

The Civility

"Nobody makes a greater mistake than he who does nothing because he could do only a little."

-Edmund Burke



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From the Publisher's Desk

The CIVILITY is a quarterly newsletter publication of the Organization for Community Civic Engagement (OCCEN), aimed at showcasing OCCEN's work of empowering citizens and communities across Nigeria to reach their full potential through promoting good governance, human rights and inclusive democracy that works for all. Like the first and second and third editions of the newsletter, this fourth edition is also dedicated to OCCEN's partnership with the European Union Agents for Citizens-driven Transformation (ACT) Project, which empowers CSOs to be credible and effective drivers of change for sustainable development in Nigeria.

It therefore focuses on the various activities of OCCEN in the fourth quarter of its implementation of the EU ACT Project titled: "Strengthening Civil Society Participation in Public Policy Decisions in Kano State. The project strengthens Kano Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) capacity to demand accountability and tackle social exclusion through participation in public policy discussions.

As this is the final edition dedicated to the EU ACT Project, it contains an article offering an overview of the successes recorded by the sixteen-month EU ACT project which lasted from September 2021 to December 2022. In this edition we also have an article by a guest columnist titled: How the Next Nigerian President Will Be Elected; My Ten Factor Approach, contributed by Dr

Hussaini Abdu, as well as a piece on OCCEN's Policy Dialogue on Child Nutrition Services in Kano State, held November 2022.



Signed

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How the Next Nigerian President Will Be Elected; My Ten Factor Approach,

By Dr Hussaini Abdu

As you make your permutation on the likely winner of the 2023 Presidential election, note that a candidate will be returned elected only when she/he wins a simple majority vote **and** 25% of the votes in at least 2/3 of the 36 states of the federation. Based on my understanding of Nigerian politics, the winner will largely be determined by a combination of some of the following factors:

1. **Incumbent Governors** – The more governors a party has, the better its chances. Governors control a significant chunk of public resources and political interest groups available for their candidates. Evidence from previous elections, shows that no incumbent state governor failed to deliver at least 25% of the vote to its presidential candidate.

2. **Political Party Members and Sympathizers** – People will vote for their parties. To be sure, political parties in Nigeria don't have any serious membership registers. Despite the fluidity of party membership, there are still people that are deeply committed to their political party and will always vote for the party.

3. **Party that Presents Candidates for All the Available Seats** – President, Governor, National Assembly and State Assemblies. The more candidates a party have, the more the human and material resources for electioneering. A presidential candidate's votes is directly proportional to the number of candidates contesting for other seats.

4. **Ethnic and Regional Alliance** – People are likely to vote for "their own" – This may be an important factor, but not a sole determinant. Where "your own" is not in contest, people will vote for the one that serves their political, economic, and even psychosocial interest.

5. **Religion** - This is related to No. 4 (you can even combine them - Ethno-religious). I deliberately separated them, because of the relative peculiarity of the context. There is a growing influence of political religion. Some will reject same faith ticket; others will happily canvass and vote for it.

6. **Street Credibility:** Street presence is important. We are in the age of populism; mass appeal and rallies are important show of force in Nigerian political carnival (sorry campaigns). Any candidates that is not able to sustainably pull crowds across the country cannot win the race.

7. **Immediate or Delayed Gratification:** Some will vote a candidate/party because of immediate or delayed material interest. Delayed interest involves what you hope to get if your candidate/party wins. Immediate gratification is what comes to you before or during the elections (kayan aiki) – call it vote buying etc.

8. **Previous/Current Performance:** This is important but



recognised that people assess performance based on their economic and political interests. You may think the party, or the candidate performed poorly in his/her previous or current role, others will see it differently.

9. **PVC and Voters Turnout:** According to INEC, voters' turnout across Nigeria hovered around 30 to 35 per cent of registered voters in the last two electoral cycles. People turnout to vote because they are passionate about it or have been mobilised to do so. Election day could present a different situation. Victory goes to those who are persistent, despite challenges – and there may be many of them – postponement of the election, delays due to INEC's logistics issues, electoral violence, long queues due to the size of polling units, distance from polling units, not being able to find your name in your supposed polling units, frustrations by police on election duty etc. Most Nigerian middle- and upper-class people don't vote for these reasons.

10. **Party Programme and Manifesto:** Unfortunately, this only appeals to the middle class, business groups and other interest groups.

NOTE: *No single factor is sufficient, it must be a combination of at least 8 of the factors listed. Please add it on, if I missed any factor*

PHOTO NEWS



Success Stories of OCCEN's EU-ACT Project

In September 2021, the Organisation for Community Civic Engagement (OCCEN) began the implementation of its Project titled: “Strengthening Civil Society Participation in Public Policy Decisions in Kano State, with support from European Union Agents for Citizens-driven Transformation (EU-ACT) Project implemented by the British Council.

The sixteen-month project which lasted until December 2022 was aimed at creating an enabling environment for CSOs and marginalized citizens (women, girls, youth, men, boys and PWDs) to engage and interact with powerholders on matters of promoting inclusive governance, participation in policy decisions, and demanding political accountability in Kano State. To this end, the OCCEN-EU-ACT Project sought to tackle weak public accountability and government unresponsiveness in Kano State.

In specific terms, the Project's objectives were to build the capacity of ten (10) selected CSOs on public policy participation in Kano state; Build the capacity of thirty (30) Champions of marginalized groups (10 each for women, youth and adolescent girls) on public policy participation; Provide coaching and mentorship support to five (5) select Community Based Organizations (CBOs); as well as implementing effective communication strategy to ensure project results, accomplishment and visibility of EU-ACT support were widely disseminated.

One of the major successes of the Project was bridging the huge gap between public institutions and CSOs in Kano State through various citizens-government dialogue sessions on policy reforms, bringing hitherto inaccessible representatives of key government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) into the same table with the leadership of Kano civil society, to brainstorm on public interest issues around health, education, gender and agriculture.

Thanks to the OCCEN-EU ACT dialogue series, there is now an improved working relationship between government and civil society in Kano State; one of the key achievements of this paradigm shift is the development of The Citizens Accountability Report, by the civil society in partnership with the State Ministries of Finance, Budget and Planning, to foster citizens' participation in governance processes.

Another outcome of the newly-found rapport between the duo was the Kano Citizens Charter of Demands ahead of the 2023 elections. The Charter seeks to mainstream the culture of political decision-makers and government agencies seeking public input in the formulation and delivery of government policies and services towards improved citizens' participation and job creation. OCCEN-EU-ACT was actively involved in developing the Charter's nine strategic

areas including, commerce, environment, education, ICT and digital economy etc.

Moreover, gender mainstreaming was a key component of the OCCEN-EU ACT Project which tackled social exclusion by promoting inclusion in policymaking in Kano state through addressing the dearth of women's and girls' participation in public policymaking processes in the state.



Josephine Omajari
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer

Due to socio-cultural beliefs, policymakers in Kano were not accountable to women and girls whose voices were rarely heard in the male-dominated civic space. Consequently, they suffered from various forms of abuse, namely domestic and sexual violence.

Against this backdrop, OCCEN-EU-ACT strengthened the capacity of women and girls from Kano to identify their priorities, articulate their demands and engage policymakers. By empowering women and girls to positively influence decision-making processes in Kano society, EU ACT tackled the age-long near complete absence of women and girls in public policymaking. Thanks to their newly acquired confidence, these women and young girls have now become civic activists in their respective communities, helping girls and women to organize and demand inclusive participation in public life.

Other key activities implemented by OCCEN during the lifespan of the EU-ACT Project were, the training of CSOs on public policy participation; training of women and girls' champions on gender mainstreaming in public policy; Production of two handbooks on Promoting Civil society Participation in Public Policy and another on Civil Society Legal Framework in Nigeria. Other activities implemented by OCCEN during the period were production of 4 editions of quarterly newsletters titled Civility, which showcased the EU-ACT project activities

OCCEN Policy Dialogue on Child Nutrition Services in Kano State

The Organization for Community and Civic Engagement (OCCEN), with support from European Union (EU) Agents for Citizens-driven Transformation (ACT) Project, organized a one-day policy dialogue on Child Nutrition Services in Kano State. The dialogue session focused on the situation of nutrition service delivery in Kano state and ways to improve these services to save the lives of children and make life easy for their mothers.

In her remarks, Nafisa Murtala Ahmad from Young Mothers Forum said the idea behind the dialogue was to create a platform for citizens, particularly young mothers, to have a say on nutrition matters, adding that a lot needed to be done around creating awareness about the malnutrition challenge in Kano so as to change the unfortunate situation in the state.

In her presentation on the state of child nutrition in Kano State, Dr Faiza Sheshe, provided an analysis of health facility records from 33 Community Management of

Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) and stabilization centers for the period 2009-2018 revealed a clustered distribution pattern. Child malnutrition is seasonal with a peak around the rainy season with highs and lows in both rural and urban areas.

Dr Sheshe identified as major challenges in the campaign against malnutrition in Kano the need to streamline records to determine the accurate location of residences of malnourished children; unsustainability of access to free RUTF and Tom Brown powder; inconsistency in nutrition management strategies as well as lack of mass public enlightenment campaign on preventive measures against malnutrition.

At the end of the dialogue session, the participants came up with commitments and recommendations on how best the Kano Nutrition Working Group, CSOs, nutrition workers, young mothers and public institutions can work together to improve the state of nutrition in Kano state.



OCCEN, KCSF inaugurate Kano Election Situation Room

Ahead of the 2023 General Elections, the Organization for Community Civic Engagement (OCCEN), in partnership with Kano Civil Society Forum (KCSF), with support from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), has established an Election Situation Room, to ensure improved coordination between civil society actors and all relevant stakeholders in election management towards a free and fair elections in Kano State.

In his remarks during the inauguration of the Election Situation Room mid-December in Kano, Abdulrazaq Alkali, Executive Director of OCCEN, said traditional election observation has contributed to the improved quality of elections in Nigeria by providing opportunities for peer review and learning; putting the election process under the spotlight, thereby reducing the chances of impunity; and providing evidence-based documentation of elections.

Despite these successes, Mr Alkali said the traditional election observation model had its limitations because it was not designed to react to real-time challenges of the election process, hence the introduction of the Situation Room model which provides a platform for rapid response

and will ensure that, beyond observation, civil society is able to play a greater role in crisis management, early warning and constructive engagement of the process to ensure a credible election.

To this end, the Election Situation Room is expected to bring together diverse civil society groups, maximize information gathering assets ranging from grassroots outreaches, to access to government, internet skills, and access to security structures to provide a unified platform for analysis and intervention. It will also organize periodic engagements with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to brief citizens on its activities.

Among others, the Situation Room will serve as a platform for immediate sharing of information and recommendations among civil society groups and with other relevant stakeholders; provide credible, real-time analyses and information during and after polls; offer objective insights into INEC's challenges and help to address them; as well as serve as a rapid response mechanism during post-election emergencies by mobilizing interventions from key stakeholders and respected personalities in Kano and Nigeria at large.



Policy Dialogue on Strengthening Civil Society Legal Framework in Kano State



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