

# RULE OF LAW AND ANTI-CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

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 through supporting the adoption and implementation of relevant legislation, policies, and strategies in the sector.

We work at the federal level and in Lagos, Kano, Anambra, Edo, and Adamawa states.

#### Our work focuses on the following areas:

- Reforming the criminal justice system
- Ensuring women, children and people with disabilities have access to justice
- Improving the performance of anti-corruption agencies and how they work together
- Enhancing the voice of Nigerians in justice sector reforms and curbing corruption

The five-year programme (2017-22) is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.



Cross-section of members at the Network of Justice Sector Reform Teams meeting in Abia state. Source: RoLAC.

Funded by the  
European Union



Implemented by  
the British Council



## KEY ACTIVITIES

This newsletter highlights activities undertaken between January to March 2021.

Summary of key activities:

#### Criminal justice system:

- Awareness of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law improves police-community relations in Kano state
- RoLAC supports efforts to re-integrate ex-offenders into communities
- Lagos SCID records 700+ confessional statements
- Adamawa state inaugurates Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee

#### Access to justice:

- RoLAC commemorates International Women's Day
- RoLAC supports law enforcement agencies with IT equipment for the National Sexual Offenders' Database
- Launch of the 30<sup>th</sup> Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Nigeria

#### Curbing corruption:

- Training on the Crime Records Information Management System
- Anambra state Anti-Corruption Strategy unveiled and personnel trained

#### CSO and media engagement:

- 34 MDAs comply with the use of NOCOPO

#### Special feature:

- Sexual Assault Referral Centre data tells a worrying story

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

### ACJL awareness improves police-community relations in Kano state

The Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC) Programme trained police officers in Kano state on the Administration of Criminal Justice Law (ACJL).

The Fagge and Badawa communities in Kano state have been plagued by security concerns. As a result, the relationship between the police and the community has been impacted.

The police have been accused of unlawful arrests and detention of suspects, police brutality, and the extortion of confessional statements from suspects at the police stations.

Following the RoLAC training, there was a remarkable attitudinal change noticed in the police, particularly in its readiness to partner with the communities to fight crime and improve communication with community members.

The improved relationship has led to the police being more civil during arrests, interrogation and detention. Through the relationship between the Police Community Relations Committee and the police commands, it has become easier for community members to secure bail for themselves, friends, and relatives.

The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of the Fagge Police Division, CSP Abubakar Hama, leveraged on the training provided by RoLAC to hold a series of sensitisation meetings with communities. The modest impact of the reform initiatives by the DPO drew the attention of authorities in Kano and some international partners, such as the Nigeria Policing Programme (NPP) - supported by the Security and Justice Reform Programme and funded through the UK government's Conflict Security and Stabilisation Fund. The NPP noticed the positive impact of the division in this regard and paid a visit to the DPO to commend him on the community-friendly initiatives being implemented and encouraged that they be adopted as a national programme.

## RoLAC supports efforts to re-integrate ex-offenders into communities

The Federal Justice Sector Reform Coordinating Committee (FJSRCC) has committed to partner with Prisoner Rehabilitation and Welfare Action (PRAWA), a civil society organisation implementing the Yellow Ribbon Project. The project promotes the reform and reintegration of ex-offenders into society. It also aims to reduce the stigma against ex-offenders.

The partnership announcement was made at the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC) sponsored Network of Justice Sector Reform Team (JSRTs) conference held in Umuahia, Abia state in February 2021. Prof Mohammed Tabiu, Co-Chair of FJSRCC, commended PRAWA for its commitment to supporting reforms in the correctional system.

In her response, Dr Uju Agomoh, Executive Director of PRAWA, stated that she predicted a future where ex-offenders are properly reintegrated into society, under enabling laws and policies. She said that this can be achieved with assistance from relevant government agencies that are members of justice sector reform teams.

PRAWA partnered with RoLAC to support the adoption of the Nigerian Correctional Service Act 2019 (NCSA 2019) and is collaborating with the Nigeria Correctional Service to implement key provisions of the law.

The FJSRCC is the justice sector reform team that operates at the federal level. It consists of representatives from the Federal Ministry of Justice and other justice sector agencies.

**“I predict a future where ex-offenders are properly reintegrated into society, under enabling laws and policies.”**

Dr Uju Agomoh, Executive Director of PRAWA

## Lagos SCID records 700+ confessional statements

In 2019, RoLAC supported the Nigeria police in Lagos state to set up a Statement-Taking Room (STR) in the State Criminal Investigation Department (SCID). This was in line with section 9(3) of the Lagos State Administration of Criminal Justice Law (ACJL). Audio-visual recording facilities were provided to ensure an improvement in interrogation sessions and deter forced confessions.

Between July 2019 and December 2020, over 700 voluntary confessional statements were taken in the facility covering cases of murder, theft, robbery, forgery, defilement, among others. In February 2021, further support was provided by RoLAC to the police with the donation of 350 CDs, an external hard drive 2TB, a Flash drive, and an external DVD re-write. This provided much-needed materials for the storage and retrieval of statements. The new equipment enables copies of the CDs to be forwarded to the Directorate of Public Prosecution with every case filed to strengthen prosecution purposes.

## Adamawa state inaugurates the Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee

The Adamawa State Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee (ACJMC) has pledged its commitment to monitor the implementation of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law (ACJL) in the state. This pledge was made at the inauguration of members of the ACJMC in Yola. The committee has 11 members representing the Judiciary, the Office of the Attorney General, the Nigerian Police, the Nigerian Correctional Service, the Legal Aid Council, the National Human Rights Commission, the National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency, the Nigerian Bar Association, the Federation of International Women Lawyers, and Crystal Justice Initiative.

The ACJL replaced the Criminal Procedure Code Law and introduced several innovations including the inspection of places of detention by judicial officers; a remand protocol to reduce the prolonged detention of suspects; among others. The law mandates the ACJMC to monitor and ensure compliance with the law by all justice sector agencies and actors. It aims to ensure the speedy resolution of criminal matters and to reduce the congestion of criminal cases in courts and inmates in correctional centres.

**“I commend RoLAC for supporting Adamawa to take the bold step of being the first state in the Northeast to adopt the Administration of Criminal Justice Law. I also thank the European Union for its support for the criminal justice sector in Adamawa state.”**

Justice Ishaya Kida Banu, ACJMC Chairman and State Chief Judge

**“As members of the ACJMC, we pledge to discharge our duties with integrity.”**

Ishaq Abdullahi Jada, Acting Director Public of Prosecution, Adamawa state

# ACCESS TO JUSTICE

## RoLAC commemorates International Women's Day

International Women's Day is a global annual event celebrated on March 8<sup>th</sup> that honours women and inspires campaigns against gender inequality and biases. The theme for this year's International Women's Day was "Choose to Challenge".

RoLAC participated in several activities to commemorate the day including a press briefing by the Minister of Women's Affairs, Mrs. Pauline Tallen, to kick off activities. The event was attended by top government dignitaries, representatives of the European Union, UN agencies, international, and local NGOs. It provided a platform for Nigerian stakeholders to discuss topical issues affecting women in the country, including gender stereotypes, biases, harmful traditional practices, abduction of schoolgirls, and other barriers that hinder women from realising their full potentials.

Through the #HerStoryOurStoryNG campaign, RoLAC worked with groups to identify and put the spotlight on women who are supporting the rights of women in their communities. The aim was to bring to the fore women whose work and contributions have gone relatively unnoticed and whose influence and achievements at the community level should be recognised. A total of 14 Nigerian were featured in a video reel on the #HerStoryOurStoryNG social media platforms.

RoLAC and the European Union also promoted a social media campaign: "I choose to challenge". Women were invited to pledge to the challenge in a photo competition. The most creative submissions were acknowledged on the #HerStoryOurStoryNG social media platforms and prizes were awarded to the most popular photos. These activities generated 38,852 impressions on Instagram and Twitter and 47,142 impressions on Facebook.

**"Statistics from 2014 (when the Chibok Girls were kidnapped) to now, show that over 1,157 girls have been kidnapped. This is unbelievable. We must not stay silent anymore."**

Dame Pauline Tallen, Honourable Minister, Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs

**"It is exciting to be recognised by the British Council, the European Union and the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme. I thank @HerStoryOurStory for this privilege."**

@Daniel8\_28 (winner of the photo competition)



Nigerian women participate in the "I choose to challenge campaign". Source: #HerstoryOurstoryNG

## RoLAC supports law enforcement agencies with IT equipment for the National Sexual Offenders' Database

To strengthen the use and functionality of the National Sexual Offenders' Register, RoLAC donated laptops, fingerprint scanners, and webcams to the Nigeria Police Force Gender Unit (Force Intelligence Bureau), the Nigeria Police Force HQ, and the Nigeria Security & Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC). The equipment was presented at the meeting of High-Level Multi-Agency Team (HiMAT) on the implementation of the VAPP Act on 24 February 2021.

The National Sexual Offenders' Register was launched on 25 November 2019 to serve as a database of reported, arraigned, and convicted cases of sexual violations as defined by the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act 2015. Since its launch, some states such as Edo have linked their state Sexual Offenders' Register to the National Sexual Offenders' Register. Plans are currently underway to link more states.

## 30th Sexual Assault Referral Centre launched in Lagos state

On 31 March 2021, the First Lady of Lagos state, Dr. Mrs. Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu officially launched the new Idera Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). It was established with funding from the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC) Programme.

The Centre, like other SARCs across Nigeria, will provide counselling and forensic medical examination services to victims of sexual violence in a confidential manner at the facility within the General Hospital, Alimosho.

Many cases of sexual assault go unreported because victims are often reluctant to report due to limited facilities to provide victims with necessary medical assistance, trauma counselling, in addition to the social stigma associated with rape. The Idera Centre marks the 30th SARC set up in Nigeria to provide support for victims of sexual violence.

The First lady emphasised that the establishment of the centre confirms the commitment of the Lagos state government to stamp out the menace of sexual and gender-based violence. She enjoined everyone to increase advocacy efforts and speak against the menace of SGBV in society. The launch was attended by senior government officials, traditional rulers and representatives of civil society organisations.

**"Alimosho is not only one of the largest local government areas, it has the highest SGBV crime rates in the state. It is comforting that the SARC is being strategically and intentionally located there."**

Dr. (Mrs) Ibijoke Sanwo-Olu, First Lady of Lagos state



Stakeholders at the launch of the Idera SARC. Source: RoLAC

# CURBING CORRUPTION

## Training on the Crime Records Management System for anti-corruption agencies and law enforcement agencies

RoLAC supported the Nigeria Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) to train authorised officers of Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs) and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) on its newly developed Crime Records Information Management System (CRIMS).

The CRIMS is a mobile and web-based system with a back-end data analytics engine, used for collecting operational data from law enforcement and regulatory bodies, analysing the data, and sending real-time actionable intelligence to requesting agencies. It is meant to collate and link crime records and personal information from all competent authorities and manage this information in a secure data bank while being able to swiftly respond to requisition about an individual(s) suspected to have committed a crime.

With this system, operatives of ACAs and LEAs can now receive instant information about persons under investigation, even at the point of interrogation, without information on the identity and crime records of the subject lingering. The system will help fast-track resolution of criminal matters and enhance collaboration between policing agencies. The system is primarily deployed on mobile tablets to increase the speed of information sharing and requires no data connectivity to function.

Over 60 authorised officers from various ACAs, LEAs, and regulatory bodies were in attendance, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), the NFIU, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Tracking Against Persons (NAPTIP), the Department of State Services (DSS), the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), the Nigerian Army, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), the Office of the National Security Adviser (NSA), the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), the Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON), and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC).

## Anambra state Anti-Corruption Strategy unveiled and personnel trained

RoLAC supported the Anambra state government to develop an Anti-Corruption Strategy (ANSAC), which aims to establish an Anti-Corruption Agency in the state and institutionalise a results-based system to stop corruption. The strategy was approved by the State Executive Council and was publicly launched in February 2020.

Progress on the implementation of the strategy was delayed by the global COVID-19 pandemic until the end of February 2021. A week-long training was held for various personnel and enabled every department of government and civil society. The aim was to ensure that those involved in implementing the strategy understand their roles to entrench transparency and accountability in the state. 129 persons were trained, including 31 members of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) committee and 66 persons from various ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs).

The training was concluded by official unveiling of the Anambra state anti-corruption strategy, which also marks the commencement of implementation of the strategy.

**“RoLAC targeted our two critical challenges of ‘rule of law’ and ‘anti-corruption’. We hope that the structures and strategies introduced will give us a quantum leap in a positive direction.”**

Sir Harry Udu, Head of Service, Anambra State

# CSO AND MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

## 34 MDAs comply with Nigeria Open Contracting Portal – says ANEEJ

The Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ) has conducted an assessment on the compliance of federal government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) on the use of the Nigeria Open Contracting Portal (NOCOPO). From the assessment, 79 MDAs have failed to comply with the directive on the use of the portal issued by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation in 2018 (Ref. No. PROC/BPP/045/I/89 and Ref. No. 59780/S.5/C.2/11/6).

ANEEJ carried out the ranking of MDAs as part of the Civil Society Advocacy to Support Anti-corruption and Rule of Law in Nigeria (CASARN) project, supported by RoLAC.

A total of 113 (of 173) MDAs were assessed on the Nigeria Open Contracting Portal (NOCOPO) as of 20 August 2020. The ranking was designed to cover 2018 procurement records and 2019 procurement plans. From the assessment, the top-ranking MDAs are the Nigeria Police Academy, Kano; the Federal College of Education, Abeokuta; the University of Lagos; and the National Orthopaedic Hospital, Enugu.

The Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs assessed as ‘partially compliant’, as some information for the different procurement stages was published. However, 79 MDAs were assessed as ‘not compliant’, as they failed to publish procurement data on the portal, including the Infrastructure Regulatory Commission, the Aminu Kano University Teaching Hospital, among others.

The ranking was calculated between 15 July and 20 August 2020. It provides insights into how well MDAs have complied as evidenced by the number of projects and the quality of data provided across all stages of the contracting process.

**“The Nigerian Open Contracting Portal ranking is a big step towards improving the open contracting commitment.”**

Rev David Ugolor, Executive Director, the Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice

# SPECIAL FEATURE

## Sexual assault referral centre data tells a worrying story

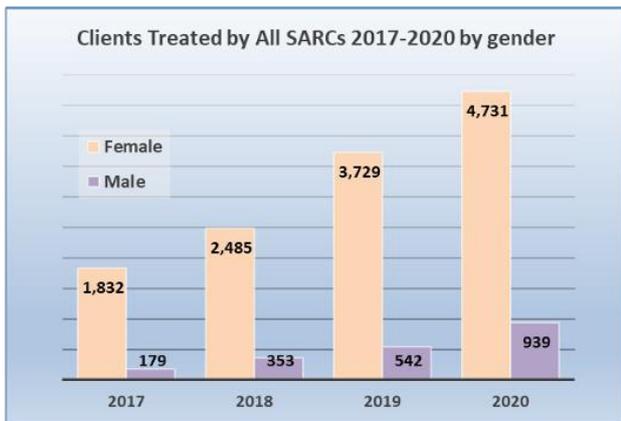
The first Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) opened in 2013 in Lagos state. By the end of 2020, there were twenty-nine SARCs operating across Nigeria, many of which were established with British Council support.

The programme has analysed data from 26 of these SARCs from 2017-2020. The results highlight some worrying trends. Over the four years, a total of 14,790 survivors of sexual assault have sought assistance from a SARC, the majority of whom are females.

The large difference between male and female clients of the SARC confirms that women are at greater risk of sexual violence than men.

Another worrying trend is the number of sexual violence victims who are under 18 years of age. In the last four years, the number of SARC clients who are less than 18 years increased from 416 in 2017 to 1,544 in 2020.

The volume of cases and the continuing upward spiral of numbers vividly demonstrates that sexual violence is at epidemic levels, especially as it is widely believed that less than 10% of cases are reported. SARCs have become an established part of the health, justice and social support landscape, providing free medical treatment and counselling to victims of sexual violence. State governments across Nigeria should be encouraged to establish more SARCs and more importantly, fund these SARCs to provide needed services to the most vulnerable in society.



Source: Managing Conflict in Nigeria, SARC client data.

## FACTS & FIGURES:

Number of direct beneficiaries  
(July 2017 – December 2020)

Justice reforms

18,840

Access to justice

24,033

Curbing corruption

11,834

CSO & media

60,538

## OTHER ACTIVITIES COMPLETED WITHIN THE PERIOD

- Training for members of Nigerian Bar Association (Adamawa and Kano branches) on the development and implementation of the Police Duty Solicitor Scheme
- Legal Aid Council of Nigeria validation workshop on draft curriculum for certificate course in paralegal service in tertiary institutions
- Training of CSOs, MDAs and contractors on the use of the Nigeria Open Contracting Portal
- Capacity building for CSOs on the 2019 Extractive industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) standards and the simplification of the Nigeria EITI audit reports

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- Validation meetings on the ACJL Practitioners' survey reports in the F.C.T. and Lagos
- Virtual meeting of Directors of Public Prosecutions on plea bargaining in focal states
- Service providers consultative meeting to develop an annual report on the implementation of the VAPP Act
- ANEEJ's stakeholders meeting on the revised Edo State Public Procurement Law

### Find out more

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