

# 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 four-year programme (2017-21) is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.



Stakeholders at the launch of the statement taking rooms for the Nigeria Police Force. Source: RoLAC

## KEY ACTIVITIES

This newsletter highlights activities undertaken between July to September 2019.

Summary of key activities:

### Criminal justice system:

- Launch of statement taking rooms in the FCT and Lagos state
- Strengthening human rights observances in Anambra and Adamawa states
- Training of trainers workshop for area commanders and divisional police officers in Edo state

### Access to justice:

- Launch of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre – Ntasi Centre – in Anambra state
- RoLAC and the National Policing Programme collaborate with the Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team to build the capacity of religious leaders in responding to domestic violence
- Training on sexual and gender-based violence for FSU police officers in Lagos state

### Curbing corruption:

- Review of the codes of conduct for public officials
- Application of the ethics and compliance scorecard by ICPC
- Improving the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of public procurement processes in Edo state

### CSO and media engagement:

- Training for Adamawa state CSOs and media on provisions of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law
- Commemoration of international sign language day
- Awareness lectures on sexual and gender-based violence

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

RoLAC sets up statement taking rooms for the Nigeria Police Force in the FCT and Lagos

The Nigeria Police Force commands in Lagos state and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) launched statement taking room facilities supported by RoLAC.

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In Lagos state, the facility consists of two statement taking rooms and an observation room at the State Criminal and Investigation Department in Panti. In the FCT, a statement taking room and an observation room was created in the Wuse Zone 3 police station.

The launch was held in Lagos state on 9 July 2019 and was attended by the State Commissioner of Police, the Director Public Prosecution, senior police officers, and other stakeholders. The launch event in FCT was attended by over 153 persons including the Commissioner of Police, who was represented by Mr Sola Okediji, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) in charge of administration.

Participants at both events acknowledged that a key challenge facing the administration of criminal justice in Nigeria is a lack of forensic skills by police and other law enforcement officers. This has contributed to the practice of torture and intimidation of criminal suspects as a means of extracting confessional statements to be used as evidence in courts. When these cases go to trial, many suspects disown the statements resulting in courts ordering for trials within trials to determine the voluntariness of the statements. This leads to long trials and delays in criminal justice administration, and high numbers of Awaiting Trial Persons (ATPs) on remand in prisons across the country.

To address this problem, the Administration of Criminal Justice Act contain provisions requiring investigators to record confessional statements of suspects by video. However, law enforcement agencies lack the infrastructure needed to comply with these provisions.

The statement taking rooms will enable the police to conduct and document interviews and confessional statements that are admissible in court and meet international human rights standards.

A total of 156 police officers (119 in the FCT and 37 in Lagos) were trained on investigation, interviewing, and the use of the statement taking facility. The training acquainted investigation police officers with modern policing techniques of recording confessional statement on video and for use as evidence in court.

**‘The statement taking rooms will ease the work of the courts by reducing the number of instances where suspects deny making confessional statements tendered by the prosecution as a result of confessions obtained under duress.’**

Mrs Akanni Idayat, Chief Magistrate 1, Wuse Zone 2 Senior Magistrates’ Court

## Strengthening human rights by police officers in Anambra and Adamawa

The Administration of Criminal Justice Law (ACJL) was passed in 2010 in Anambra state; and in 2018 in Adamawa state. To address current and future hindrances to smooth application of the law, RoLAC conducted training on the ACJL for Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) and Divisional Crime Officers (DCOs) in Anambra and Adamawa states.

A 2018 survey conducted in Anambra state by RoLAC showed low levels of understanding and compliance. Also, the Anambra State Justice Sector Reform Team - the platform responsible for coordinating and monitoring implementation of justice sector reforms in the state - identified the need to train Police DPOs and DCOs on aspects of the ACJL that strengthen safeguards for human rights and due process.

In Anambra state, RoLAC organized an eight-day workshop/training from 3-20 September 2019 for 98 Divisional Police Officers and District Crime Officers of the Anambra State Police Command. The aim was to sensitize the officers on the provisions of the law and improve compliance related to human rights.

Participants committed to adhere to the provisions of the law, respect the rights of suspects, and improve the treatment of suspects. They requested a step-down training to all officers of the command to strengthen compliance on human rights observances.

In Adamawa state, 45 senior police officers were trained with RoLAC support from 25-6 September 2019. Two Deputy Commissioners of Police, an Assistant Commissioner of Police, and all the divisional officers in the State attended the training.

The Commissioner of Police, A.A. Madaki, mandated all Divisional Police Officers in the state to ensure that the provisions of the ACJ Law are always complied with from the point of arrest to arraignment.



Commissioner of Police, Adamawa state, addressing officers at the training. Source: RoLAC

**‘The command is very lucky to have the support of RoLAC in making sure that there is paradigm shift from the traditional way of enforcing criminal laws to modern ways that match global standards. I challenge us to make a positive impact on the entire state by using the new acquired techniques in discharging your duties.’**

CP Audu. A. Madaki, Commissioner of Police, Adamawa state

## Training of trainers for senior police officers on the Administration of Criminal Justice Law in Edo state

ROLAC, in collaboration with the Nigeria Police Force (Edo State Police Command) and the Edo State Justice Reform Team (JSRT) trained senior police officers - including 15 Area Commanders and 50 Divisional Police Officers - on the key provisions of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law of Edo State, 2016 (ACJL), relating to investigations and prosecutions.

The ACJL, passed into law in 2018 (although officially cited as a 2016 law), closely mirrors the innovations of the federal Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015. Some deviations account for local circumstances such as the retention of lay police prosecutors due to the volume of criminal cases in the state.

Given the similarities between the legislation at federal and state levels, implementation of the policing provisions of the ACJL should have been seamless. However, there has been little progress in its implementation. Working closely with the Edo state Commissioner of Police, and the state JRT, RoLAC identified a lack of awareness of the law among officers.

The Commissioner of Police, Danmalam Mohammed, encouraged officers to fully participate in the training and to share the information learned with officers in their respective stations. Fifty-five officers committed to holding step-down trainings within two months of the training. Official copies of the ACJL - printed by RoLAC - were distributed to officers to support the cascading of information.

By the end of September 2019, 189 senior police officers (including the 88 DCOs and prosecutors) have new or increased knowledge of the key provisions of the law. This improved capacity will enhance respect for the rights of suspects. The aim is that through improved adherence to due process and the rule of law, public confidence in the police will improve.

## ACCESS TO JUSTICE

### SARC launched in Anambra state

As part of efforts to enhance access to justice for women, children and persons with disabilities, RoLAC supported the establishment of a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) - the Ntasi Centre - in the Enugu-Ukwu General Hospital in Anambra state. The centre received its first set of victims on the day of the launch.

Police records and analysis by CSO partners indicate that many parts of the state record high numbers of sexual offences against women and children. Unfortunately, many of these victims do not know how to report sexual offences and where to turn to for support.

On 17 September 2019, the Ntasi Centre was launched. It is the culmination of efforts initiated in May 2018, including the identification of a suitable location and hospital (the Enugu-Ukwu General Hospital); the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the state Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Women Affairs and Children Affairs; the renovation, renovating, furnishing and equipping of the centre; and the training of 40 staff (12 female and male medical doctors, 12 female and male nurses, 12 female and male counsellors, two lawyers and two sign language interpreters).

The Ntasi Centre will provide immediate medical assistance to victims of sexual assault. It will also conduct structured medical forensic examinations that can be used in prosecuting perpetrators of sexual based crimes.

A number of structures have been put in place to support the centre, including the SARC Steering Committee comprising of representatives from the State Ministries of Health; Justice and Women and Children Affairs, which will supervise the operations; and the Sexual and Gender Based Violence Response Team and the VAPP Implementation Coordination Committee have been tasked with sensitizing the public on sexual based violence and promote the SARC within the state.



The Commissioner for Health, Dr Vincent Okpala and the National Programme Manager of RoLAC, Mr Danladi Plang officially open the Ntasi Centre. Source: Anambra Broadcasting Services

**'We thank RoLAC for restoring fundamental human rights in the state and bringing succour to victims of sexual assault. We promise to keep the centre functioning for efficient service delivery.'**

Dr Willie Obiano, Governor, Anambra state

## Capacity building for religious leaders to respond to domestic violence

In August 2019, RoLAC and the Nigeria Policing Programme (NPP) in collaboration with the Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team (DSVRT) of Lagos state trained religious leaders to respond to cases of sexual and gender-based violence and the Domestic Violence Law (DVL). Over 96 representatives participated in the training from the Nasrul-lahi-li Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Ahmadiyya Movement in Nigeria, and Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria.

Religious institutions are uniquely positioned to prevent domestic and gender-based violence as its teachings convey values and belief systems to their members. In addition, members often have direct support or counselling relationships with these religious leaders.

Religion also can be misused to excuse or condone abusive behaviour. For instance, statistics from the DSVRT reveal that at least 80% of clients that report matrimonial abuses are compelled to remain in these abusive relationships due to counselling received from religious leaders. In their bid to preserve the institution of marriage, religious leaders have failed to deal with domestic and gender-based violence as a crime, leaving many of their members to have repeat experiences of violence.

The training also highlighted best practices for responding to DVL complaints. Following the training, it is expected that these leaders have improved their capacity as first responders and will contribute to making access to justice for DVL victims a reality.

**‘The need to engage religious leaders in curbing domestic violence cannot be overemphasised because we hold influential position of authority and are opinion leaders in the community. There is no gainsaying that most of the perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence live with us in our community and worship with us in our mosques.’**

Imam Lukman

## Training on sexual and gender-based violence for family support unit police officers in Lagos state

A training on handling sexual and gender-based violence was organized for officers of the Nigeria Police Force in collaboration with RoLAC and the Nigeria Policing Programme (NPP). The training took place at the Nigeria Police Training School in three batches in August and September 2019.

The facilitators were drawn from the Mirabel Centre, the Nigeria Police Force (especially the Family Support Units) and the Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team.

The training covered investigating sexual and gender-based offences (domestic violence, sexual violence); initial response by the police; stages of investigating a crime scene; interpretation of forensic medical reports; and psychosocial issues in investigating SGVB.

Fifty-five participants attended the training programme and were drawn from the following police divisions in Lagos - Adeniji Adele, Ajah, Alakuko, Badagry, Festac, Ikeja, Ikotun, Ilupeju, Isokoko, Iju, Isolo, Ketu, Ikorodu, Igbogbo, Gender Desk, Orile, and the Mirabel Centre.

**‘As police officers, when receiving an allegation of any sexual assault (rape and defilement), you should believe what the victim is telling you unless your subsequent investigation tells you otherwise. It is unprofessional for a police officer to assume anything or become judgmental. He/she must painstakingly carry out a thorough and unbiased investigation to come out with the facts of the case reported.’**

Emegwamor Kenneth, Facilitator



# CURBING CORRUPTION

## Review of the Code of Conduct for public officials

RoLAC is supporting the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) review its codes for public officers. The codes of conduct are a set of ethical guidelines and basic professional standards that public officials are expected to honour, observe and apply in their roles within Nigeria's public service.

The CCB is the institution responsible for ensuring that ethical standards and values are adhered to by public officials and anyone who provides services to citizens on behalf of the Nigerian government. It is also responsible for enforcing sanctions when these ethical standards are breached or violated.

A meeting organised by RoLAC on 20-21 August 2019 in Abuja was the first of many steps to be taken in reviewing and strengthening the current set of codes that have not been reviewed since 1999.

Honourable Justice Joseph Oyewole, Justice of the Court of Appeal, noted that it is important that the CCB ensures that violation of ethical standards is sanctioned, and by doing this, the CCB would have solved more than half of the corruption problems in Nigeria.

The Chairman of the CCB, represented by Barrister Murtala Aliyu Kankiya, stated, 'If we successfully review the codes and ensure they are adhered to, I will believe that we are serious about addressing the problem of corruption.'

The Chairman charged staff to take the exercise seriously and ensure that they give honest feedback when reviewing the codes of conduct. He said the revised codes will serve as a tool in strengthening the fight against corruption.



Participants at the Code of Conduct Bureau training for public officials. Source: RoLAC

**'We will give RoLAC all the support it requires in helping us build the capacity of staff and strengthen our process for the purpose of addressing issues of corruption in Nigeria.'**

Barrister Murtala Aluyu Kankiya, CCB Board Member

## Improving the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of public procurement processes in Edo state

As part of its support to the Edo State Public Procurement Agency (EDPPA) to improve transparency, accountability, and integrity in the procurement procedures in Edo state, RoLAC worked with the EDPPA management to develop an Audit Template for Procurement Officers and Codes of Conduct for the key groups involved in procurement activities in Edo state.

These corruption-prevention tools were officially issued by the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the EDPPA, on 24 September 2019 (Audit Template) and 25 September 2019 (Codes of Conduct) further to his powers under the Edo State Public Procurement Law, 2012.

The legally binding tools were deployed to over 70 procurement officers across MDAs and the 18 local government areas of Edo state at a training workshop held on 26-28 September 2019 with support from RoLAC.

Mr Idogun expressed that this process of review using a uniform and all-encompassing template across MDAs and local governments is critical to entrenching the right procurement culture in the state.

The purpose of the comprehensive Audit Template is to track activities from project conception, to procurement processes, and finally to completion.

The specific role of the Codes of Conduct is to guide all stakeholders in the public procurement process in Edo state on the irreducible minimal behaviour legally required of them. The Codes of Conduct issued are:

- The Code of Conduct for Edo State Government Public Officers and Personnel Involved with Public Procurement;
- The Qualifications and Code of Conduct for Public Procurement Observer Groups in Edo State; and
- The Code of Conduct for Edo State Government Contractors, Suppliers and Service Providers.

With the deployment of the tools and the training of procurement officers, the EDPPA is deepening procurement reforms and enhancing its sustainability.

**'I commend RoLAC for collaborating with the Edo state government in bringing to fruition the development and deployment of the audit template. It has been on the state's wish-list for a while.'**<sup>1</sup>

Mr Henry Idogun, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the EDPPA

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/10/obasekis-reforms-edo-govt-partners-anti-corruption-initiative-to-enhance-accountability/>

## CSO & MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

### Training for CSOs and the media on the Administration of Criminal Justice Law in Adamawa state

To improve the capacity of media and civil society organisations (CSOs) in monitoring the implementation of the Administration of Criminal Justice Law (ACJL), RoLAC supported the training of 35 media representatives and CSOs in Yola from 19-21 August 2019.

The training aimed to build the capacity of the participants on the provisions of the ACJL and enable representatives from CSOs and the media to identify opportunities for collaboration with relevant government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs).

Following the training, the CSO and media representatives held a roundtable discussion with 20 criminal justice decision makers and providers to engage the MDAs on the implementation of the law in the state. The roundtable enabled CSOs, media and government agencies identify areas of collaboration to enable implementation of the ACJ Law.

Adamawa state now has trained CSOs and media that will work to ensure the criminal justice system promotes efficient management of criminal justice institutions, speedy dispensation of justice, protection of society, suspect, defendant, and the victim.

### Raising awareness about sexual and gender-based violence for communities in Adamawa

As part of efforts to increase access to justice for women and children, the Federation of International Female Lawyers, Adamawa State branch with support from RoLAC, sensitized women and children on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and the services of the Adamawa Hope Centre, a sexual assault referral centre in Yola.

The lectures, held from 25-26 September 2019, aimed to create awareness on how the society can prevent, mitigate and report incidences of SGBV. Over 400 people attended from Yola-North, Yola-South, students from Federal Government Girls' College Yola; Government Girls' Secondary School, Yola; General Murtala Muhammed College, Jimeta; Capital Day Secondary School, Yola; and Aliyu Mustapha College, Yola.

**'We must sincerely thank RoLAC for organising this awareness lecture. It has come at the right time. Incidences of rape are happening in the community, but some people are left with little or no knowledge of what to do next. We shall use what we heard from the lectures to save the vulnerable.'**

Mrs Fatima Abubakar, Guidance and Counsellor, Government Girls' Secondary School, Yola

### Commemorating the International Day of Sign Languages

In 2017, the UN General Assembly declared September 23 as the International Day of Sign Languages, to raise awareness about sign languages and strengthen the related status.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognises and promotes the use of sign languages. It suggests that sign languages are equal in status to spoken languages and obligates state parties to facilitate the learning of sign language and promote the linguistic identity of the deaf community.

RoLAC, in recognition of the importance of sign language as a major tool in advancing access to justice for the deaf people and the realisation of their human rights, marked the 2019 International Day of Sign Languages in collaboration with the Nigeria National Association of the Deaf and the National Human Rights Commission.

The highlight of the event was a communique issued by the Nigeria National Association of the Deaf demanding for the implementation of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2019.



Civil society representative addressing the press. Source: Deaf Resource Centre

**'Sign language as an official language is capital for the inclusion of deaf people in implementing and achieving the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 2030 Agenda to make the motto *Nothing About Us Without Us* to *Leave No One Behind* become a reality.'**

Nigeria National Association of the Deaf

## FACTS & FIGURES:

July 2017-  
September 2019

No. of anti-corruption agency staff trained on prosecutions & investigation techniques

**429**

No. of justice sector staff trained on the ACLJ

**1,356**

No. of SARC clients in focal states

**5,278**

Total number of programme beneficiaries

**17,425**

## OTHER ACTIVITIES COMPLETED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

- Retreat for the national bar association branches in the FCT (Unity Bar, Bwari Bar and Gwagwalada) on the role of the bar in the implementation of the administration of criminal justice act 2015
- Content management system training for staff of the Anambra judiciary
- Stakeholder roundtable to review the status of the Proceeds of Crime Act Bill and the development of advocacy strategies
- Training of the Adamawa state anti-corruption and transparency unit officers

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- Bilateral meeting between prosecutors and judicial officers in Edo state
- Training on plea bargaining for magistrates in Edo state
- Validation of baseline on access to justice for persons with mental disabilities in Anambra, Lagos and Kano
- National child rights implementation committee meeting
- Ethics training for staff of anti-corruption agencies
- Training of MDAs procurement officers on the use/application of the National Open Contracting Portal
- Inauguration of the child protection network (Amuwo Odofin chapter)
- Support to the joint national association of persons with disabilities (PWD) on advocacy for the implementation of key provisions of the PWD law in Kano state

### Find out more

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