

IMPACT REPORT

# RULE OF LAW AND ANTI-CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

## STRENGTHENING THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION



Funded by  
the European Union



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the British Council

# INTRODUCTION

Addressing corruption is arguably Nigeria’s biggest developmental challenge. The limited operational capacity of Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs)<sup>1</sup>, the lack of appropriate legal frameworks, and the low level of coordination among ACAs have been identified as key issues.



The primary goal of the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC) Programme’s Anti-Corruption Component was to enhance the ability of ACAs to address corruption in these key areas including procurement, the extractive industry and criminal justice. RoLAC interventions centred on enhancing national and sub-national coordination frameworks for the fight against corruption amongst ACAs as well as building their capacity for greater effectiveness and improved performance. The programme also sought to strengthen capacity to prevent corruption.

# ACTIVITIES

RoLAC interventions enhanced the national and sub-national coordination framework for the fight against corruption.

ACAs were supported to develop the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS), which serves as the overarching framework for all-inclusive coordinated action in the fight against corruption. RoLAC enabled the establishment of the NACS Secretariat and the M&E Committee and the development of implementation tools including an M&E Framework, Action Plan, Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), and Reporting Templates.

## NACS OBJECTIVES (2017–2021)

**Vision:**

A Nigeria free of corruption for sustainable human development

**Mission:**

To provide a holistic National Anti-Corruption Strategy for all sectors and stakeholders in the fight against corruption

**Key objectives:**

- Strengthening preventive measures against corruption
- Increased public engagement in anti-corruption efforts at the national and sub-national level
- Ethical re-orientation
- Improved recovery and management of proceeds of crime

<sup>1</sup> ACAs here refer to ICPC; EFCC; CCB; BPP; NEITI; TUGAR (in their capacity as secretariat of the IATT)



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The NACS Secretariat and M&E Committee were encouraged to manage the roll-out and implementation of the strategy. It helped secure the buy-in of ACAs to the NACS and its implementation framework through the development of agency-specific strategic plans and related tools.

Advocacy to key actors in Adamawa, Anambra and Kano led to buy-in to the NACS and the development of state-specific anti-corruption strategies including the setting-up of new Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit (ACTUs) in state MDAs for the effective implementation of their respective anti-corruption strategies. The programme also supported advocacy by civil society organisations (CSOs) and the media to drive the ratification of the state strategies as all-inclusive anti-corruption coordination frameworks.

The Nigeria Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) was supported to develop its financial intelligence, analysis and investigative capacity and improved its electronic platform for secure intelligence sharing with ACAs and law enforcement agencies (LEAs). RoLAC supported joint investigations and prosecutorial training for ACAs and select LEAs and enabled their quarterly interactions through the Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT), improving technical collaboration.

Corruption prevention was enhanced through support to the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to develop and deploy the annual Ethics and Compliance Scorecard (ECS) and National Ethics Policy. The programme facilitated joint training for ACAs on Corruption Risk Assessment (CRA), and the investigation and prosecution of corruption-related cases in the extractives industry and public procurement. Furthermore, the programme helped strengthen ICPC's Anti-Corruption and Transparency Units (ACTUs). The revision of Standing Orders and development of the ACTU Effectiveness Index enabled the establishment of ACTUs in MDAs where none previously existed.

Reform of legal frameworks were supported in Adamawa, Edo and Kano. The Proceeds of Crime Law for instance was passed into law in Adamawa state, while Anambra, Adamawa, Edo and Kano states passed new Public Procurement Laws, which are now being implemented.

The capacity of national and state public procurement management and oversight institutions were built through the development of the National Open Contracting Portal (NOCOPO), which enables open and transparent handling of public procurements actions. By the end of 2022, 558 MDAs had registered on the NOCOPO (out of which 298 had uploaded their procurement plans

on the portal). Open Contracting Data Standards were deployed in Edo and Adamawa states, facilitating the disclosure of data and documents for all stages of the procurement process by defining common data models for stakeholders.

The Nigeria Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (NEITI) built the capacity of ACAs and LEAs to better understand money laundering issues in the extractives sector and how to investigate and prosecute them. This led to partnership MOUs between NEITI and ICPC, NEITI and EFCC, and NFIU and ACAs to improve technical level cooperation and coordination among ACAs. NEITI launched the Extractive Industries Beneficial Ownership Register and revived the NEITI Civil Society Committee. The initiative also simplified its audit report for easier understanding by stakeholders thus empowering state and non-state actors to hold the extractive sector actors to account.

Targeted agencies have taken full ownership of reform initiatives. For instance, the NACS and Freedom of Information reform is driven by the Federal Ministry of Justice (FMOJ). The Bureau for Public Procurement is leading on the NOCOPO, while ICPC owns and drives the annual Ethics and Compliance Scorecard and the ACTU Effectiveness Index. The Extractive Industry Beneficial Ownership Register is guided by NEITI.

# IMPACT

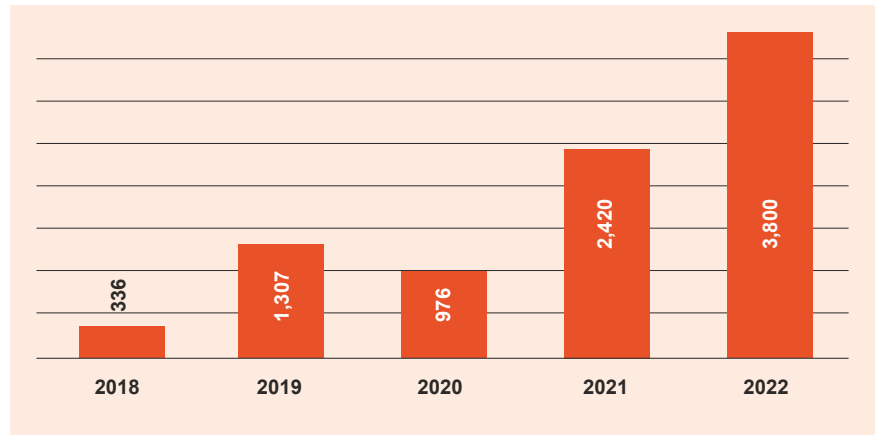
## Improved prosecutorial outcomes for ACAs.

There was over 1000 percent increase in convictions over four years from 336 in 2018 to 3,800 in 2022. The value of assets recovered also increased from N13.68bn at the end of June 2019 to N352bn in June 2022. The recently established Asset Recovery and Management Unit in the FMOJ also recovered assets worth over N145 billion in 2021 alone.

## Better coordination of ACAs and LEAs.

The activities of all ACAs and LEAs are now better coordinated and aligned towards the achievement of key objectives in the NACS. The emphasis by both ICPC and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on asset recovery and their recent partnership MOUs with other LEAs and non-state actors including CSOs and the media came about in response to the NACS. It is now the central coordination framework for all-inclusive national and sub-national anti-corruption reform.

Figure 1: Convictions 2018-2022 (EFCC, ICPC and CCB combined)



Source: RoLAC

## ACTUs functioning and acting as procurement oversight mechanisms and NACS Implementing Units in federal MDAs.

In addition to the re-activation of over 400 ACTUs in MDAs as of 2017, 26 new units were established by the end of 2021. Kano, Adamawa and Anambra states are now using the ACTU model to focus their state anti-corruption strategies. Kano now has operational ACTUs in all 44 LGAs and their MDAs. Recently, a Kano ACTU exposed a sex for grade abuse case in one of the state’s higher institutions.

## Three states have active anti-corruption strategies aligned to the NACS.

Kano, Adamawa, and Anambra states strategies are being implemented through coordination between ACAs and state-level institutions.

## The Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP) National Open Contracting Portal (NOCOPO) is fully established and improving contractors’ confidence.

The initiative enabled procurement to continue during the COVID-19 pandemic with over 20,000 visitors to the platform in the first year (2020). By December 2022, there were 558 MDAs registered on the NOCOPO, and 298 of them have already uploaded procurement plans on the portal. In addition, new procurement laws are now in operation in Anambra, Adamawa, Kano, and Edo states. Development and deployment of several procurement management/oversight tools, including the Procurement Audit Template, have resulted in the blockade of leakages in Lagos state, as well as the building of a databank of Procurement Compliant MDAs in Edo state.

## The NFIU is independent and sharing intelligence with all ACAs and LEAs.

The number of pieces of intelligence shared by the NFIU with local and international agencies has increased significantly from 484 shared in





2019 to 1277 in 2021, and 774 were shared in the first half of 2022. The NFIU has deployed the Crimes Information Management System (CRIMS) on tablets to ACAs and LEAs for improved intelligence sharing, leading to improved investigations and prosecutorial outcomes.

#### Improved corruption prevention by the ICPC.

This has been achieved through the deployment of tools/initiatives, including the Annual Ethics and Integrity Scorecard, the ACTU Effectiveness Index, the National

Ethics Policy, and Corruption Risk Assessments. The number of MDAs that are 'substantially compliant with the ethical standards for public service institutions' increased from 27 in 2020 to 48 in 2021 and 61 in 2022.

#### NEITI voted the best EITI globally for 2021

for its implementation of the Beneficial Ownership Register. Its partnership with other ACAs and MDAs facilitated the recovery of over N2.65 trillion<sup>2</sup> owed to the federal government by oil firms. Technical

level cooperation and coordination with other ACAs and LEAs has strengthened implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) under Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption Reforms (TUGAR's) Inter-Agency Technical Team (IATT) platform. The Extractive Industries Beneficial Ownership Register is now used by state and non-state actors to better hold extractive sector actors to account.



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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/09/oil-companies-remit-n2-6trn-after-public-hearing-on-neiti-report/>

**Table 1:** ICPC’s Ethics and Compliance Scorecard Analysis Sheet (2020-2022)

ICPC’s Ethics and Compliance Scorecard Analysis Sheet (2020-2022)						
Compliance Level	2020		2021		2022	
	No. of MDAs	%	No. of MDAs	%	No. of MDAs	%
Substantial Compliance	27	8	46	13	61	23
Partial Compliance	80	23	108	30	120	46
Non-Compliance	115	33	147	41	16	6
Non-Responsive	130	37	59	16	52	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>		<b>360</b>		<b>260</b>	

Source: ICPC



# LESSONS

## Data is key to measuring success of reforms

When data is not available it is very difficult to track impact of reform interventions. Many public institutions do not have data or are unwilling to share data that measures the impact of reforms and interventions that benefit their institutions. It is imperative to obtain concrete commitments for the periodic collection and reporting on key performance measurements/ indicators from target states and institutions before implementation of support begins.

## Early involvement of demand-side actors ensures greater impact

The non-inclusion of demand-side actors early in the design and implementation of key policies and reforms makes it difficult for them to effectively advocate for those policies and reforms. Early involvement of CSOs and the media, as stakeholders in the policy reform process gives them a voice, facilitates buy-in and support, and ensures greater impact. A formalized structure for the engagement of CSOs by government agencies, such as NEITI and its Civil Society

Committee and the FOI-Coalition partnerships will also ensure sustainability of support.

## Sustainable reform requires legal and regulatory changes and budget allocation

While development assistance helps to drive governance and policy reform initiatives, sustaining those initiatives require legal and regulatory changes and budgetary allocation as seen in the operations of the newly created anti-corruption strategy implementation structures at both the national and sub-national levels.

## DATA/STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

- **27 priority actions** were implemented from the NACS Action Plan (M&E framework, etc) by September 2022. These include the passage of the Proceeds of Crime Act; the establishment of the Asset Recovery Management Unit (ARMU) in the Federal Ministry of Justice, which recovered over N145bn worth of assets as at 2021; the establishment by the NFIU of the Crime Information Management System (CRIMS) for the secure exchange and management of intelligence among the ACAs and LEAs; and the ICPC's training/certification of ACA Corruption Risk Assessors and their recent deployment to assess the Law Reform Commission.
- **24 priority actions** identified during the capacity assessments for the federal and state public procurement agencies implemented between June 2019 and September 2022. These include the deployment of the National Open Contracting Portal (NOCOPO), which enabled procuring entities to publish their procurement plans and actions on the public web-portal; and the Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS), which ensures that public procurement process are open, and procurement-related data is accessible to all stakeholders for effective monitoring and oversight. Other actions include the passage of Procurement Laws in the different states and the development and deployment of Public Procurement Audit Templates and Codes of Conduct for different procurement stakeholders across the states.
- ICPC's Ethics and Compliance Scorecard has in the past three years revealed continuous improvement in the levels of compliance to established ethical standards and accountability checks and balances.

# COMMENTS FROM BENEFICIARIES

**Kingsley Obi, External Corporations Unit, ICPC**

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RoLAC support for the joint training of ACAs, especially on the Corruption Risk Assessment (CRA) has contributed to improved technical cooperation among the different agencies. All the certified assessors from the different agencies now eagerly look forward to the joint deployment of the CRA in the Law Reform Commission. If this is sustained, we'll surely see great outcomes in the fight against corruption.

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**Dr Johnson Eze, Head of Planning, Research and Statistics, EFCC**

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Managing citizens engagement has been an ongoing concern at the EFCC with public confidence in ACAs and LEAs at an all-time low. The development and deployment of the Eagle Eye App as a key action from the Strategic Plan has made it very convenient for the public to report economic and financial crimes anonymously or otherwise resulting in increased reportage and engagement of various publics in our various social media handles. The commission has also increased its interagency collaboration and cooperation through increased involvement in Joint Task Forces, an Inter-Agency Task Team, and the operationalised MOUs with an increased number of ACAs, LEAs and even some MDAs for operational partnership.

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# PERSONAL STORY OF CHANGE



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My increased understanding of the negative impact of corruption... has greatly strengthened my resolve to be a patriot and to defend the integrity and rights of prison inmates.

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M. Opara, Nigeria Correctional Service

My training in Corruption Risk Awareness and subsequent appointment as the Chairperson of the ACTU at the Nigeria Correctional Service has greatly impacted my career development and progression over the past five years. Though initially a daunting task as I tried to persuade many of our colleagues to join hands with us to improve the ethical standard in the service, the unwavering support of leadership has made our task easier. The little wins we made are celebrated and prominence is given to the activities of the unit.

From a personal standpoint, my membership in the ACTU has inspired me to

research more on the corruption vulnerabilities in the service. And to advise management on the need to increase the anti-corruption campaign and to raise awareness on the ethical standards required of correctional officers. Luckily, this campaign has gained ground and the system for staff accountability has improved. The result of this is the emergence of the Nigeria Correction Service as the top compliant agency in ICPC's 2021 Ethics and Compliance Scorecard.

Importantly, my increased understanding of the negative impact of corruption as a member of the ACTU has greatly strengthened my resolve to be a patriot and to defend the integrity and rights of prison inmates. It further facilitated my

interaction with operatives from other ACA, LEAs and the development community. My recent promotion to lead the newly created External Cooperation Unit of the NCS is testament to integrity as a great virtue. Thanks to the ICPC and RoLAC for the exposure and empowerment.

M. Opara, Nigeria Correctional Service

The Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC) Programme is working to enhance good governance by strengthening the rule of law and curbing corruption. Our main objective is to back the government's justice and anti-corruption agenda by supporting the adoption and implementation of relevant legislation, policies and strategies in the sector. The six-year programme (2017–23) is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.

**Find out more**  
**Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption**  
**(RoLAC) Programme**  
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**[www.justice-security.ng](http://www.justice-security.ng)**

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