YouthCOPEE

Youth Collective Action for Political and Electoral Engagement

Project Activity Report



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The PowerShift for Democracy Project was implemented to empower young people with the knowledge, skills, and platforms necessary to champion digital rights, civic engagement, democratic participation, and social inclusion within their communities. Supported through the Yiaga Africa Incubator Grant, the project combined capacity-building, youth-led advocacy, media engagement, public sensitization, and stakeholder dialogue to promote responsible civic participation and digital citizenship.

The project commenced with a two-day Digital Rights and Civic Tech Bootcamp held in March 2026, where 47 young leaders were trained on digital rights, civic space, protest law, cyber hygiene, storytelling for advocacy, and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for civic engagement. Beyond building knowledge, the bootcamp provided participants with practical opportunities to co-create advocacy ideas addressing real social and civic challenges within their communities.

Following a competitive review process, two participant groups were selected and supported to implement their advocacy concepts. The first group launched the "Reclaim Your Voice" campaign, addressing youth voter apathy through radio engagements and public sensitization activities which happened in the month of April 2026. The second group implemented an inclusion-focused advocacy project promoting equal participation and representation of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in society and governance processes which also happened in April 2026.

The project culminated with the PowerShift Symposium held on 29th April 2026. The symposium brought together youth leaders, civil society organizations, social influencers, media practitioners, poets, spoken-word artists, and civic actors to reflect on lessons learned, share implementation experiences, and discuss how digital platforms can be leveraged responsibly to promote civic engagement and social change.

Through community outreach, radio discussions, digital storytelling, and stakeholder engagement, the project successfully transitioned participants from learning to action, strengthened youth leadership, amplified civic awareness messages, and contributed to broader conversations on digital rights and democratic participation.



ACTIVITY

YOUTHCOPEE CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

The YouthCOPEE Capacity Building Workshop represented the foundation upon which the entire project was built. Conducted on 16th–17th March 2026 in Bauchi State, the workshop was designed to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, confidence, and networks required to become active participants in democratic governance and community development.

The project team launched an open call for applications targeting young civic actors, students, community organizers, emerging leaders, and youth advocates across Bauchi State. The response demonstrated a strong demand for civic learning opportunities, with 121 applications received from young people seeking to strengthen their engagement in governance and democratic processes. Following a competitive selection process, **60 participants** were selected, while **54 successfully completed the workshop.**

The workshop was developed in response to growing concerns around youth political apathy, shrinking civic spaces, limited understanding of democratic rights, and the increasing disconnect between young citizens and governance processes. It sought to address these challenges by providing participants with practical tools and knowledge that would enable them to engage constructively with democratic institutions and influence positive change within their communities.



Over two intensive days, participants engaged in interactive sessions covering:

- Understanding Civic Space and Democratic Participation
- Community Organizing and Grassroots Mobilization
- Digital Rights and Online Civic Engagement
- Leadership, Accountability, and Active Citizenship
- Protest Rights and Responsible Civic Action
- Advocacy Campaign Design and Strategic Communication
- Electoral Participation and Electoral Reform
- Civic Innovation and Youth-Led Action

The workshop adopted a highly participatory methodology that moved beyond traditional classroom learning. Through group discussions, simulations, reflection exercises, practical strategy sessions, and collaborative problem-solving activities, participants were encouraged to critically examine governance challenges affecting their communities and identify practical solutions.

A particularly transformative aspect of the training was the civic innovation laboratory, where participants worked in groups to develop community-based civic action initiatives. These sessions challenged participants to move beyond theoretical understanding and design practical interventions capable of addressing voter apathy, civic disengagement, accountability deficits, and governance challenges within their local contexts.

Pre- and post-training assessments demonstrated significant improvements in participants' understanding of civic rights, democratic participation, advocacy strategies, and community organizing. Participants reported increased confidence in their ability to engage public institutions, mobilize citizens, organize campaigns, and advocate for accountability.

Most importantly, the workshop shifted participants from being passive observers of governance to active civic actors capable of initiating and leading change within their communities.

Outcomes:

54+ Youth Leaders
trained and equipped with civic engagement skills.

Democratic Participation.
Increased understanding of democratic participation and governance processes.

Digital Rights
Improved knowledge of digital rights, protest rights, and civic freedoms.

Enhanced advocacy, leadership, and community mobilization skills.

Creation of three youth-led civic action initiatives.

Establishment of a foundation for sustained youth civic engagement in Bauchi State.





2 ACTIVITY

YOUTH-LED CIVIC ACTION INITIATIVE:

1 HOOPS & VOICES FOR CIVIC ACTION

Using Sports and Entertainment to Promote Democratic Participation

Following the workshop, participants were challenged to apply their learning through community-led interventions. One of the most innovative initiatives developed was "Hoops & Voices for Civic Action," implemented by the Northern Youth Civic Action Network (NYCAN) on 17 April 2026.

Recognizing that many young people often disengage from conventional civic education activities, the group utilized sports and entertainment as entry points for democratic engagement. The initiative combined a community basketball competition, music performances, civic discussions, and audience engagement activities to create a unique platform for civic learning.

The event attracted young people from Gwallameji Community and surrounding areas and created opportunities for participants to discuss issues related to voter registration, political participation, responsible citizenship, and youth leadership.

Throughout the event, civic education messages were integrated into entertainment activities, making governance discussions more accessible and relatable to participants. Facilitators engaged attendees in conversations around why elections matter, the role of young people in shaping governance outcomes, and how citizens can influence public decision-making beyond election periods. By embedding civic learning within recreational activities, the initiative successfully demonstrated that democratic education can be delivered through innovative and youth-friendly approaches.

Key Outcomes:

250+
young people reached.

Increased awareness of voter education and electoral participation.

Encouraged youth engagement in governance discussions.

Demonstrated innovative approaches to civic education.

Strengthened youth ownership of democratic participation initiatives.



2 Youth-Led Civic Action Initiative | Operation My Vote Counts

Addressing Voter Apathy Through Community Mobilization

On 26 April 2026, members of the My Vote My Future Group implemented "Operation My Vote Counts," a large-scale voter education campaign targeting residents of Yelwa Community and Yelwa Tudu Market.

The initiative was designed to address one of the most persistent challenges affecting democratic participation in Nigeria: voter apathy. Through direct engagement with traders, transport workers, women, students, and community members, the team sought to promote the importance of electoral participation and strengthen public understanding of the role citizens play in democratic governance.

The market environment provided a strategic platform for engaging diverse groups of citizens who may not ordinarily participate in formal civic education programmes. Volunteers conducted awareness sessions, distributed information materials, facilitated discussions, and collected feedback from community members regarding their perceptions of elections and governance.

Many participants expressed frustration with governance outcomes but acknowledged that disengagement from elections often contributed to weak accountability. Discussions therefore focused on empowering citizens to see voting not merely as a civic obligation but as a tool for influencing leadership and demanding accountability.

The initiative generated significant public interest and stimulated conversations around electoral participation, responsible citizenship, and democratic accountability.



Key Outcomes:

500+
citizens reached.

Increased awareness of voter rights and electoral participation.

Encouraged greater civic responsibility among community members.

Improved understanding of the relationship between voting and accountability.

Strengthened confidence among youth leaders to organize community-based advocacy initiatives.

2 Youth-Led Civic Action Initiative 3 Promoting Patriotism and Combating Corruption Through Youth Engagement

Strengthening Integrity and Accountability at the Community Level

On 28 April 2026, the Voter Awareness Squad implemented a community sensitization campaign at Wunti Market focused on promoting patriotism, accountability, and anti-corruption values.

The initiative responded to growing concerns regarding the normalization of corruption and declining civic responsibility among citizens. Participants recognized that corruption remains one of the most significant barriers to development and that changing public attitudes requires continuous community engagement and awareness. Using direct outreach, public sensitization, awareness materials, and community dialogue, volunteers engaged traders, youth groups, women, persons with disabilities, and community members on the consequences of corruption and the importance of ethical leadership.

The campaign emphasized that leadership positions should be viewed as opportunities for service rather than personal enrichment. Participants were encouraged to promote integrity in their daily activities and reject practices that undermine transparency, accountability, and national development.

The initiative generated meaningful conversations around citizenship, patriotism, and the role of ordinary citizens in combating corruption.



Key Outcomes:

- **700+** community members reached.
- Increased awareness of accountability and anti-corruption principles.
- Encouraged community dialogue on ethical leadership.
- Strengthened public understanding of responsible citizenship.
- Promoted patriotism and civic responsibility among participants.



3 ACTIVITY

YOUTHCOPEE DIALOGUE FORUM

From Awareness to Action: mobilizing youth for electoral participation and accountability.

The YouthCOPEE Dialogue Forum, held on 30 April 2026, served as the culminating activity of the project and brought together 48 participants alongside representatives of 15 civil society organizations, including members of the Bauchi State Civil Society Network.

The forum was designed to consolidate learning from previous project activities, strengthen collaboration among civic actors, and explore pathways for sustaining youth engagement beyond the project period.

The keynote presentation, "From awareness to action," delivered by Mr. Nicholas Afeso, challenged participants to move beyond social media commentary and become active contributors to social change within their communities. Participants reflected on how digital engagement can be transformed into practical civic action capable of addressing governance challenges.

A second session facilitated by Mr. Ahmed Abubakar explored the power of social media as a tool for civic education, accountability, citizen mobilization, and democratic participation.

The dialogue forum also provided participants with opportunities to share experiences from their civic action initiatives, discuss challenges, identify collaboration opportunities, and strengthen relationships with civil society organizations operating within Bauchi State.

The event concluded with a collective commitment to continue promoting democratic participation, accountability, and youth leadership through collaborative action and civic engagement.

Key Outcomes:

48+ participants engaged in policy and civic dialogue.

15 civil society organizations strengthened collaboration with youth leaders.

Increased awareness of the relationship between online activism and real-world civic engagement.

Strengthened civic networks and partnerships.

Created pathways for continued youth engagement beyond the project lifecycle.



Overall Impact



- The most significant achievement of YouthCOPEE was its success in transforming civic awareness into civic action.
- Rather than ending with a training workshop, the project created a complete civic engagement ecosystem through which participants acquired knowledge, applied that knowledge in their communities, and connected with broader civic networks capable of sustaining their engagement through virtual platforms.
- The project directly empowered

54 YOUNG CIVIC ACTORS

1500+ CITIZENS reached through community-based awareness campaigns,voter education activities, anti-corruptioninitiatives, and civic dialogues.

Overall Impact

- Participants emerged from the project with stronger leadership skills, improved advocacy capacities, enhanced confidence, and practical experience in organizing community actions from the workshop assessments and and also the civic events.
- Many participants who initially viewed governance as the responsibility of elected officials came to recognize their own roles as active citizens capable of influencing decision-making processes and promoting accountability.

The project also contributed to strengthening relationships between youth leaders and civil society organizations, creating opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and sustained civic engagement beyond the project period as we were able to link the trained youths to youth led organizations and start ups in Bauchi for continued engagements and volunteering opportunities.

Most importantly, YouthCOPEE demonstrated that when young people are provided with knowledge, platforms, and opportunities for action, they can become powerful agents of democratic change, community development, and accountable governance.

RESULTS

OUTPUT AND OUTCOMES

OUTPUTS ACHIEVED:

1. **121** applications received from young people interested in civic engagement and democratic participation.
2. **54** youth leaders Trained on civic rights, digital rights, electoral participation, advocacy, and community organizing.
3. Supported the design and implementation of three youth-led civic action initiatives on the project instead of the proposed two.
4. **2,000+** citizens reached through voter education, civic awareness, accountability, and anti-corruption campaigns.
5. Convened a YouthCOPEE Dialogue Forum with 48 participants.
6. **15** Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engaged in discussions on youth participation and democratic governance.
7. Established a functional network of young civic actors for continued collaboration and engagement.

OUTPUT AND OUTCOMES

KEY OUTCOMES



SUSTAINABILITY

- Participants gained practical skills that can be applied in future civic and community initiatives.
- A network of youth civic actors was established to promote ongoing collaboration and peer learning.
- Participants demonstrated the capacity to independently organize and implement civic actions.
- Partnerships formed with CSOs provide opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and future engagement.
- The project created a pool of young civic leaders committed to promoting democratic values and active citizenship.

RISKS AND CHALLENGES

During the implementation period, the project encountered a number of challenges that affected activity timelines and execution. However, mitigation measures were adopted to ensure successful delivery of project objectives.

- Delay in the disbursement of the second tranche of funding, which affected the timely implementation of the youth-led civic action initiatives and required adjustments to the planned activity schedule.
- Limited availability of some participants and volunteers due to academic, work, and personal commitments, which posed coordination challenges during the planning and implementation of civic action activities.
- Short implementation timeframe between the capacity-building workshop and the civic action activities, which limited opportunities for extended mentorship, follow-up support, and wider community outreach





LESSONS LEARNED

- Young people are more likely to engage in democratic and governance issues when learning approaches are practical, participatory, and linked to real community challenges.
- Combining capacity-building with youth-led civic action significantly increases knowledge retention, leadership development, and community impact.
- Community-based platforms such as sports events, market outreaches, and dialogue forums are effective channels for promoting civic education and citizen engagement.
- Providing young people with ownership of project activities enhances commitment, innovation, and their ability to independently lead civic initiatives.
- Strong collaboration between youth groups and civil society organizations creates opportunities for mentorship, networking, and sustained civic engagement beyond the project period.
- Sustainable civic participation requires a combination of online advocacy and offline community action to translate awareness into meaningful social impact.



EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- The success of the YouthCOPEE project presents an opportunity to scale the initiative by developing proposals and securing additional funding from donors and development partners interested in youth leadership, democratic governance, civic engagement, and accountability programming.
- The project has created a strong network of young civic leaders that can be further strengthened through the establishment of a virtual learning and networking platform, enabling continuous engagement, peer learning, mentorship, resource sharing, and collaboration on future civic initiatives.
- The partnerships established with civil ociety organizations and key stakeholders provide opportunities for future joint advocacy campaigns, community engagement activities, and expanded civic participation programmes across Bauchi State and beyond

SUCCESS STORIES

EMPOWERED YOUNG PEOPLE
to move from civic learning to community action.

REACHED 1,500+ CITIZENS
through voter education, accountability, and active citizenship campaigns.

INCREASED PUBLIC AWARENESS
of democratic participation and reduced voter apathy through community outreach.

STRENGTHENED COLLABORATION
between youth leaders and civil society organizations, fostering continued civic engagement and advocacy.





MEET THE IMPLEMENTING TEAM



MOSES KUSKO



MUSA INUSA TURAKI



KAMAT CYNTHIA

DIVE INTO THE HIGHLIGHTS



















THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE CHANGE.

Thank you

Get in Touch

WANT TO SPEAK WITH US?

Contact:

07034912246, 08137076501

thamaniinitiative5@gmail.com

ECWA 3 Street, House 5 behind, Launi Filling station, Dass-Yelwa Road Bauchi state.