



# **2ND IMPACT REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NIGERIA NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON YOUTH PEACE AND SECURITY**

**SEPTEMBER 2024**

**SUPPORTED BY**



## **About the NCYPS**

The Nigeria Coalition on Youth Peace and Security (NCYPS) is a multi-stakeholder movement of over 1000 organizations comprising of the Nigerian government, youth groups, civil society, private sector and development partners working on YPS. It started as the National Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding in 2016, and was renamed NCYPS in 2019. The overall role of the NCYPS is to provide constant and up-to-date strategic technical advice, coordination and support to the Youth, Peace and Security agenda including the domestication of the UNSCR 2250 and the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) in Nigeria. The duties of the NCYPS includes convening monthly meetings (online and offline) of core stakeholders (government, youth groups, civil society, private sector and development partners), mobilizing technical and financial resources, monitoring and evaluation, and peer learning to support the Youth, Peace and Security agenda in Nigeria. The NCYPS is responsible for providing oversight for the work of State Coalitions on YPS. The NCYPS is also responsible for reporting results to the Global Coalition on Youth Peace and Security.

The NCYPS is led by three Co-Chairs drawn from government, civil society and youth groups, with the support of a Steering Committee comprising of youth groups and civil society, helping to drive the work of the NCYPS.

## **STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER INSTITUTIONS/ORGANIZATIONS**

1. Federal Ministry of Youth Development.
2. Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
3. Centre for Sustainable Development and Education in Africa.
4. Police Community Relations Committee – Youth Wing.
5. Markengee Touchinglives International Initiative.
6. Youth Advocacy and Health Foundation.
7. Next Generation Youth Initiative International.
8. Centre for Rural Youth Entrepreneurship and Environmental Development.
9. Youth, Peace and Security Network.
10. West Africa Network for Peacebuilding.
11. African Center for Leadership, Strategy and Development.
12. Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Center.
13. Center for Democracy and Development.
14. Technoworld Community Foundation.
15. ActionAid
16. National Youth Council of Nigeria.
17. Nigeria Youth Parliament.

## **FORWARD**

Nigeria launched its National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security (NAPYPS) on November 1, 2021 leading to various steps taken by stakeholders under the coordination of the Nigeria Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security (NCYPS) to ensure its successful implementation.

This second impact report has demonstrated the progress made with the implementation of the NAPYPS in the last one year. Kaduna State has launched its State Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security with the support of the Kaduna State Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security. The State government and stakeholders have also invested huge resources in building the capacity of youth from all over the state on early warning and early response to conflict, supporting the peacebuilding process in the state.

Adamawa State is in an advanced stage of developing its State Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security, including taking steps to address the scourge of drug abuse, the rise of criminal gangs, and large numbers of girls and women who are survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence. Other states including Anambra, Delta, Plateau, Oyo, Kano, and Abuja are all at various stages of preparing their State Action Plans on Youth, Peace, and Security.

There is an increase in ownership by state governments. However, challenges still exist at the sub-national levels as youth are having difficulty collaborating with the government in some states. There is also the lack of capacity, and paucity of funds to make the desired impact. The annual budget for YPS by the Federal Government has also witnessed a decline in 2023/2024. The YPS Basket Fund managed by the United Nations and supported by the European Union has witnessed long delays in the release of funds, negatively impacting the implementation of the NAPYPS.

The successes identified in this report need to be sustained and replicated. At the same time, the challenges highlighted need to be addressed immediately to ensure

the successful implementation of the NAPYPS. There is the need to urgently promote partnerships with young people for NAPYPS implementation at all levels. This partnership should include capacity building and sustainable funding to strengthen the resilience in the youth and build sustainable peace. The Federal and State government budgets for YPS should be increased and not decrease. The YPS Basket Fund should be strengthened to include more donor commitments and timely release of funds. This should be supported by private sector resources.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nigeria, with a youthful population exceeding 60% of its 200 million citizens as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics, recognizes the pivotal role that young people play in shaping its peace and security landscape. Historically marginalized in formal peace processes, Nigerian youth are now being recognized as key peacebuilders, especially following the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) in December 2015. This landmark resolution emphasizes the positive contributions of youth in peacebuilding and provides a framework centered around five key pillars: Participation, Protection, Prevention, Partnership, and Disengagement and Reintegration.

In response to UNSCR 2250, Nigeria has made notable strides at both grassroots and national levels. The establishment of the Nigeria Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security (NCYPS) and the development of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security (NAPYPS) are significant milestones. Launched on November 1, 2021, Nigeria became a leading example in Africa for adopting a comprehensive YPS framework, guiding efforts from 2021 to 2024.

Progress across the pilot states—Kaduna, Plateau, Adamawa, Delta, Oyo, Anambra, and Abuja—has been varied. Kaduna has made substantial headway in stakeholder mapping and recently launched their State Action Plan (SAP) on YPS, while Anambra has established a youth coalition despite delays in stakeholder mapping. In 2024, focus has shifted to developing State Action Plans, translating the groundwork laid in 2023 into actionable, state-specific strategies. Nasarawa and Kogi have successfully launched their SAPs. Other states like Adamawa, Oyo, Plateau and Abuja face challenges but have shown commitment and planned for SAP through local efforts and stakeholder engagement, Adamawa has advanced furthest by massively engaging key stakeholders across the state in consultations to develop their SAP, and pass legislation on YPS. These plans, developed through inclusive consultations, are

supported by capacity-building initiatives and robust monitoring frameworks to ensure effective implementation. At the National level, YPS has been mainstreamed into the ongoing review of the National Youth Policy.

Challenges remain, including disparities in implementation speed, delays in EU funding, decrease in federal government budget for YPS, and security issues impacting states like Anambra. Addressing these challenges requires targeted advocacy, enhanced coordination between federal and state governments, and diversified funding strategies. Recommendations include improving engagement with decision-makers, streamlining funding processes, and strengthening local security partnerships to create safer environments for YPS activities.

## INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, with a youthful population, is home to over 120 million young people whose actions and voices are critical to the nation's peace and security landscape. Historically, young people have played active roles in both warfare and peacebuilding, yet their involvement in formal peace negotiation processes has often been marginalized. Popular narratives frequently emphasize youth involvement in conflict and violence, casting them as central figures in socio-political unrest and as threats to sustainable peace within their communities.

To challenge and transform this narrow perspective, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) on December 9, 2015. This groundbreaking resolution marked the first formal international recognition of the vital role that young people play in promoting and maintaining peace and security. Through this resolution, member states, including Nigeria, acknowledged the positive contributions of youth to global peacebuilding efforts, aiming to harness their potential as key agents of peace rather than merely viewing them as instigators of conflict.

The main objective of UNSCR 2250 is to recognize young people as equal partners in peacebuilding, representing a significant shift from negative stereotypes to recognizing youth as peacebuilders and valuable assets to their communities. The resolution emphasizes the importance of gender equality as a tool for peace, drawing from UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. It provides a comprehensive framework for addressing, designing, and evaluating the peacebuilding activities of young people, structured around five key pillars:

1. **Participation:** Advocates for increased youth representation in decision-making processes at all levels, from local to international institutions. It also encourages the support and empowerment of local youth peace initiatives.
2. **Protection:** Calls for safeguarding young people from harm, particularly during armed conflicts and in post-conflict environments. This includes



addressing sexual and gender-based violence and ensuring accountability for crimes against youth.

3. **Prevention:** Promotes an inclusive and enabling environment where youth are recognized and supported as key actors in violence prevention and social cohesion efforts.
4. **Partnership:** Urges member states to provide political, financial, technical, and logistical support to youth in peace efforts, ensuring their active participation in conflict and post-conflict settings.
5. **Disengagement and Reintegration:** Encourages the consideration of youth needs in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs, with a focus on rehabilitating those involved in violence.



## **THE ROAD TO THE NIGERIA NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON YOUTH, PEACE, AND SECURITY**

Since the adoption of UNSCR 2250, subsequent resolutions 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020) have further solidified the YPS agenda. In Nigeria, significant efforts have been made at both local and national levels to strengthen this agenda. This led to the establishment of the Nigeria Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security (NCYPS), serving as a multi-sectorial platform for youth and non-youth groups working on peace and security.

At the national level, collaboration between the Federal Ministry of Youth Development (FMYD), the Centre for Sustainable Development and Education in Africa (CSDEA), and the Nigeria Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security (NCYPS) has led to the development of a National Action Plan on Youth Peace and Security (NAPYPS). This plan domesticates the five pillars of UNSCR 2250 through a series of stakeholder engagements, including youth forums, zonal workshops, community focus group discussions, and national conferences.

The culmination of these efforts was the launch of Nigeria's first National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security on November 1, 2021, during the inaugural National Youth Conference in Abuja. This milestone made Nigeria the first African nation and the second globally, after Finland, to adopt a NAP on YPS. The plan, spanning from 2021 to 2024, serves as a critical guide for federal, state, and local governments, as well as non-governmental stakeholders, ensuring that their programs address the needs of youth in all the pillars of UNSCR 2250.

At the sub-national and grassroots levels, awareness of UNSCR 2250 has galvanized Nigerian youth to actively engage in peacebuilding, leading to the formation of State Coalitions on YPS, comprising numerous youth-led organizations dedicated to fostering peace within their communities. These State Coalitions on YPS have

effectively used the resolution as an advocacy tool to push for its implementation and domestication across various levels of governance and society.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TOWARDS STATE ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Since the launch of the NAPYPS, significant developments have been made in mapping and documenting stakeholders crucial to Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) in the pilot states of Kaduna, Plateau, Adamawa, Delta, Oyo, Benue, Anambra and Abuja. These activities have been pivotal in fostering an environment where youth can meaningfully contribute to peacebuilding processes. From 2022 to 2023, concerted efforts were made to identify and engage with relevant stakeholders at various levels, including governmental agencies, civil society organizations, youth-led groups, traditional leaders, and security forces. In each of the pilot states:

- 1. Kaduna State:** The Kaduna State served as a model for stakeholder engagement. A comprehensive mapping exercise was conducted, identifying key actors across the 23 local government areas. This included youth organizations, religious and community leaders, security personnel, and representatives from relevant government ministries including Kaduna State Ministry of Human services and Social Development and the Kaduna State Peace Commission. It highlighted some government agencies, civil society, community-based organizations, security agencies, traditional and religious institutions, and individuals, who have the influence and capacity to ensure that the NAPYPS is implemented holistically in Kaduna state. The process culminated in the formation of a coalition focused on early warning and early response mechanisms.

**EXPERTS AT THE REVIEW OF THE DRAFT STATE ACTION PLAN ON YOUTH PEACE AND SECURITY IN KADUNA STATE**



- 2. Plateau State:** Similar mapping activities were carried out, with a focus on areas affected by intercommunal violence. Stakeholders involved in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and youth empowerment were documented. This effort has been instrumental in creating a network of youth advocates and peacebuilders across the state, enhancing the state's capacity for conflict prevention.
- 3. Adamawa State:** In Adamawa, the mapping exercise targeted regions with high incidences of youth involvement in violence. The process brought together youth leaders, security agencies, local government officials, and non-governmental organizations, laying the groundwork for more coordinated peacebuilding efforts and the ongoing development of its State Action Plan on YPS. The Adamawa State Coalition on YPS has also advocated to the State House of Assembly resulting in an ongoing process to enact legislation on YPS.



## STAKEHOLDERS AT THE ADAMAWA STATE CENTRAL ZONAL CONSULTATION ON YOUTH PEACE AND SECURITY



4. **Delta State:** The meticulous stakeholder mapping process brought to the fore an array of actors, each imbued with distinct perspectives, capabilities, and potentials. Ranging from the vulnerable youth ensnared in conflict to the proactive advocates of youth-led peace initiatives, from community leaders fostering dialogues to internationally recognized organizations lending their expertise—the spectrum of stakeholders encountered in this mapping resonates as a vibrant mosaic of collaboration, conflict resolution, and aspiration. The focus in Delta State was on engaging youth in the oil-producing areas, and non-oil producing areas where tensions have historically been high. Stakeholders identified included youth groups, environmental activists, and local and state government representatives. This initiative it is hoped will lead to the development of programs aimed at reducing youth unemployment and fostering dialogue between young people and government officials.
5. **Oyo State:** In Oyo State, the stakeholder mapping was aligned with the state's broader goals of youth empowerment and development. The exercise identified gaps in youth participation in decision-making processes and led to the establishment of new platforms for youth engagement in peacebuilding.

**6. Federal Capital Territory (FCT):** The stakeholder mapping process brought to the fore an array of actors, each imbued with distinct perspectives, capabilities, and potentials. Ranging from the vulnerable youth ensnared in conflict to the proactive advocates of youth-led peace initiatives, from community leaders fostering dialogues to internationally recognized organizations lending their expertise—the spectrum of stakeholders encountered in this mapping resonates as a vibrant mosaic of collaboration, conflict resolution, and aspiration. As the capital, Abuja's mapping activities involved high-level stakeholders, including federal ministries, international organizations, and youth-led NGOs. This exercise was crucial in coordinating national-level activities and ensuring that the NAPYPS is effectively implemented across all pilot states.

**FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY (FCT) YPS COALITION CO-CHAIRS  
PAID A COURTESY VISIT TO THE FCTA MANDATE SECRETARY**



**7. Anambra state:** Anambra state has implemented the stakeholders mapping using technology to reach out to various youth and civil society groups, and has made significant progress by establishing a YPS coalition. These developments represent a crucial advancement in furthering the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda in Anambra state.

These mapping activities have not only increased awareness of the NAPYPS but also established a robust network of stakeholders committed to advancing youth participation in peace and security. The shift from viewing youth as perpetrators of violence to recognizing them as key contributors to peace has gained momentum, driven by these targeted and strategic initiatives. The ongoing documentation and engagement with stakeholders ensure that youth voices are integrated into decision-making processes, paving the way for a more peaceful and inclusive society.

## **2024: SHIFT TO DEVELOPING STATE ACTION PLANS**

Building on the success of the 2022 to 2023 mapping and NAPYPS dissemination activities, the focus in 2024 has shifted to the development of State Action Plans (SAPs) for Youth, Peace, and Security. This strategic shift is translating the insights and networks established during the mapping phase into actionable plans that address the specific needs and challenges of the youth and citizens in each state. To that end significant progress has been made by some states in the development and implementation of State Action Plans on Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS). Nasarawa and Kogi states successfully developed and launched their State Action Plans in 2022, marking a pivotal step in localizing the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security (NAPYPS). Kaduna state launched its State Action Plan on September 21, 2024, and Adamawa state is at an advanced stage in the development of its State Action Plan. Delta, Plateau, Oyo and Abuja are all at various stages of developing strategies and plans for actualizing their State Action Plans. These efforts represent a growing commitment across various regions to integrate youth voices into peacebuilding and security frameworks at the state level.

**Inclusive Planning Processes:** The development of these State Action Plans has been highly inclusive, involving consultations with a broad range of stakeholders identified during the mapping phase. Youth representatives, civil society organizations, local government officials, security agencies, and traditional leaders have all contributed to the formulation of these plans, ensuring that they are comprehensive and reflective of the realities on the ground.



**Capacity Building and Implementation:** Alongside the development of SAPs, capacity-building initiatives have been launched to equip youth and other stakeholders with the skills and knowledge needed to implement these plans effectively. Training programs focused on conflict resolution, dialogue facilitation, and monitoring and evaluation have been rolled out in the pilot states.

**Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks:** Each State Action Plan includes a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress and ensure accountability. This framework will allow for the continuous assessment of the impact of YPS initiatives, and the adjustment of strategies as needed to meet the evolving needs of each state.

These developments mark a significant step forward in the implementation of the NAPYPS, as the pilot states have all formed youth coalitions as they move from planning to action. By focusing on the development of State Action Plans, Nigeria is ensuring that the principles of Youth, Peace, and Security are not only recognized but also actively implemented at the grassroots level. This approach is crucial for sustaining peace and security in the country and for ensuring that youth are seen not as perpetrators of violence, but as key contributors to a peaceful and secure future.

## **PROGRESS ON STATE ACTION PLANS FOR YOUTH, PEACE, AND SECURITY (SAP-YPS)**

**Oyo State:** In Oyo State, the implementation of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security (NAPYPS) has been met with challenges and gradual progress. The Oyo State Action Committee on Youth, Peace, and Security was established by the Executive Secretary of the Agency for Youth Development late last year. Despite this, the committee has yet to produce concrete recommendations for the state government after holding two meetings. However, efforts by the Federal Ministry of Youth Development, alongside development partners such as the Center for Sustainable Development and Education in Africa, have succeeded in raising awareness among various youth organizations and NGOs within the state about the goals and objectives of NAPYPS.

A key event in this process was a stakeholders' meeting hosted by the state government on July 29, 2024, at the House of Chiefs in Ibadan, where political leaders and thought leaders, including the Special Assistant to the President for Youth Initiatives, discussed the importance of peaceful demonstrations. The state's progress has been somewhat hindered by administrative changes, including a new Commissioner for Youth and Sports, and the retirement of the former Executive Secretary of the Agency for Youth Development.

**Kaduna State:** Kaduna State has made significant strides in the development of its State Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security (KAD-SAP YPS). The process began with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and UN Women with funding from the Peacebuilding Fund, in collaboration with the Kaduna State Peace Commission. Key steps included the establishment of a Technical Working Group (TWG) comprising youth stakeholders from the state's three senatorial zones, who were trained and tasked with promoting peace and security. An Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) mechanism was also developed, involving youth from all 23 LGAs to identify and analyze conflict trends. This

mechanism has been instrumental in strengthening the implementation of KAD-SAP YPS and supporting peace in the state. A State Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security was formed during a stakeholders meeting, ensuring the document reflected the cultural and religious diversity of Kaduna State.

**YOUTH VOLUNTEERS TRAINING ON CONFLICT EARLY WARNING AND RESPONSE  
AS PART OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE YPS AGENDA IN KADUNA STATE**



The draft KAD-SAP YPS has undergone validation and was launched by the Executive Governor of Kaduna State on the September 21, 2024.

**Plateau State:** Plateau has a history of crises and violence, which have significantly impacted peace in the region. In response to this, the state has actively engaged with measures aimed at mitigating conflicts and promoting sustainable development. The introduction of the Nigeria Coalition on Youth Peace and Security and the domestication of the National Action Plan on YPS in Nigeria are seen as vital steps towards addressing these issues and aligning with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 agenda for global peace.

Since the launch of the National Action Plan, Plateau State has made significant strides. A State Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security was formed, bringing together traditional rulers, youth councils, peace agencies, civil society organizations, and security operatives. This coalition has conducted several capacity-building workshops and established a WhatsApp platform to facilitate communication among stakeholders. The State Government has given its approval to domesticate the NAPYPS, and a productive meeting with the Honorable Commissioner of Youth and Sports Development led to the mapping of stakeholders, and the development of a strategy for SAP development. However, the official inauguration of the SAPYPS

steering committee and the commencement of activities have been delayed due to funding constraints. There is a need for greater awareness and advocacy to increase understanding of the National Action Plan on YPS among state actors.

**Adamawa State:** In Adamawa State, the impact of the NAPYPS has been significantly shaped by strong collaboration between the Ministry of Youth and Sports and other relevant government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies. The Ministry of Youth and Sports, as the lead agency, has worked closely with various stakeholders to implement strategies aligned with the pillars of the NAPYPS. Efforts to increase awareness have been directed towards key stakeholders and various youth groups across the state.

Prior to the adoption of the National Action Plan, Adamawa's Ministry of Youth and Sports, through its Department of Youth Development, had already established partnerships with the Multi-Sectoral Crisis Recovery Project (MCRP)—a World Bank initiative—and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). These collaborations led to the formation of Youth Peace Groups and the establishment of offices in all 21 Local Government Areas of the state. In the state Area Youth Development Officers were trained on peace and security to enhance the coordination of these youth groups at the local level. These established structures have played a crucial role in broadening the reach of NAPYPS awareness efforts throughout Adamawa State.

The introduction of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security has spurred the Ministry to work with the Centre for Sustainable Development and Education in Africa (CSDEA) to develop a State Action Plan on YPS. Currently, CSDEA has engaged a consultant to assist in the development of this State Action Plan on Youth Peace and Security. There are on-going consultations with various stakeholders and youth groups from the 21 Local Government Areas of the State to get their inputs into the SAP development process.

The domestication process of the NAPYPS in Adamawa State has also led stakeholders to focus on youth including those who are victims of sexual and gender based violence, and drug users. There are ongoing multi-stakeholder programs

targeting over 3000 drug users, and 5000 SGBV survivors. This is aimed at empowering the youth and ensuring sustainable peace in the state.

**Anambra, Abuja, and Delta States** have made varying levels of progress in the development of their respective State Action Plans for Youth, Peace, and Security (SAP-YPS). Their achievements include stakeholders mapping, capacity development, advocacy, and strategy development. While each state has shown commitment to advancing the objectives of the National Action Plan, they face common challenges, particularly in securing sustainable funding and ensuring comprehensive support for long-term implementation. These financial constraints have hindered their ability to fully operationalize their plans and engage marginalized and vulnerable groups effectively, posing a significant obstacle to achieving the desired outcomes.



## **ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON YOUTH PEACE AND SECURITY IMPLEMENTATION IN PILOT STATES**

It is noteworthy that a one-day workshop held at Park-view Hotel Limited in Abuja, with the aim of assessing the effects of the Nigeria National Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security (NAPYPS) in pilot states. The pilot states are Adamawa, Anambra, Delta, Kaduna, Oyo, Plateau states and Abuja. The event was organized by the Nigerian Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Youth Development with support from the Centre for Sustainable Development and Education in Africa. There were 30 participants from various pilot states, youth organizations, government and the United Nations Population Fund contributing to the discussions and evaluations. Overall, the workshop highlighted the ongoing commitment to youth capacity building and the implementation of the National Action Plan, with challenges highlighted as well as recommendations from key stakeholders and active participation from youth organizations reinforcing the impact and future goals.

### **STAKEHOLDERS AT A WORKSHOP TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON YPS**



## CHALLENGES

There is a noticeable disparity in the speed and efficiency with which different states are implementing the NAPYPS. While some states have rapidly advanced in developing and operationalizing their State Action Plans (SAPs), others are lagging behind. This inconsistency raises questions about the underlying factors contributing to such disparities. Issues such as variations in state-level governance structures, the availability of resources, and the level of engagement from local stakeholders could be influencing these differences. States with more government buy-in or those that receive greater support from international partners and civil society may progress more quickly. Understanding these disparities is crucial for developing strategies to support slower-moving states and ensure a more uniform implementation of the NAPYPS across the country.

Another critical challenge is the delay in the distribution of funds by the European Union (EU), which was expected to play a significant role in financing NAPYPS activities. The delays in disbursement have caused considerable setbacks, particularly in states that rely heavily on external funding to drive their youth, peace, and security initiatives. The reasons behind these delays are not always transparent, leading to frustration among implementing agencies and stakeholders who depend on these funds to carry out their planned activities. This financial uncertainty undermines the continuity and sustainability of the programs, potentially impacting the overall success of the NAPYPS.

In some pilot states, including those with ongoing youth peace and security initiatives, gaining access to key decision-makers such as State Governors has proven to be a significant challenge. This lack of access hampers the ability to hold crucial discussions that could lead to more informed decision-making and tailored policy interventions. Without the engagement of these high-level stakeholders, it becomes difficult to ensure that the concerns and suggestions of the youth are adequately represented and acted upon. This gap in communication and

collaboration could slow down the progress of implementing the NAPYPS at the state level, reducing the effectiveness of the initiatives designed to promote peace and security

Insecurity remains a major obstacle to the successful implementation of NAPYPS in some pilot states. A state like Anambra state is plagued by low intensity insurgency, and faced significant challenges in carrying out youth-focused mapping activities leading to reliance on technology. The presence of armed groups, communal conflicts, and other security threats not only endangers the lives of those involved in the programs but also limits the ability to engage with communities and implement activities on the ground. In some cases, the heightened security risks have led to the suspension or scaling back of operations, further impeding progress. Addressing these security challenges requires a coordinated effort involving local security agencies, peacebuilding actors, and community leaders to create safer environments for NAPYPS initiatives.

One of the observations raised during the NAPYPS evaluation process is the absence of clear procedures for requesting financial assistance from the government. While there is an understanding that the government should play a role in funding these initiatives including dedicated annual budgets, the mechanisms for accessing such funds remain unclear or overly bureaucratic. This lack of clarity discourages many organizations, particularly smaller, youth-led groups, from seeking government support, thus limiting the financial resources available for NAPYPS activities. Establishing straightforward, transparent, and accessible procedures for financial assistance is essential to empower more organizations to participate fully in the NAPYPS.

Funding constraints have also caused significant challenges to the implementation of sensitization programs aimed at raising awareness about the NAPYPS. These programs are critical for educating the public and key stakeholders about the importance of youth involvement in peace and security efforts. However, the scarcity of funds has led to the curtailment of outreach activities, limiting the program's reach and impact. Without adequate funding, it is difficult to organize workshops, produce educational materials, or conduct media campaigns that are vital to the



success of these sensitization efforts. To overcome this challenge, there is a need for more robust fundraising strategies and greater support from both public and private sectors.

The collaboration between federal and state governments on NAPYPS initiatives has been another area of concern. The relationship between these two levels of government is crucial for the effective implementation of the NAPYPS. Yet, it has been observed that coordination is not always seamless. Issues such as overlapping responsibilities, lack of communication, and differing priorities can lead to inefficiencies and delays in program execution. While the Nigeria Coalition on YPS has coordinated the process within this context, strengthening the collaboration between federal and state governments is essential to ensure that NAPYPS initiatives are adequately funded, and effectively implemented across all states.

## **SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Addressing these challenges requires actionable recommendations, that can contribute to strengthening the implementation of the NAPYPS and SAP-YPS across the states while enhancing the role of youth in promoting peace and security in Nigeria.

- Develop a targeted advocacy strategy aimed at increasing access to key decision-makers in states where engagement has been limited. This could include organizing high-level meetings, involving influential stakeholders as champions of the NAPYPS, and leveraging existing relationships within state governments.
- Train local youth organizations on effective lobbying and advocacy techniques to empower them to engage with state representatives and governors more effectively.
- Conduct a thorough assessment of the specific barriers faced by states lagging in the implementation of NAPYPS. Based on the findings, provide tailored support such as technical assistance, additional resources, or targeted training programs to help these states catch up.
- Facilitate peer-to-peer learning exchanges between states that are progressing quickly and those that are lagging behind. This could involve sharing best practices, tools, and lessons learned.
- Engage with the European Union to understand the causes of funding delays and advocate for a clear and transparent timeline for disbursement. Regular updates and communication between the EU and implementing partners can help manage expectations and reduce uncertainty.
- Develop advocacy and awareness raising plans to ensure that critical activities can continue and receive funding. This could involve identifying alternative

funding in government, private sector and donor sources by prioritizing essential activities.

- Strengthen partnerships with local security agencies to create safer environments for NAPYPS activities. This could involve joint risk assessments, security briefings, and the deployment of security personnel during key activities.
- Encourage the government partners to advocate for local communities to take a more active role in securing their environments, including through community policing initiatives, early warning systems, and conflict resolution mechanisms.
- Work with government agencies to develop clear, transparent, and accessible procedures for requesting financial assistance. This should include detailed guidelines on eligibility criteria, application processes, and timelines for disbursement.
- Provide training for youth organizations on navigating government funding processes, including how to prepare strong proposals and meet reporting requirements.
- Diversify funding sources for sensitization programs by seeking support from private sector partners, international donors, and philanthropic organizations. Consider launching crowdfunding campaigns or organizing fundraising events to support specific initiatives.
- Partner with media organizations, influencers, and social media platforms to amplify sensitization efforts. In-kind contributions such as free advertising space or media coverage can help extend the reach of these programs without requiring significant financial outlays.
- Strengthen the Nigeria Coalition on YPS to support robust communication between federal and state governments, such as quarterly meetings or intergovernmental working groups. These forums can help align priorities,

address challenges, and ensure that efforts are coordinated and mutually reinforcing.

## CONCLUSION

In response to UNSCR 2250, Nigeria has made significant strides at both grassroots and national levels. The establishment of the Nigeria Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security and the development of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security mark substantial milestones. Launched on November 1, 2021, Nigeria has set a leading example in Africa by adopting a comprehensive YPS framework, guiding efforts from 2021 to 2024.

Progress across the pilot states—Kaduna, Plateau, Adamawa, Delta, Oyo, Anambra, and Abuja—has been diverse. Kaduna has advanced significantly with stakeholder mapping and the launch of State Action Plan, while Anambra has formed a youth coalition despite delays in stakeholder mapping. In 2024, the focus has shifted to finalizing and implementing State Action Plans, building on the foundational work laid in 2022 and 2023. Kaduna state became the 3<sup>rd</sup> state in Nigeria to launch their SAP, following Kogi and Nasarawa states. Meanwhile, Adamawa, Oyo, Plateau, and Abuja despite facing challenges, have demonstrated commitment through local efforts and stakeholder engagement. These State Action Plans, developed through inclusive consultations, are supported by capacity-building initiatives and robust monitoring frameworks to ensure effective implementation.

Nevertheless, challenges persist, including disparities in the speed of implementation, delays in funding, and security issues affecting states like Anambra. Addressing these challenges necessitates targeted advocacy, enhanced coordination between federal and state governments, and diversified funding strategies. Recommendations include improving engagement with decision-makers, streamlining funding processes, and strengthening local security partnerships to create safer environments for YPS activities.

The continued dedication to advancing the NAPYPS framework promises a more inclusive and effective approach to youth involvement in peacebuilding. The need

for a comprehensive impact report following the 2023 assessment of the NAPYPS has become increasingly evident. The previous year's report provided valuable insights into the initial stages of implementation and highlighted key areas of progress and challenge. As the process moves forward, it is essential to evaluate the developments since then to measure the effectiveness of YPS agenda in Nigeria to understand the evolving landscape and ensure that the pilot states are meeting their intended goals.

To ensure the successful implementation of the Nigerian National Action Plan on Youth, Peace, and Security, and the development of SAPs, it is crucial for the federal, state governments, and international partners to adopt a funding approach that coordinates with local partners and the Nigeria Coalition on Youth, Peace, and Security.



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