the IVED system.
ix.   Registration official prints out the person's Temporary Voter's Card.
x.   Registration official gives the person his/her Temporary Voter's Card.
xi.   Registration official enters person's name and details in the Manual Register of Voters.
xii.   Registration official thanks the person for registering to vote.
xiii.   The person leaves the registration centre.

Transfer of Registered Voters

Every Nigerian has the right to live in any part of the country. An important part of the Voter Registration is that an eligible person is advised to register at the centre nearest to his/her residence. This is to make it easy for the voter to access the Polling Unit (PU) and vote on Election Day.

A person who has relocated to another place outside the unit in which he/she registered can apply to transfer his/her registration to his/her new location to enable him/her to vote on Election Day.

Procedure for Transfer within a Registration Area

The person who intends to transfer his/her registration will apply to the Resident Electoral Commissioner (REC) of the state through the Electoral Officer (EO) of the Local Government Area where he/she is currently residing.

Steps:

i. The person will fill out form EC 4A (application for transfer of registered voter)
ii. RO 2 will initiate the transfer on IVED.

The person must apply to the Resident Electoral Commissioner in good time, well before 45 days to the election, as no transfer will be entertained or granted in less than 45 days to the election.

If the Resident Electoral Commissioner is satisfied that the applicant is currently residing in the area, he/she shall approve the application and the transfer is done.

Transfer outside a Registration Area (RA)

i. The applicant will fill Form EC 4A (Application for Transfer of Registered Voter).
ii. The applicant will attach a photocopy of his/her Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) to the application.
iii. The Electoral Officer of the applicant's Local Government Area (LGA) on receiving the application shall ensure that the transfer is affected electronically.

If the Resident Electoral Commissioner is satisfied that the applicant is currently resident in the area, s/he will approve the application and transfer is affected.

The Resident Electoral Commissioner **MAY** demand evidence, such as Utility Bill, for confirmation.

Online Transfer

The applicant can initiate all forms of Transfer using the Online Voter Registration Portal. Existing voters may transfer their registration to their chosen PU nationwide via the Online Voter Registration System as follows:

i. Log on to the voter registration website (website address before going to press)
ii. Click on SIGN IN/ REGISTER
iii. As a new user, fill in required details (Name, Email, Phone number, etc) to create an account on the portal or sign in using a Facebook or Gmail account.
iv. Go to your mail and click on the verification link sent to verify your account
v. Sign into the Portal
vi. Click on Transfers
vii. You will be required to review your voter status by taking two pictures of yourself (a neutral and a smiling face). This will verify your identity with your existing picture in the INEC database to prevent unauthorised transfer requests
viii. After verification of your identity, select the Delimitation of the PU you wish to transfer to
ix. Your transfer request slip will be displayed and sent to your email
x. Print or save your transfer request slip
xi. Your request will be automatically submitted to the EO and REC of the State you requested to be transferred to for approval
xii. You will receive an update on your transfer request via email.

Collection of Permanent Voters Cards

The PVC distribution takes place at INEC LGA offices nationwide between the hours of 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. A person is eligible to collect PVC if he/she;

- Has registered before,
- His/her details are in the register of voters displayed,
- Has a Temporary Voters Card (TVC),
- Has lost his/her TVC but his/her identity can be confirmed.
- Is physically present at the collection centre; there shall be no collection of PVC by proxy.

The Registration Officer shall issue a Permanent Voters Card (PVC) to a registered voter who has not collected his/her PVC. The officer shall also handle issues of lost or omitted PVCs.

Permanent Voters Cards Collection Procedures

Steps:
i. The registration officer checks and confirms that the prospective voter is in the distribution register of voters.
ii. If the name of the prospective voter is found on the distribution register, he/she shall search through the PVC cards for his/her PVC.
iii. He/she requests the prospective voter to thumbprint and sign the PVC collection section of the distribution register of voters.
iv. The registration officer retrieves the TVC from the prospective voter and hands it to the prospective voter his/her PVC.
v. Where the prospective voter does not have a TVC, the prospective voter is made to sign an attestation form and affix his/her passport photograph.
vi. If the prospective voter is suspected to be underage, his/her PVC shall be retained at the LGA office.
vii. The registration officer stores the retrieved TVCs in the bags provided.
viii. The registration officer cross-checks PVC and SCR to ensure quality.
ix. At the end of the day, the registration officer checks to ensure that the number of PVCs signed equal the number of PVCs he/she handed over to prospective voters.
x. The registration officer completes the card issuance daily report to ensure that the report tally.
xi. Incident forms should be issued for complaints about double name, lost PVCs, damaged/defaced PVC etc.

Display Claims and Objections

The Preliminary Register of Voters (PRV) shall be displayed at each Registration Centre. The Registration Officers will print the list of registered voters at period intervals, preferably quarterly for display at the registration centre, clearly marked as Preliminary Register of Voters.

- The Preliminary Register of Voters shall be available online (INEC website) for any member of the public to verify his/her registration status.
- The display claims and objections shall be carried out in a manner that ensures easy and unimpeded inspection of the register by members of the public.
- Any person caught tampering with the displayed preliminary register of voters shall be arrested and prosecuted.
- At the end of the display period, the commission shall effect all necessary changes and proceed to produce the Final Register of Voters.
- Offences during Voter Registration
- For a person to apply to register as a Voter when they KNOW that they do not qualify for registration
- Unlawful possession of another person's Voter's Card

- For a person to refuse to surrender a Voter's Card to the Registration Officer when they are required to do so
- To register as a voter more than once
- For a person to deliberately provide wrong information to the Registration Officer
- For a person to provide wrong information to the Registration Officer that a person is deceased when in fact not
- For a person to forge, falsify or destroy a Voters Card or Register of Voters
- To be in possession of a forged Register or Voter's Card
- For a person to make a false appeal, claim, application or objection
- To induce or compel another person to register or not to register as a Voter
- Unlawfully or forcefully ask another person to produce a Voter's Card
- To persuade a person who is not qualified to register as a Voter, to do so
- To represent any person to the Registration Officer that they are entitled to register as a voter when in fact not

Encouraging/Mobilizing others to go and register:

Trainer should ask participants the most important gatherings that the members of their community attend and where they take information very seriously. These gatherings may be youth groups, women groups, religious gatherings etc. They should share why it is that people are inclined to listen to these various groups. Let them indicate which of the groups is the best point for advising qualified persons to go and register as voters. Ask each of the participants to indicate where they would disseminate information about voter registration and what they could do to make it an interesting experience.

Perhaps it may be worthwhile to ask the gathering if it could be marked out as a special monthly announcement using any common media to remind those who are attaining the age of 18 that they should remember the duty of obtaining their voters card because the voter's card is like a currency for purchasing the kind of leadership that a people desire and that they have come of age in deciding who should be the leader. Apart from those who are just turning 18 years of age, older adults who do not have voter's cards should be encouraged to go and obtain their voters cards.

Non-partisan campaign for participation in voting:

At this stage, the trainer should stimulate conversations about why people do not vote and what could be done to make them participate in voting. A number of reasons and points would come up here. The rationale for encouraging the participants to raise them is to create entry points for addressing them. Basically, people opt out of the civic sphere because they do not see that government consider them as important and therefore, they rarely see participation in election as their business. Once this crucial point comes up, the trainer should take advantage of it and ask the participant how the community had placed their demands on the government in the past. S/he should remind them of the engagement tools they have learnt in the training. The engagement tools make them active citizens who are not only aware of their problems but take active steps in making demands on the government to address them. The trainer must be very careful here to avoid partisan discussion that either privileges or criticizes any political party. In fact, explicit indication that the conversation is not about any party or regime is important. Instead, the focus would be on governance issues that affect the people and how to resolve them. One step is learning how to use the tools of engagement. Another step is taking steps to make accurate choices of candidates or parties whom they trust to perform well if elected.

Another issue that is likely to come up here is the incentive for voting. Trainer should ask participants to express what incentive community members expect for participating in voting. Two levels of incentives are likely to be identified. The first one is the short-term incentive of voting for payment or vote buying/selling. The second incentive is the long-term incentive of good governance which is not usually accompanied by the monetary rewards. The participants should be encouraged to discuss their experiences in the past or some other cases they know, regarding pre-election inducements and vote-buying. Secondly, they should deliberate on the best guide that should be given to the electors where one or multiple political parties are coming to share monetary or other inducements. While the question of whether they should accept or reject such pre-election/election day gifts creates ethical versus cultural tension, the trainer should focus on getting the participants to arrive at the best practice that would ensure that the voters select the candidates of

their choice. To underpin an ethical position, the trainer should cite examples of communities where groups had openly rejected inducement to vote for a particular party and insisted on their choice candidate (Eze, 2021). Of course, community groups may also collectively extract a promise from a contestant to an office about what he would do for the community based on their strongly felt need. E.g., a feeder road for easy transportation of agricultural produce or a secondary school for a community where they lack one or a nearby one to serve them.

Communal campaign against electoral violence/malpractice

Another important content of voter education/mobilization messages is campaigns within community against acts that would compromise free and fair elections especially violence and other electoral malpractices. This aspect of the training is to be interactive with the trainer moderating conversations on experiences and cases known to the community members. After narratives of these experiences and how it affects the community members in terms of the willingness to participate in elections, the trainer should pose the question around:

- Identifying the age group or interests who mostly participate in electoral violence and malpractice.
- Evolving community-based efforts to ensure that at least the violence does not originate from the community.
- Possible community responses to electoral violence.

Following identification of the most critical stakeholders that may have roles in electoral violence/malpractice (aspects that may involve community members such as the youths), the trainer should split the participants into women, youth and older men groups to go into separate groups to brainstorm how each of their groups is affected by electoral violence both as victims and as participants. The aim is to generate the best way to engage the core stakeholders in the community (women, youth, men etc.). The outcome of the discussion of the various groups is presented in a plenary by a selected member of each group. Basically, the trainer should look at the fitness of the recommended pathways with existing laws. But also, s/he should create broad categories for the recommendations such as:

- Information, Education and Communication
- Advocacy with community youth organization to prevail on its members to avoid violence or used by politicians to undermine the integrity of the election
- Advocacy to women groups as mothers to engage with their sons and daughters at home against electoral violence. etc.

Voting on Election Day

To prepare for voting, the electors should a few days prior to the voting, visit their polling station where the voters register in each ward is displayed in order to confirm that their names are on the voters list. There are times that INEC devise novel ways of confirming the availability of voters' names in their electoral ward. For instance, pressing some codes in the same phone whose number was used as the elector's phone number will yield information about whether the entry is a valid one for that electoral ward. While this is convenient, it's important to note that not every person may own a mobile phone. Therefore, the trainer should advise the participants to settle for what is understandable to the local population and use it for confirmation of names in the voters' register. After demonstrating how they would confirm their registration by checking the voters register, the next step is to go, and vote based on the training on how to vote.

The trainer should simulate the actual voting with the participants, mimicking an actual voting process.

Overview of INEC's Election Procedures

i.   **Polling units**

- Elections are held at the polling units.

- Each polling unit has been given an INEC code – including a PU code between 001 and 999, a two-digit Ward or RA code between 01 and 99, a two-digit LGA code between 01 and 99 and a two-digit State code between 01 and 22.
- This INEC code for the polling unit should be on the sign for the polling unit, the ballot box, the form used to post the results and other documents.

ii.   Polling Staffing

Each polling unit should have four staff: a Presiding Officer and three Assistant Presiding Officers.

Also, at the polling unit may be:

- Voters
- INEC officials on election duty
- Security officials who are there to maintain order; (The military and Department of the State Security Services are not expected to be seen at the polling unit. Local vigilante and regional security outfits are also not expected to be involved in providing security at the polling unit)
- Polling/party agents who are there to represent the interests of their party (one agent for each party/ candidate) per polling unit
- Other accredited Nigerian citizen observers and international observers who are there to observe impartially the process on behalf of all Nigerians;
- Accredited journalists reporting on the election.

iii.   Polling Materials

Each polling unit should have:

- A Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS)
- An Electronic Register of Voters
- Ballot boxes for each election
- Ballot papers
- INEC stamps
- INEC forms
- Braille ballot guide for the blind
- Indelible ink (for marking fingers); and
- One or more ink pads (for voting).
- Face masks
- Infrared thermometer
- Disinfectant (Methylated Spirit)

iv.   Setting up of the Polling Unit

Before accreditation of voters, the Polling Officials should:

- Remove all campaign materials, if any, from the polling unit.

- Set up the layout of the PU in accordance with the approved layout for voting amidst COVID-19 using the twine (rope) to demarcate inner queue from outer queue.
- Set up the voting cubicle in such a way that the voter can mark his/her ballot paper(s) in secret. Place the Ballot Box not more than two (2) meters away from the voting cubicle in the direction of the Presiding Officer and away from the Polling Agent.
- Check the Bimodal Voter Accreditation Systems (BVAS) for operational readiness.
- Display the BVAS to all persons present at the Polling Unit to ascertain that total accreditation indicates zero (0) on the dashboard.
- Open the ballot box and display it in the full view of all persons present at the Polling Unit, to show that the ballot box is empty.
- Lock the ballot box with the seal provided and place it in not more than two (2) meters away from the voting cubicle in the direction of the Presiding Officer and away from the Polling Agents.
- Allow all accredited Polling Agents. Observers and Journalists to enter the polling unit and sign the attendance register in the polling unit booklet.

v.   Accreditation and Voting

The polling procedure to be used in this election requires a prospective voter to cast his/her vote immediately after being accredited. Accreditation is a process of ascertaining that a voter's name is in the Register of Voters in a particular Polling Unit where he/she registered to vote in an election. The Accreditation process shall comprise the verification and authentication of voters using the BVAS, cross-checking the voters' names in the Register of Voters, as well as inking of the cuticle of the specified finger.

Accreditation and Voting shall commence at 8:30 a.m. and close at 2:30 p.m. Any voter already on the queue at 2:30 p.m. shall be granted access to Accreditation and Voting in the prescribed manner.

Opening of Poll: At 8:30am:

The presiding Officer shall:

- Arrange tables and chairs in line with the Polling Unit layout
- Paste relevant EC 30 series Posters conspicuously at the Polling Unit
- Allow voters into the Polling Unit in an orderly queue
- Ensure that all electoral officials (PO, APO I, II and III) properly sanitize their hands with the alcohol-based hand sanitizer provided intermittently
- Request individuals to lower their face masks for proper identification during voting processes where necessary
- Request the APO III or any other official to read out loudly the Voters Code of Conduct (VCC) at the outer voting area and paste VCC Poster conspicuously at the Polling Unit
- Invite the first batch of voters into the voting area
- Declare the Polling Unit open.

Accreditation and Voting Steps

- When the Voter reaches the front of the queue, he/she presents him/herself to an Assistant Presiding Officer who should determine if the Voter is at the correct Polling unit.
- Upon inspection of the PVC held by the voter, if the APO III discovers that the PVC is not for the Polling Unit, the APO III will advise the voter to proceed to the appropriate Polling Unit
-
- If the Voter is at the correct Polling unit, the Voter proceeds to the next Assistant Presiding Officer and the Voter presents his/her Permanent Voter's Card (PVC).
- The assistant presiding officer scans the barcode/QR code on the PVC/Voters' register or enter the last six (6) digits of the VIN or type in the last name

of the voter using the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System to verify and authenticate the voter.

- The assistant presiding officer requests the voter to place the appropriate finger in the place provided on the BVAS; and if the fingerprint match fails, capture the photo of the voter to authenticate. Then proceed to APO (II).

If the Voter does not have a PVC, the Voter will NOT be permitted to be accredited or allowed to vote.

If the BVAS cannot read the PVC, the voters' fingerprints or facials, the Voter will NOT be permitted to be accredited or to vote.

If the voter is verified by the BVAS:

The verified voter shall then present himself/herself to the assistant presiding officer II who shall:

- Request for the PVC of the voter
- Check the Register of Voters to confirm that the voter's name, details and VIN are as contained in the Register of Voters
- Tick the appropriate box of the horizontal boxes on the right margin beside the voter's details on the Register, showing the category of election, if the person's name is on the Register of Voters
- Document the status of the voter. If the voter is a PWD, complete the PWD Form EC 40H as prescribed
- Apply indelible ink to the cuticle of the specified finger on the left hand to indicate that the voter has been accredited to vote in that election

Where the BVAS malfunctions and a replacement is not available by 2.30pm, the Presiding Officer shall inform the voters and polling agents that accreditation and voting for the affected Polling Unit, shall continue the following day.

If the BVAS can read the PVC, the voter's fingerprints and facials but the voter is not on the Register of Voters, the Presiding Officer or Assistant Presiding Officer in charge of the polling will politely ask the voter to leave the polling unit.

If a voter is registered in the PU, but the BVAS can't read his/ her PVC, the Presiding Officer or Assistant Presiding Officer in charge of the polling unit will politely ask the voter to leave the polling unit.

If a Voter's name does not appear in the Register of Voters, the Voter will NOT be permitted to be accredited or to vote

Once the voter's details have been confirmed in the register of voters, the accredited voter shall proceed to the Presiding Officer who shall:

- Check the cuticle of the appropriate finger/thumbnail of the voter to confirm that he/she has been accredited
- On being satisfied that the person before him/her has been duly accredited, stamp, sign and write the date on the back of the ballot paper(s) for the respective categories of elections
- Fold vertically inwards and flatten the ballot paper(s)
- Issue the pre-folded and endorsed ballot paper(s) to the voter
- Request the voter to remove his/her cell phone or any photographic device before proceeding to voting cubicle
- Direct the voter to the voting cubicle to mark his/her choice on the ballot paper
- Ensure that the voter deposits the thumb-printed ballot paper in the appropriate ballot box
- Where the voter is visually impaired, the PO shall issue to him/her the Braille Ballot Guide or magnifying glass, as the case may be. The items shall be sterilized after use by each voter

REJECTED BALLOT PAPERS: A Ballot Paper should be rejected if: a) the choice of the Voter is not clear; b) the back of the Ballot Paper is not stamped, signed, and dated; c) the Ballot Paper is without any thumb-print of a Voter; d) the Ballot Paper has any writing or marks that identify the Voter; or e) the thumb print on the Ballot Paper indicates a Political Party not contesting the election.

Rejected ballot papers should be shown to all party agents and observers present. If any party agent or observer disagrees with the Presiding Officer's decision to reject a ballot and believe it to instead be a valid ballot where the voters' choice is clear, the Presiding Officer writes the words "Rejected but objected to" on the ballot.

2) COUNTING BALLOT PAPERS PHASE

For the Polling unit, the Polling Officials should:

Sort according to the type of elections; then sort out the ballot papers by party into separate piles for each party and one pile for rejected ballots

- Loudly count the votes scored by each Party in the presence of the Polling Agents and Observers; allow recount of votes on demand by a polling agent, provided that such recount shall only be allowed once
- Enter the scores of the candidates in both figures and words in the appropriate forms EC 8A series.
- Verify the Votes for each Political Party by comparing the number of Votes for each Political Party plus the number of Rejected Ballot Papers plus the number of Spoilt Ballot Papers with the number of used Ballot Papers.

IF the number of Votes for each Political Party plus the number of Rejected Ballot Papers plus the number of Spoilt Ballot Papers does NOT equal the number of used Ballot Papers, then the Polling Officials should recount the Ballot Papers.

A Polling Agent may request a recount of the Ballot Papers. Such a recount should only be done once.

3) RECORDING VOTES PHASE

For the Polling unit, the Polling Officials should:

- Record the Votes cast for each Political Party on INEC Form EC.8A for the Polling unit
- Give all Polling Agents an opportunity to countersign the form (however refusal to sign the form by a Polling Agent does NOT invalidate the results).
- Announce all of the information on the form.
- Give a duplicate copy of the form to all Polling Agents and Security Agents.
- Paste the completed Publication of Result Poster EC 60 (E) at the Polling Unit.
- Transmit the result as prescribed in the Regulations and guidelines for the conduct of elections
- Scan/take a picture of the EC8A using the BVAS and upload to the INEC Result Viewing Portal (IReV)

IF the number of Votes for each Political Party plus the number of Rejected Ballot Papers plus the number of Spoilt Ballot Papers is LESS THAN the number of used Ballot Papers then "ANOMALY EXISTS" should be written across the form and the Presiding Officer should make a report to the RA/Ward Collation Officer.

IF the number of Votes for each Political Party plus the number of Rejected Ballot Papers plus the number of Spoilt Ballot Papers is MORE THAN the number of used Ballot Papers or is MORE THAN the number of Accredited Voters or is MORE THAN the number of Registered Voters, then "NULL AND VOID" should be written across the form.

Experimental ballot papers are designed and given to the participants to act as voters going to the polls. After being shown the political parties and their corresponding symbols, the participants are made to queue up and cast their votes, observing the essential rules of secrecy.

The trainer is to ask the participants to indicate the various ways to encourage their fellow voters to go to the polling station for casting their ballot. The methods would depend on the nature of the community. In rural locations, neighbours may inform their neighbours, relations and friends that they are going to vote and urge them to join in expressing their only opportunity to express the power of determining who runs their joint affairs. In other places, they may adopt text message reminders for various groups to go and vote. Whichever legitimate approach that serves the community well, provided it encourages enhanced participation, the trainer should discuss them jointly with the participant.

On a final note, the training participants are to be informed that their training only makes sense when it filters down to the grassroots in the community and therefore urge them to proactively promote voting as a human right which people should not deny themselves.

5.11. ASSESSMENT

After the session on this module, the achievement of the learning objectives is to be tested with the following questions:

- Government of the people for the people and by the people is called ....
- Name any five things that a democracy is known for............................
- Name any three duties of citizens in a democracy...............................
- Give any two reasons why people should vote in a democracy..........................
- Apart from attaining 18 years of age, what other three conditions must a person satisfy in order to vote in Nigeria..................................?
- Name any four things that are required for an election to be considered free and fair......
- Mention any three things you can do to encourage the members of your community to participate more in voting..

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