



Next Generation

Nigeria – November 2020

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Disclaimer

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Acronyms

APC	All Progressives Congress
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GSMA	Global Systems for Mobile Communications
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ILO	International Labour Union
LGA	Local government area
LGBTQI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NCDC	Nigerian Centre for Disease Control
NERDC	Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council
NGP	National Gender Policy
NTYTR	Not Too Young To Run
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PLWD	People living with disabilities
PSUs	Primary sampling units
PVC	Personal Voter's Card
PwC	Pricewaterhouse Coopers
SEC	Social economic class
SMEs	Small- and medium-sized enterprises
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
SSMPA	Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act
SUG	Student union government
UBE	Universal basic education
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WHO	World Health Organization
YIAGA	Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth & Advancement (YIAGA)

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> Forewords

It's with great pleasure I put pen to paper to write the foreword for this Next Generation Nigeria research, ten years after the first report was published in 2010.

The Next Generation research series seeks to understand and give voice to young people, highlighting their concerns and aspirations, their influences, and views of their place in the world. This rich research not only shapes the British Council's priorities and programming, it contributes to providing a springboard for engagement with young people globally, and for systemic change in policy and practice.

The Next Generation research series focuses on countries undergoing critical moments in transition, at a crucial moment in a country's history. The Nigeria report comes as this country celebrates its 60th anniversary of independence. Rather than looking back, we look to the future, with this multifaceted and inclusive research providing rich data on and insights into the lives, attitudes and aspirations of young Nigerians aged 18 to 35 today.

Since I came to Nigeria in 2014 and throughout my six years here, I've continued to be inspired by the energy, enterprise, innovation, positivity, resourcefulness, resilience and 'can-do' attitude I see every day. This spirit shines through in the report and, moreover, shines a spotlight on young Nigerians' attributes and interests, including benevolence, community spirit and capacity as 'self-starters'. I highlight this, in particular, as it provides a different dimension to Nigerian youth, and a more nuanced one than those more regularly portrayed.

When we commissioned the research in 2019, we had no idea quite what 2020 would bring, especially the impact the Covid-19 pandemic would have on the world. When the virus hit Nigeria in March 2020 the research was under way, and the situation was clearly going to have an impact on the programme. Given that the pandemic brought another aspect to the rich diversity and complexity of Nigeria, we felt it important to capture in some way the impact of the virus – and the measures to control it – on the youth population. An additional strand was added to the research: 24 Covid-19 diaries which capture 'in the moment' the thoughts, feelings and fears of a cross-section of young Nigerians at the time.

When the British Council last undertook a Next Generation study in 2010, the phrase 'youth not oil' was used to describe the future of Nigeria. A decade later, Nigeria has the largest youth population in Africa, and the fourth largest globally. With more than half of Nigeria's 200 million plus population under the age of 35, economic shifts globally and the ongoing impact of Covid-19, the Next Generation Nigeria 2020 report continues to highlight the potential of the country's youth and the important role they have in her future.

Values, family and religion remain of great importance to young people in Nigeria, while a complex ecosystem of challenges face young Nigerians: employment and financial security, education, politics and governance, crime, policing and access to justice, healthcare, social cohesion, and environmental problems and climate change.

There is no quick fix to the barriers facing young people across Nigeria today. The challenges identified in this research are multiple and multifaceted and warrant a set of strategic solutions that reflect the breadth, scale and magnitude of the issues identified. However, I strongly believe no challenge is insurmountable, with the qualities we see in Nigeria's youth through this report and the commitment from stakeholders, together we can find and embed those solutions.

As conditions in Nigeria, and around the world, become more challenging, in particular for the youth generation – and exacerbated by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic – it is our hope that this research, and the recommendations put forward by the task force, make a positive contribution. We are keen to support thinking, action and reform from the many stakeholders with the ability to influence positive change in Nigeria – from researchers and academics to faith and community leaders, civil society and international organisations, to public and private sector bodies, ministries and policymakers at federal and state levels, and finally the young people of Nigeria themselves.

The British Council remains committed to the mutually beneficial UK–Nigeria relationship, where we all have a role in supporting Nigeria's next generation.

Lucy Pearson
Director Nigeria, British Council

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with a population of over 200 million. Nigeria has the largest youth population in Africa and the fourth largest in the world. These young people are diverse, with over 500 different cultures, different religious backgrounds, divergent socio-economic situations and a diversity of beliefs and experiences. They will play a critical part in what the future looks like for this country. The importance of understanding those young people, and listening to their voices, cannot be underestimated.

This Next Generation report explores the lives, attitudes, hopes, values, aspirations, challenges and experiences of young Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 35. The focus has been to listen, engage, understand and try to codify their expectations and experiences, and what is needed to ensure that young Nigerians lead fulfilled and satisfied lives.

A beauty of the report has been the identification of the positive values that still underpin the lifestyle and life choices of many young people. It is heartwarming to hear young people in one breath identify the need for increased security, but in the next speak about benevolence, self-drive, family and community as important values that guide their lives and inform their selection of their role models. Family was one institution that many young people reiterated as an important pillar for how their values are shaped.

Given the context of Nigeria's socio-political and political importance, the challenges identified by young Nigerians remain an important mirror through which to understand the reality of young people in Africa. Young people were unequivocal about their desire for improvements in employment, financial security, social mobility, governance, education, policing, access to justice, healthcare, social cohesion and environmental preservation.

One must also celebrate the successes recorded by young Nigerians. This includes the important and strategic advocacy that led to the #NotTooYoungToRun constitutional reforms that reduced the age for political officeholders in Nigeria, as well as young Nigerians taking vital and more important roles in policymaking and politics. In addition, we can see the rapid development of the Nigerian technology and information communication industry, which is powered by young Nigerians using innovation to solve Africa's biggest problems, and considerable entrepreneurship activity from the highly skilled working population. The message is that Nigerian youths have taken responsibility for their lives and situations regardless of the inefficiencies of the system.

An important feature of the report is of young people 'having a voice' and what that means to young Nigerians. In this area, young people identified three main aspects: the safety required to speak freely; the ability to properly articulate one's views and perspectives; and the opportunity to speak legitimately about one's experiences. In enabling these three aspects, this research attempts to accurately reflect what young Nigerians view as important.

Next Generation Nigeria offers deep insight for policymakers, governments, politicians, businesses, social analysts, impact groups, NGOs and every stakeholder invested in engaging young Nigerians in addressing their challenges, understanding their aspirations and cultivating an environment for them to live fulfilled lives. We urge readers not to approach this report with cynicism, or look for any errors, but to read with an open mind, and seek the value in this honest glimpse into the experiences, behaviours and perspectives of young Nigerians.

The report is a reminder of the brilliant hope, innovative thinking, agile optimism, firm resolve, unbridled courage and towering aspirations that best describe Nigeria's young people.

Here's a glimpse into Nigeria's next generation!

**Chioma Agwuegbo and
Adetola Onayemi**
Next Generation Research Task Force

> Executive summary

The British Council commissioned the M&C Saatchi World Services' Research, Insight and Evaluation (RIE) Team to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the lives, attitudes and aspirations of young Nigerians aged 18 to 35 today. Next Generation is a global flagship research series aimed at listening to and engaging with young people, in order to understand the conditions that support them to become creative, fulfilled and active citizens in their countries. It does so, moreover, by focusing on young people in countries experiencing a period of significant change, to consider how these changes are affecting young people and to ensure that their voices are heard and their interests represented in decisions that will have lasting implications for their lives.

This report, published in the year of Nigeria's 60th anniversary of independence, presents the findings from a year-long programme of research that began in September 2019 and has subsequently spanned a period of unprecedented global tumult in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The research was guided from the outset by the three core objectives of the Next Generation research series:

1. to understand youth attitudes and aspirations
2. to amplify youth voice
3. to support better youth policymaking.

In response to the first of these objectives, the research investigates which values are most important to young Nigerians. Values refer to what people think is important to them in life, with people making judgements and choosing courses of action depending on the extent to which certain behaviours, policies and events align or disagree with the values that are most important to them. As such, they offer fundamental insights for helping to understand the goals, beliefs and attitudes that drive young Nigerians today.

The research finds that the value of security – manifested, for example, by personal goals such as safety, financial security, good health and a sense of belonging – is the most important and widespread of all basic human values for young Nigerians. It also pinpoints a number of other important values, including being kind to and supporting others (benevolence); achieving independence and following their own goals (self-direction); respecting family and meeting social expectations (conformity); and being committed to and preserving religious traditions and practices (tradition).

The research identifies who and what serve as the formative influences for these values among young Nigerians. In terms of security, it concludes that this is most likely a reflection of the pervasive under-service experienced by young Nigerians across a range of crucial areas, including health, education, employment and physical security from conflict and violence. Family and religion, meanwhile, which represent the two most important institutions for the majority of young Nigerians, encourage a set of common values, including benevolence, tradition and conformity. Celebrities in the sports and entertainment industries, finally, are acknowledged as among the most important influences on the value of self-direction, encouraging young Nigerians to be creative and discover and follow their own path, in their own way.

This research explores the visions that young Nigerians have and, in many cases, are already working towards, for themselves, their communities and their country. Eight aspirations are identified.

Young Nigerians want to advance positive, values-driven leadership of Nigeria, with many regarding young leaders as the ones most suited to realising this ideal. They want to assure their own and others' economic

prosperity and security, and further believe that by doing so, they will tackle challenges such as crime and substance abuse, plus amplify the voices of young Nigerians by building their confidence, self-efficacy and credibility in the eyes of others. Highly cognisant of the value and importance of education, young Nigerians want all Nigerians to be able to realise their potential by acquiring the right skills and knowledge, both by widening access to schools and universities and by developing curricula, teaching methods and practices that are fit for purpose and adapted to the lived experiences of young people today.

In line with the importance placed by young Nigerians on the values of security and benevolence towards others, young Nigerians believe that ending discrimination and prejudice and fostering unity will have a positive impact on the voices and prospects of the Nigerian population as a whole. They are also vocal advocates for justice, opposing acts of criminality and abuses of power, and calling for reforms that will maintain the rule of law and ensure high-quality governance. Recognising the power of mass media and the internet to facilitate public discussion and transparency around core issues, they believe that advancing media access and, in particular, access to the internet has the potential to yield civic and democratic dividends, but are also sensitive to the need to balance media freedoms against the threats of disinformation and hate speech. They continue to promote the importance of health and well-being and believe more needs to be done to guarantee universal, high-quality healthcare for all. A number of young Nigerians are taking the lead as climate activists, to help safeguard their country and the world from climate change.

The Covid-19 pandemic has magnified the imperative to support young Nigerians to achieve these aspirations. Compared with Nigeria's great success in combating the Ebola virus epidemic in 2014, the response to and impact of Covid-19 in Nigeria has not realised the early optimism of some commentators, but neither has it been as detrimental as in other countries. Amid the pandemic, Nigerian youth have been subject to competing media narratives. On the one hand, these narratives showcase young Nigerians' efforts to support their communities and pioneer the innovation and technology that will help lift Nigeria and the world out of the pandemic. On the other hand, they reiterate associations between youth, violence and unrest, through stories of young people stealing palliatives, resisting lockdown and engaging in violent protest.

Looking past these narratives to hear young Nigerians' own perspectives, the research uncovers that many have been hard-hit financially and in terms of future employment prospects. They are also concerned that poor trust in government has led people to ignore mitigation and prevention measures, weakening the efficacy of the public health response. In spite of these challenges, however, the actions of many young Nigerians are characterised by resilience, resourcefulness, kindness and generosity. These include taking time away from their regular occupations to learn new skills; pursuing new business opportunities, particularly in the online space; and self-organising to support their community by donating and delivering food, face masks, personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitation supplies to those in need.

To amplify youth voice and support better youth policymaking, this research asks, first, what having a voice means to young Nigerians themselves. From

their perspective, to have a voice an individual must have a sense of safety and security; the educational attainment necessary to be able to recognise and articulate one's views and perspectives; and the self-efficacy required to feel motivated to speak out. A person must also be afforded the opportunity to speak, should they wish to, and legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of their audiences, if they are to be heard.

In the context of local, national and international public discourse, young Nigerians perceive their own voices as limited and insignificant compared to more dominant groups that include politicians, religious leaders, celebrities and prominent human rights activists, as well as violent groups such as Boko Haram. On the international stage, meanwhile, they regard Nigeria itself as a dominant voice on the African continent, but substantially less so on the global stage, upon which the USA and China, as well as the UN, lead the way in terms of voice and influence. Despite the dominance of the USA's voice on the global stage, within Nigeria itself, the most dominant voices are China and the UN across the country, and Saudi Arabia among Nigeria's Muslim population.

In the context of their day-to-day lives, however, young Nigerians commonly identify ten asset classes in which they do have a voice. These are among friends, with family, in the community, in education, in the workplace, in commercial hubs such as marketplaces, within religious groups, when participating in sports, when using legacy media – most notably television and radio – and online, particularly on social media.

Finally, in regard to formal political participation, the research identifies four clusters within the youth population which are salient to supporting young voices within Nigerian democracy and

governance. These clusters include politically apathetic Nigerians (who are the most disengaged from political and democratic processes), unengaged voters, politically engaged young Nigerians, and the politically ambitious. Each cluster is associated with a set of challenges that must be addressed to ensure full youth political participation in Nigeria. Moreover, while these clusters are distributed across all demographic sub-groups, certain patterns are more strongly associated with some groups than others.

There is no quick fix for young Nigerians to achieve their visions for Nigeria. As a country that is ranked by young Nigerians as among the highest globally in sectors including education and employment opportunities, however, the UK and the British Council are optimally placed as partners supporting them to do so. To this end, this report offers 57 recommendations that are designed to amplify the voices of young Nigerians so that they can better influence the decisions and policies that affect their lives. These recommendations are tailored towards optimising the conditions under which young Nigerians have a voice both in day-to-day life and throughout the election cycle. All of these recommendations are informed by both the input of the Next Generation Nigeria Task Force and the views and perspectives of young Nigerians who participated in the research. In actioning these recommendations, we encourage the British Council and the task force not only to advocate traditional approaches, but to be bold and embrace new and innovative practices and methods that are designed to adapt to the reality of young Nigerians' lives.

> Introduction

Next Generation is the British Council research programme that explores the needs, potential and aspirations of young people aged 18 to 35 globally. The programme is designed to better understand and optimise the conditions under which young people in different countries can thrive and flourish as fulfilled, productive and active citizens. The first ever Next Generation report to focus on Nigeria was published in 2010. A decade later, this report returns to re-examine these conditions for young people living in the country today. It does so, moreover, in a year that marks 60 years of Nigerian independence from colonial rule, and which will also be remembered internationally as the year of the outbreak of the global Covid-19 pandemic, which at the time of writing continues to affect nation-states and populations worldwide, including Nigeria.

These momentous events follow in the wake of an ongoing period of rapid and intense changes in the circumstances and prospects of young Nigerians. Today, the country is experiencing rapid economic change, driven by the imperative to decrease reliance on oil and gas in the face of a declining fossil fuels market; the rapid growth of a 'gig' economy to complement Nigeria's already significant informal economy; and the ever-increasing role played by technology in defining what jobs, employment and work look like. In 2018, following several decades of marginalisation of young voices in Nigeria's politics and governance, Nigerian President Muhammed Buhari signed the Not Too Young To Run

(NTYTR) bill into law, lowering age restrictions on holding elected office, and resulting in significant gains in terms of the number of young Nigerians running for, and winning, elected office in the 2019 general elections. Widening access to and usage of social media has resulted in a surge of young voices advocating in response to a range of issues online, including gender-based violence, sexual harassment and women's rights (#ArewaMeToo, #MovementMarch, #BeingFemaleinNigeria); the rights of marginalised and minority groups such as people living with disabilities (#RampUpNigeria); as well as other historically endemic, systemic problems such as interethnic discrimination and violence, poor social cohesion and access to justice (#EnoughisEnough, #StopBokoHaram, #EndSARS).

In the context of these significant and overlapping historical moments, and in the year of Nigeria's 60th anniversary of independence, this research presents a timely and in-depth exploration of Nigeria's next generation, paying particular attention to questions including:

- What matters most to young Nigerians, in terms of values and aspirations?
- How much of a voice do young Nigerians feel they have to shape their country and communities?
- What visions do they have for their communities and country?
- What policies need to be developed to ensure that they are able to use their voices to make these visions reality?

These questions are posed, moreover, in full acknowledgement of the imperative to accommodate and reflect the huge regional, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity of a youth population that is the largest in Africa, and the fourth largest globally. Comprising hundreds of ethnic groups,¹ speaking more than 500 languages, and engaging in a rich array of religious practices, both global (Islam, Christianity) and indigenous, Nigeria warrants an approach and research design that is fully sensitised to the inherent diversity of the lifestyles, values, interests, concerns and priorities of its young citizens. Furthermore, this research also recognises the imperative of including the voices of those groups who, for a variety of reasons and to varying degrees, have been marginalised from the public sphere, including young women, young Nigerians living with disabilities, young Nigerians belonging to minority ethnic and migrant groups, and young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) Nigerians.

By posing these questions of these groups, using a wide array of methods and techniques, this research seeks to provide the British Council and the Next Generation Task Force with the data and evidence necessary not just to understand in greater detail the lives, motivations and prospects of young Nigerians today, but also to support young Nigerians to shape their futures, the future of their communities, and the future of their country, in line with their own values and priorities. To this end, in addition to exploring in depth the values and challenges faced by young Nigerians today, this research adopts

1 > The population is composed of over 250 ethnic groups, the three largest of which are Hausas (30 per cent), Yorubas (15.5 per cent) and Igbos (15.2 per cent) (CIA World Factbook, 2019). Other relatively large groups within the general population include Fulani peoples (six per cent – sometimes classified together with Hausas due to close historical and linguistic ties), Tiv (2.4 per cent), Kanuri/Berberi (2.4 per cent) and Ibibio (1.8 per cent). However, significant variations in the ethnic composition at the state and sub-state levels mean that these national-level statistics fail to properly capture the complexity of ethnic identities in Nigeria. For a detailed breakdown of the Next Generation survey sample by ethnic group, see Appendix 2.

as a guiding principle the imperative for policies that create, facilitate and optimise the conditions under which young Nigerians themselves are able to take the lead in addressing the issues they care about. The data, evidence and insights generated following this approach are presented across five chapters:

Covid-19 in Nigeria

Nigeria, like the rest of the world, is currently in the midst of navigating the global Covid-19 pandemic. First identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, the resulting pandemic has elicited over 28 million cases across 188 countries and territories, at the time of writing. To contextualise the findings of the wider report, this section explores Nigeria's response to the pandemic, reviews relevant media coverage, and incorporates insights into how the pandemic and subsequent actions taken in response have affected young Nigerians across the country, based on the responses of 24 young Nigerians who participated in the Covid-19 video diary workstream.

Values

Values refer to what people think is important to them in life, with people making judgements and choosing courses of action depending on the extent to which certain behaviours, policies and events align or disagree with the values that are most important to them. Given the foundational role values play in helping to understand the motivations, attitudes and behaviours of people, this chapter explores both which values are most important to

young Nigerians and what the main sources of influences are shaping these values and informing young Nigerians' value hierarchies.

Voices

The Next Generation programme is part of the British Council's commitment to exploring youth voice and choice. The third chapter of this report realises this commitment by considering the conditions under which young Nigerians feel like they have a voice currently, to provide the foundation for developing policies to facilitate the inclusion and amplification of their voices in local and national decision-making going forward. The chapter begins by exploring what it means to have a voice, from the perspective of young Nigerians. Subsequent sections go on to explore whose voices are dominant and marginalised in Nigeria; the contexts in which young Nigerians feel like they have a voice in day-to-day life; and the extent to which young Nigerians have and use their voices to influence state and national decision-making.

Visions for Nigeria

Building on previous chapters' insights into young Nigerians' values and what needs to be addressed to support and amplify young voices, the final chapter of this report explores the goals that young Nigerians envision and are working towards, for themselves, their communities and their country. Eight goals are identified. For each goal, this chapter provides an overview of current obstacles, together with initiatives and evidence of progress towards their achievement.

Conclusions and recommendations

The Next Generation programme is not only dedicated to understanding the lived experiences, aspirations and prospects of young people, but is an initiative to amplify the voices of young people so that they can better influence the decisions and policies that affect their lives. With this in mind, the concluding chapter presents 57 recommendations for the British Council and its partners to support the voices of young Nigerians. All of the recommendations presented are based on input from the Next Generation Nigeria Task Force, as well as the views and perspectives of young Nigerians who participated in the research.

> Methodology

This section provides an overview of the workstreams and methods employed in the research. Further detail on the

demographics of participants in each workstream is provided in Appendix 2 at the end of this report. The research

design was comprised of five inter-related workstreams, each of which is summarised below.

Figure 1: Research design

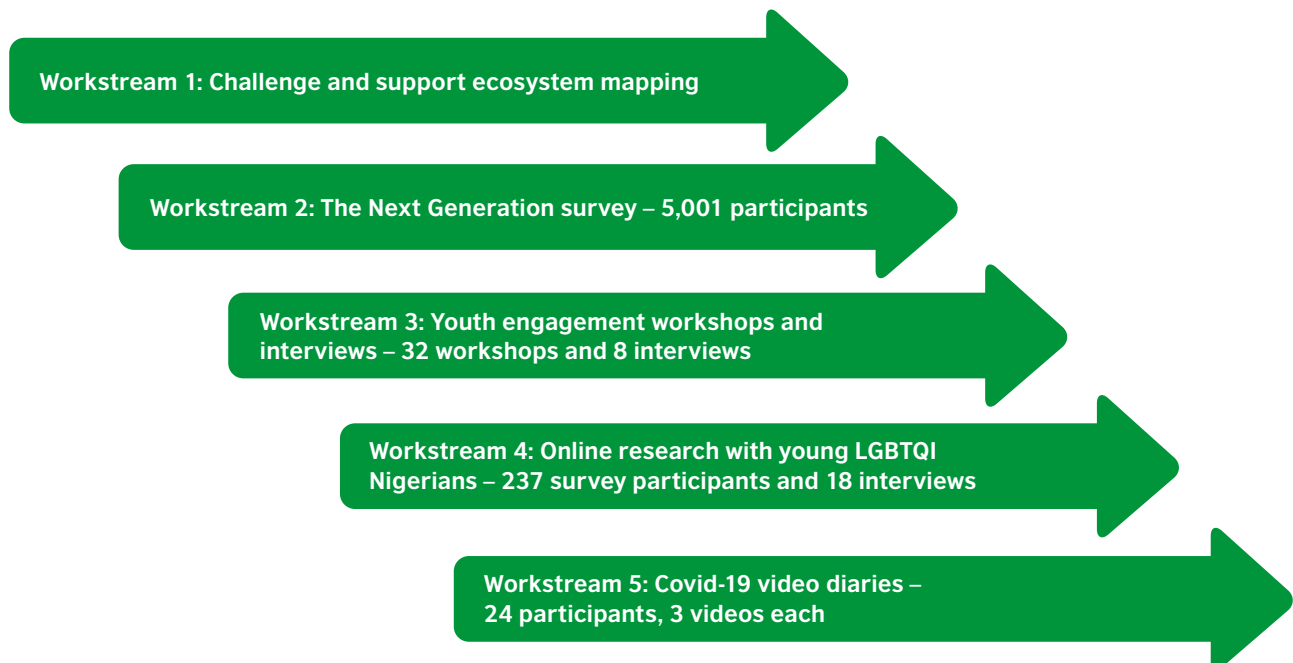


Figure 2: Next Generation Nigeria key informant interviewees



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Executive Director
Raising New Voices
Initiative



Ahmad Idris
Co-Founder and CEO
Steamledge Ltd



Ahmed Alaga
Programme Director
Teach for Nigeria



Aishatu (Aisha Pearce)
Founder
Peniel Foundation



Aver Akighir
Founder
Possibilities TV



Aysha Tofa
Founder and Executive
Director
Startup Kano



Bisi Alimi
Founder
The Bisi Alimi
Foundation



Blessing Ocheido
Founder
Platinum Interventions
Care Initiative



Bright Jaja
Founder and CEO
iCreate Africa



Bruce Lucas
Founder
Olotu Square



Bukola Ayinde
Founder
Diary of Special Needs
Mum Initiative



Bunmi Otegbade
Founder
Generation Enterprise



Cynthia Mbamalu
Co-Founder and
Director of
Programmes
Yiaga Africa



Damaris Maiko
Sports Correspondent
– Armed Forces Radio
107.7 Abuja, Nigeria
Level 1 Coach
Educator Sports
Consultant –
Institute For
Governance and Social
Research (IGSR) Jos



Elizabeth Tatau Williams
Executive Director
Sustainable Impact and
Development Initiative

Figure 2: Next Generation Nigeria key informant interviewees (continued)



Ezinne Uwaeme
Entrepreneur



Fakhriyya Hashim
Founder and Convener
#ArewaMeToo



Farida Yahya
Founder –
Lumo Naturals
Lead tutor –
The Brief Academy



Fatima Abdul Karim
Lecturer and
Lead Tutor
Department of Banking
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Femi Longe
Co-Founder –
Co-Creation Hub Nigeria
CEO – Qiesto Learning



Femi Taiwo
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Opportunities World



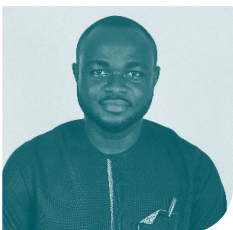
Huzaifa Yakubu Musa
Founder and CEO
Kirkira Innovation Hub



**Janet Gogo
Wellington**
Founder –
Exotic Secrets
Fragrance World
Programme Officer
– Community Resources
Development
Organization



Japheth Omojuwa
Author – *Digital: The
New Code of Wealth*
Founder –
The Alpha Reach



JIRAJI Kelvin Tersoo
Founder and CEO
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Jude Feranmi
Convener
Raising New Voices
Initiative



Kayode Olaide
Executive Producer
– Queercity Podcast
Creative Director
– Teame NG
CEO – Nurban
Managements



Kenneth Gyang
Filmmaker
Cinema Kpatakpata



Lola Shoneyin
Director
Ake Arts and
Book Festival



Misan Rewawn
Co-Founder
WAVE



Ndi Kato
Founder/Executive
Director
Dinidari Empowerment
Foundation



Noel Samuel
Child Protection and
Safeguarding Officer
Disability Rights
Advocacy Centre



Oluwakemi Odusanya
Admin Officer
Nigerian Association
of the Blind



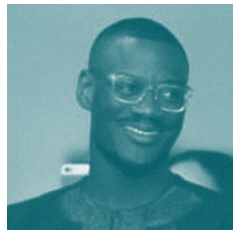
Onyeka Akumah
Founder and CEO
Farmcrowdy Limited



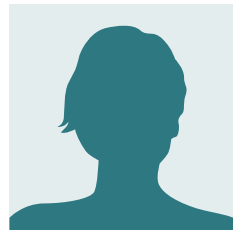
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Chikeze**
Founder and CEO
The Assembly Hub

Workstream 1: Challenge and support ecosystem mapping

The formative stage of this research set out to identify and describe the range of challenges facing young Nigerians today and to map the conditions under which young Nigerians are currently encouraged, supported and safeguarded in their efforts to overcome these challenges.

Two methods were employed: a data review of documents and data available in the public domain; and key informant interviews with 38 young Nigerian pioneers and Nigerians with specialised expertise in areas including youth advocacy and political participation, education, youth entrepreneurship and employment, the arts and creative industries, and the lives and experiences of marginalised groups in Nigeria (see Figure 2). Key informant interviews were conducted over the full course of the fieldwork period, enabling the research to gather perspectives on events such as the Covid-19 pandemic as they unfolded.

Workstream 2: The Next Generation survey

The Next Generation survey consisted of a nationally representative survey of young people aged 18 to 35 (n=5,001²) who are Nigerian nationals currently residing in Nigeria. The survey employed multistage, stratified, clustered random sampling to ensure proportional distribution of the sample size (5,001 interviews) across the six geographic regions/zones, 34 states³ and Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The sampling employed stratification and randomisation at each step of the process:

1. stratification at the regional, urban and rural level
2. stratification at the level of local government area (LGA)

3. selection of urban and rural primary sampling units (PSUs) in each LGA
4. selection of households in each PSU
5. selection of respondent in each household.

Quotas and sample controls were used to ensure the representation of two marginalised groups: young Nigerians living with disabilities and vulnerable women. Women were classified as vulnerable if they met any of the following criteria: single mothers; divorced, separated or widowed; first married below the age of 16; and first became pregnant below the age of 16. A quota of 200 young people from each group was incorporated into the total sample, distributed evenly across all states within which survey fieldwork was conducted.

Finally, to facilitate comparisons between residents of mega-urban, urban and rural areas, the sample was designed to ensure that a minimum of 400 young people in both Lagos City and Kano City participated in the survey.

Workstream 3: Youth engagement workshops and interviews

Four youth workshops were convened across two locations (one rural, one urban) in one state in each geographical zone of Nigeria, with males and females belonging to the general youth population (24 workshops total). To capture the perspectives of members of marginalised groups living in each state, an additional eight workshops and 16 one-on-one interviews were conducted with young, vulnerable⁴ women (four workshops in total, across four states) and young Nigerians living with disabilities (four workshops and 16 supplementary interviews in total, spread across two states). All groups were single sex and were conducted in the most commonly spoken language in each location,

using a semi-structured discussion guide. A breakdown of the workshops by state and location is provided in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

Workstream 4: Online research with young LGBTQI Nigerians

The criminalisation of LGBTQI identities combined with the prevalence and deep rootedness of homophobic beliefs and attitudes in Nigeria means that primary research with young LGBTQI Nigerians carries additional security and confidentiality considerations, compared to other marginalised groups.

To ensure that these challenges did not limit the recognition and participation of young LGBTQI Nigerians within the Next Generation research programme, an online version of the full Next Generation survey was created and distributed via social media and email, with the routing configured so as to ensure that only young LGBTQI Nigerians living in Nigeria were eligible to complete the survey. A total of 237 online participants completed the survey. A full demographic breakdown of the sample is provided in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

To complement the survey data, a total of 18 young LGBTQI Nigerians participated in an online programme of qualitative research. Participants included a mix of sexual orientations (gay, lesbian and bisexual),⁵ ethnicities and religions, from states in both the north and south of Nigeria. These interviews were conducted using a streamlined version of the discussion guide used in Workstream 3, which was adapted to afford in-depth discussion of the concept of voice, specifically. A demographic breakdown of online interview participations is provided in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

2 > A sample of this size provides sufficient level of accuracy with an average margin of error of +/-4% at 95% confidence level, assuming a design effect of 5, 20 interviews per cluster and a high level of clustering (Intraclass Correlation Coefficient of 0.28).

3 > The survey was not conducted in Borno and Yobe due to security and safety considerations. Similarly, in some states it was not feasible to conduct research in rural areas and therefore only urban dwellers were interviewed (Adamawa, Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara).

4 > As with the survey, women were classified as vulnerable if they met any of the following criteria: single mothers; divorced, separated, or widowed; first married below the age of 16; or first became pregnant below the age of 16.

5 > Invitations were made and accepted by young members of the trans community. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, young trans Nigerians who accepted the initial invitation decided not to participate.

A young man with dark skin, wearing a bright red polo shirt and large black over-ear headphones, is shown in profile from the waist up. He is smiling broadly and has his right hand raised in a gesture, palm facing forward. He is standing behind a DJ mixer, with his left hand resting on the controls. The background is a bright, out-of-focus outdoor setting with a large, light-colored curved structure. The overall mood is energetic and positive.

Workstream 5: Covid-19 diaries

Following the outbreak of Covid-19 in Nigeria, the British Council and the M&C Saatchi World Services recognised the expediency of an additional workstream to contextualise the findings of the wider Next Generation study, by capturing in their own words the experiences and attitudes of young Nigerians in response to the pandemic. Lockdown conditions and health and safety requirements warranted a research design that was tailored to the unique research challenges posed by the virus.

The resultant workstream employed a video diary methodology, as part of which 24 young Nigerians were required to record video responses to a set of three themes over a six-week data collection period. Each participant lived in a different location, with the total sample spread across 12 states and including an even mix of males and females, urban/rural residents, social classes, and disabled and non-disabled participants. For each theme, a subset of participants whose videos were considered to warrant further discussion was invited to participate in a 15-minute follow-up interview, to explore their responses in greater detail. A full demographic breakdown of diary participants is provided in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

> Chapter 1: Covid-19 in Nigeria

Covid-19 and Next Generation

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented effect on the world, no less on Nigeria. The virus was disclosed in Wuhan, China on 31 December (NCDC, 2020a) and by 31 January, the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and the federal government established the Coronavirus Preparedness Group (This Day Live, 2020). Nigeria confirmed its first case on 27 February 2020, an Italian citizen who returned to work in Lagos from Milan (NCDC, 2020b). At the time of writing, the number of confirmed cases stands at 55,829⁶ (NCDC, 2020a).

The pandemic hit Nigeria in the middle of fieldwork for Next Generation Nigeria research (see Figure 3). The fast-changing conditions on the ground in Nigeria raised the question of the value of conducting additional research focused on how young Nigerians were responding to the pandemic. Three factors determined the decision to proceed with the additional study.

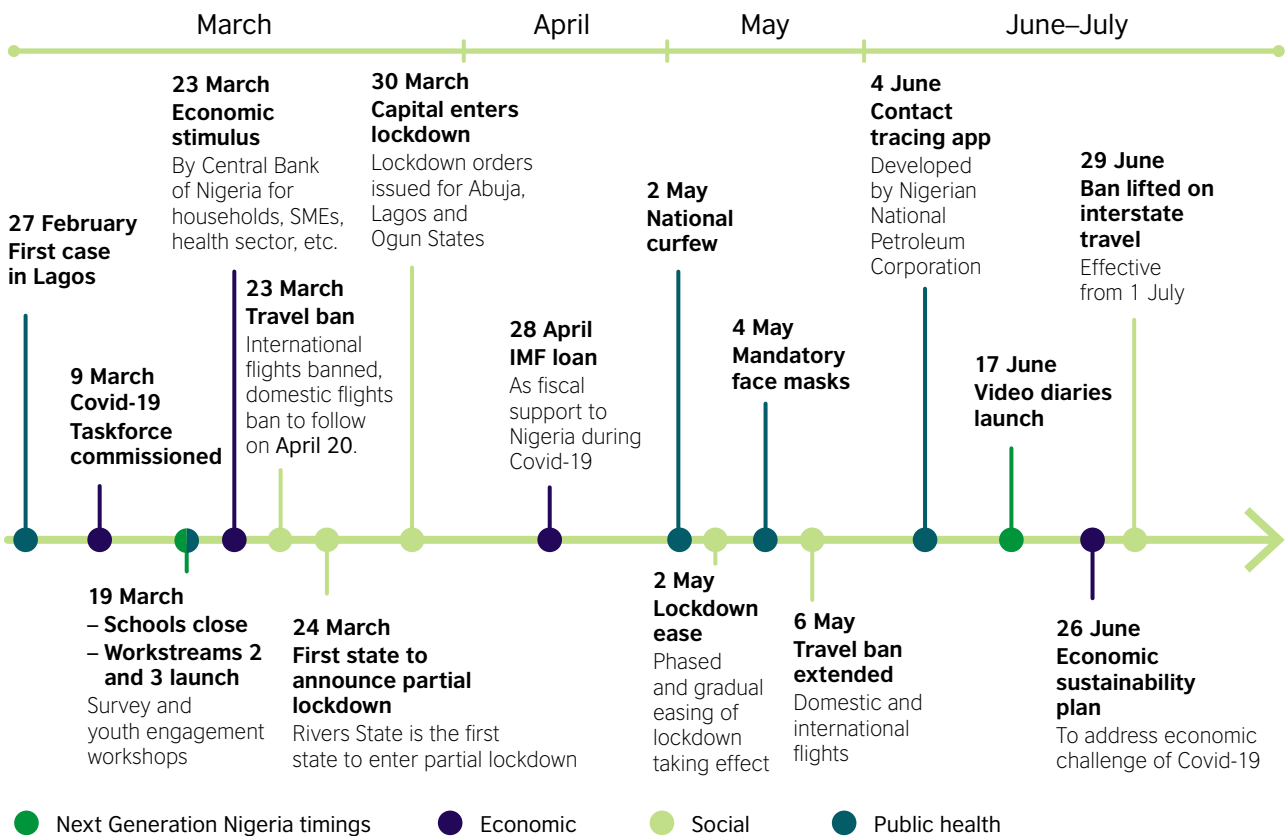
1. Engaging with young Nigerians on the impact of Covid-19 on their day-to-day lives would provide a more nuanced and of-the-moment frame of reference to the interpretation of the broader research programme.
2. The fieldwork timeline spanned several weeks, while the nature of the pandemic meant that conditions were

changing regularly and dramatically. As a result, and as demonstrated by the video diaries, youth responses across time were affected from one time point to the next.

3. The focus of the Next Generation Nigeria project on youth aspiration, opportunity, employment and voice was expected to be highly impacted by the pandemic.

To address these three objectives, the British Council commissioned an additional study component. A research approach was designed to work around limitations imposed by lockdown measures. This culminated in the development of the Covid-19 video diaries.

Figure 3: Timeline of Nigeria’s response in comparison to Next Generation fieldwork



6 > See <https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/>

The global pandemic in developing countries

As an emerging country, Nigeria presents certain conditions that negatively affect how effectively it can combat the virus and manage the long-term consequences. These so-called 'amplifying factors' of developing countries which risk exacerbating the impact of the virus include:

- pre-existing high levels of poverty and inequality
- relatively limited public sector services
- a high proportion of informal workers or workers employed in micro-firms (Djankov & Panizza, 2020).

Research shows that the responses put in place across African countries to contain the spread of the virus and the economic policy responses to shield the effects of the pandemic tend to exclude informal workers, accounting for 86 per cent of employment in Africa (Kiaga & Lapeyre, 2020).

Further, there is evidence that citizens from low-/middle-income countries are less likely to observe the lockdown measures enacted by their governments, and are likely to perceive their governments as untrustworthy and to have not responded sufficiently and appropriately to the situation (Djankov & Panizza, 2020). Infection rates in developing countries are on the rise, yet the reported number of cases is constrained by limitations in testing capacity of these countries. As a result, even the seemingly low infection rates could be imprecise.

Covid-19 in Nigeria: Early expectations versus reality

Early in the development of the global pandemic, the general expectation was for Nigeria to harness a positive and robust response to control the spread of the virus. Two factors contributed to this optimistic expectation: Nigeria's highly effective response to the 2014–16 Ebola epidemic, and the relatively slow spread of the virus in developing countries.

First, Nigeria was highly praised by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) for its competent response in controlling the outbreak of Ebola (Fasina et al., 2014). Despite Nigeria's dense population and burdened public services providing optimal conditions for disease transmission, the country was highly successful at controlling the spread due to meticulously and consistently following public health practice and surveillance (Harmon Courage, 2014). Furthermore, the lessons learned from the outbreak led Nigeria to reinforce the capacity of its National Reference Laboratory, and to develop public health risk communications (Quartz Africa, 2020). Second, early expectations spelled hope for developing countries to be protected from the pandemic. However, these hopes were misplaced as they were based on myths of warm weather providing unfavourable conditions for Covid-19, and from seemingly low infection rates that are more attributable to testing capacity (Djankov & Panizza, 2020).

In reality, to date, Nigeria's response to the pandemic has neither met the early positive expectations nor been as extreme as other countries. While Nigeria was praised for its response to Ebola, a 2017 evaluation scored Nigeria poorly in being able to prevent, detect and respond to public health risks (Brookings, 2020). For example, Nigeria has the capacity to conduct just 2,500 tests a day but, due to constraints in human resources and equipment, less than 50 per cent of these are administered (Brookings, 2020). High levels of identification and surveillance characterised Nigeria's successful response to Ebola; however, in-depth interviews with Nigerian youth experts reveal fears that the same rigorous approach is not being adopted to combat Covid-19.

Nigeria has the capacity to test hundreds of thousands of people every day, but that is not their concern. Nigeria has the capacity to have a well-equipped isolation centre in every state, but that is still not the focus.

Female, KII

As outlined in Figure 3, Nigeria's response to Covid-19 has evolved over time. It began in March with the commissioning of the task force for Covid-19 and implementation of lockdown orders. Travel and international flight bans were put in place alongside a ban on mass gatherings and the suspension of religious activities and schools. Near the end of March and into April, the government's strategy transformed to encompass more economic measures, including the

provision of food packages, stimulus packages for households in need, and cash transfers for poor people registered on the National Social Register (NSR). To supplement the public sector response, the government also called for private sector organisations to donate and raise the \$330 million it claims it needs to combat the virus successfully. Donations have come in from the Finance Minister, Zainab Ahmed, and Nigeria's state oil company, with a large proportion of these funds focused on supporting Lagos State, which is among one of the worst hit states (Reuters, 2020). The month of May saw flight bans extended and the enactment of mandatory face masks to further protect the public.

Economic stimulus packages were unveiled by the government to cope with the compounding effect of the economic impact of the pandemic. A crash in the global output has devastated the economic growth in oil-exporting countries such as Nigeria, whose reliance on exporting oil is illustrated by crude oil sales accounting for approximately 90 per cent of foreign exchange earnings and over 50 per cent of government revenue (Sukri, 2020). There are three main economic support programmes that have been implemented by the Government, which are crucial to supporting the population but have their limitations. The Economic Stimulus Bill was passed by the House of Representatives in March to support registered businesses and citizens to provide tax rebates and reduce staff cuts. However, this support programme failed to incorporate businesses in the informal sector, which are typically unregistered yet employ upwards of 80 per cent of Nigeria's workforce (ILO, 2018). Another programme is Cash Transfer, which is aimed at helping poor people registered on the NSR by giving them 20,000 naira (Human Rights Watch, 2020). With hopes to reach 3.6 million households, the

reach of the Cash Transfer economic assistance programme is wide but is ultimately dwarfed by the 87 million Nigerians who live on less than \$1.90 a day (Brookings, 2018). The third programme is the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)'s stimulus package, which is aimed again at poor families, offering them three million naira in credit. A drawback of this economic support programme is the interest rate attached to this loan, and the need for collateral. Furthermore, poor communication of the support offered by the government has led to too few households and businesses being informed about the assistance available (Brookings, 2020).

In terms of economic support targeting Nigerian youth specifically, this has been few and far between. Reports suggest better collaboration is required across the government agencies that are providing capital to better support the industries that young Nigerians are involved in, such as agriculture (Ayeni, 2020).

Lockdown measures led to reduced availability of goods and this, combined with poor economic growth in Nigeria, culminated in the prices of foodstuffs, supplies and services soaring across Nigeria, often by over 100 per cent (Ayeni, 2020). It became necessary for the government to distribute palliatives to those who could no longer afford basic amenities, the efficiency of which has been widely criticised by Nigerians.

The palliative they normally give? The money was nowhere to be found. The poor people are left on their own. People were stranded. Some were dying of hunger, you know?

Female, KII

Lockdown measures evolved and ebbed across Nigeria, with bans being extended and eased over time. While state and federal government-enforced lockdowns were implemented and eased accordingly to accommodate the

public's health and financial needs, there are reports of a lack of receptivity from Nigerian citizens. Ambiguity and inaction among young Nigerians appear to be driven by two main factors: a scepticism of the government's agenda, and a lack of informative and aligned messaging between the NCDC and the government.

This particular government that is in power is a government that forced itself to power, so there's so much distrust, even before Covid-19, between the people and this particular government.

Male, KII

First I would say the government and the NCDC, should start working on having one voice, because it makes it look unbelievable when NCDC is saying one thing and the government is saying another thing.

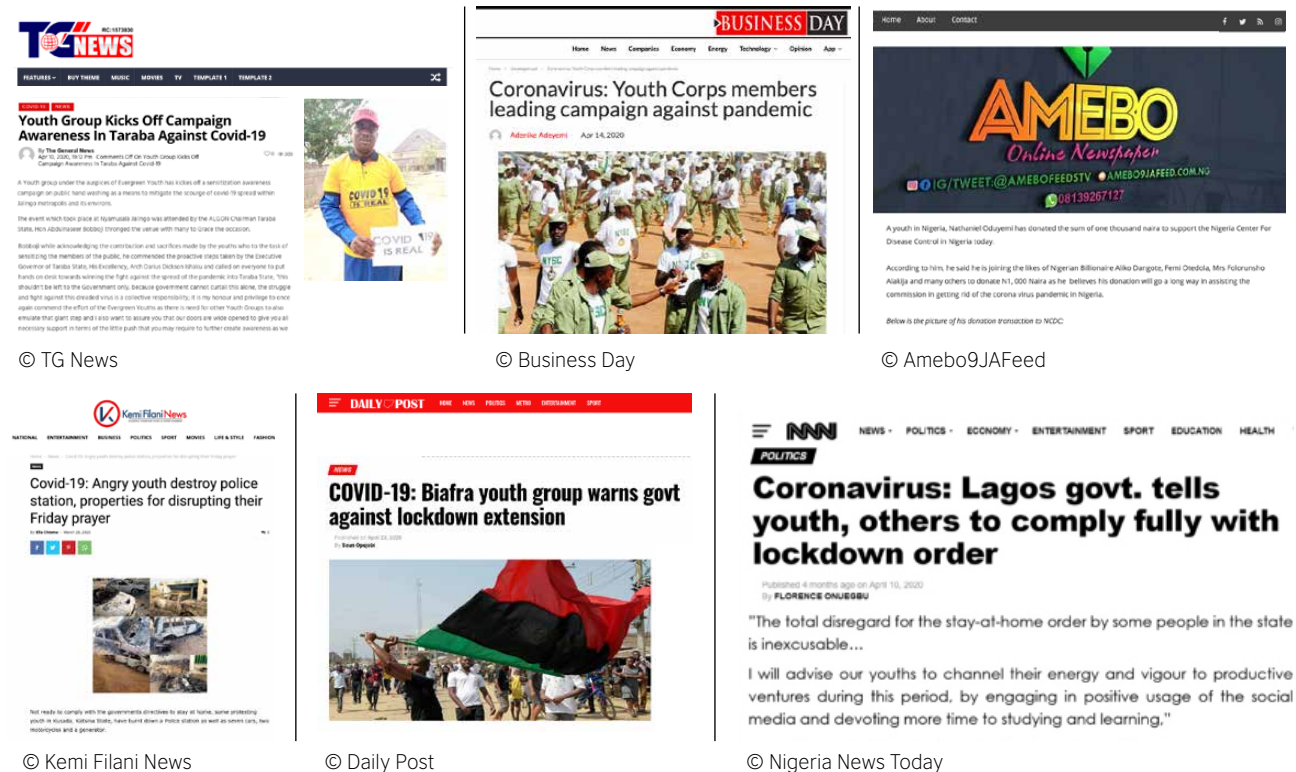
Female, KII

Competing narratives of young people

A media landscape analysis was conducted to review reports of young Nigerians during the pandemic. The tone and valence of the articles were assessed to understand how Nigerian youth are presented via media.

At a very high level, two distinct narratives of Nigeria's next generation emerged early on in news media coverage of the pandemic. These are, on the one hand, positive accounts recalling how young people have provided support for their communities across Nigeria and, further to this, are pioneering the innovation and technology that will lift Nigeria out of the pandemic. On the other hand, spikes in violent crime and unrest attributed to young people are also a common feature of the media environment (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Competing narratives of young Nigerians amid the pandemic



Listening to Nigeria's next generation: Perspectives, experiences and outlook in response to the pandemic

The Covid-19 video diaries were created to appropriately contextualise the research findings. Twenty-eight young Nigerians across the country were recruited to record a video response detailing how the pandemic has affected them and their community, their approach to overcoming the pandemic, and the future risks the pandemic poses.

Perspectives

Young Nigerians lack faith in their government's efficacy, which is largely driven by their perceptions of politicians and government officials as corrupt. The resulting scepticism of the government's agenda is thought by some young Nigerians to be contributing to disbelief in the existence of the virus, as well as to a dismissal of public health messaging. According to polling conducted by NOI in April 2020, six per cent of Nigerians believe that Covid-19 is not real (NOI, 2020).

A lot of young people are saying that Covid-19 is not real in this country, [that] Covid-19 is nothing but a political issue, it's just the politicians that are politicising the system in such a way for them to get a palliative from European countries.

Male, Wudil, Kano State (rural)

The video diaries provide an opportunity for young Nigerians to express how their attitude has changed in response to the pandemic. The diaries evidence that young people across the country have limited expectations of government support, and instead strive to be self-sufficient or seek support from their peers.

These days we don't just sit and look up to government to do everything. We work, we find a way to survive ourselves and that is the Nigerian spirit. Nigerian youths, we are strong.

Female, Owerri, Imo State (urban)

Experiences

The video diaries reveal that Covid-19 has intensified and exacerbated the challenges that young people already face.

A recent report by the Economic Sustainability Committee (ESC) indicates that the economic crisis driven by Covid-19 may lead to 39 million Nigerians falling into unemployment. Nigerian youth are expected to feel the greatest strain, as almost half of Nigeria's working-age population consists of young people aged 15 to 34 (Ayeni, 2020). Many young people express the challenges of finding employment due to firms and organisations halting their recruitment, and others share that they have lost their employment due to school and office closures. A large proportion of young Nigerians are self-employed, with members of this group who submitted videos also recalling the struggles they have encountered due to the lockdown measures implemented to contain the spread of the virus. These include an inability to travel across states to procure their stock or liaise with business partners, and the increased costs of travel due to social distancing on various forms of transport.

It has really affected the little income I normally get from the small-scale business that I am into, because due to the interstate lockdown, I can't order some of my stuffs that I want from other states.

Female, Yola, Adamawa State (urban)

Among the challenges, the video diaries recall many instances of young Nigerians' experiences of supporting their communities, expressing values of kindness and generosity towards others. These experiences include

young people organising themselves to support their community by donating and delivering food, face masks, PPE and sanitation supplies to those in need. It is noteworthy that this kindness extends beyond those who young Nigerians engage with regularly. This is exemplified by research participants who explain that the charitable acts that young people executed served those beyond their community.

My community makes sure they do things that helps the less privileged, even though in our area here there are not many who are less privileged. They contribute, get things together and send to others that are in the rural areas.

Male, Ajah, Lagos State (urban)

Outlook

In response to the adversity they face as a result of the pandemic, the Nigerian youth response to Covid-19 is characterised by resilience and resourcefulness, manifest in acts of looking for sustainable work and new business opportunities within the online space. Young Nigerians express an awareness that business structures which rely on offline mechanisms are struggling to adapt to the lockdown. Young Nigerians have therefore chosen to pursue online business ventures, with many succeeding in this respect. E-commerce and services are viewed as effective and necessary ventures to survive the pandemic.

If you can market your sales online, there is a higher chance that you are going to make money than if you are trying to act based on [the fact that Covid-19] will soon end. What if it never really ends?

Female, Ibadan, Oyo State (urban)

Young people believe that their peers should use this time to develop their skillset, specifically in a tech-focused skill, which potential employers will be seeking. This is because they believe that this will enable them to better mitigate the risks in employment and job security posed by the pandemic.

A less positive outlook conveyed by some young Nigerians concerned the need to use savings to support themselves and spending on day-to-day purchases, instead of the ambitious endeavours they had planned. This illustrates the long-term impact that the pandemic will have on young people – even upon those with savings who are relatively more economically stable in Nigeria.

I don't really have much and the little that I have saved up I'm gradually losing everything to the hike in price of things around, the foodstuff and basic things I need at home.

Male, Igbogbo, Lagos State (rural)

The savings I did to sponsor myself for the master's programme, I've been using it to sustain myself during the crisis, so it has affected my educational plan because I planned [to use it] for my MSc.

Male, Ngbalang, Adamawa State (rural)

The video diaries have illuminated what matters to young Nigerians and how, in the face of the pandemic, these issues have become pronounced. Furthermore, the diaries bring out core values in young Nigerians, such as benevolence and ambition. Many of the issues and characteristic highlighted are echoed in the Next Generation Nigeria findings, as detailed in the next chapter.

> Chapter 2: Values

An introduction to values

Values refer to what people think is important to them in life, with people making judgements and choosing courses of action depending on the extent to which certain behaviours, policies and events align or disagree with the values that are most important to them (Schwartz, 2012).

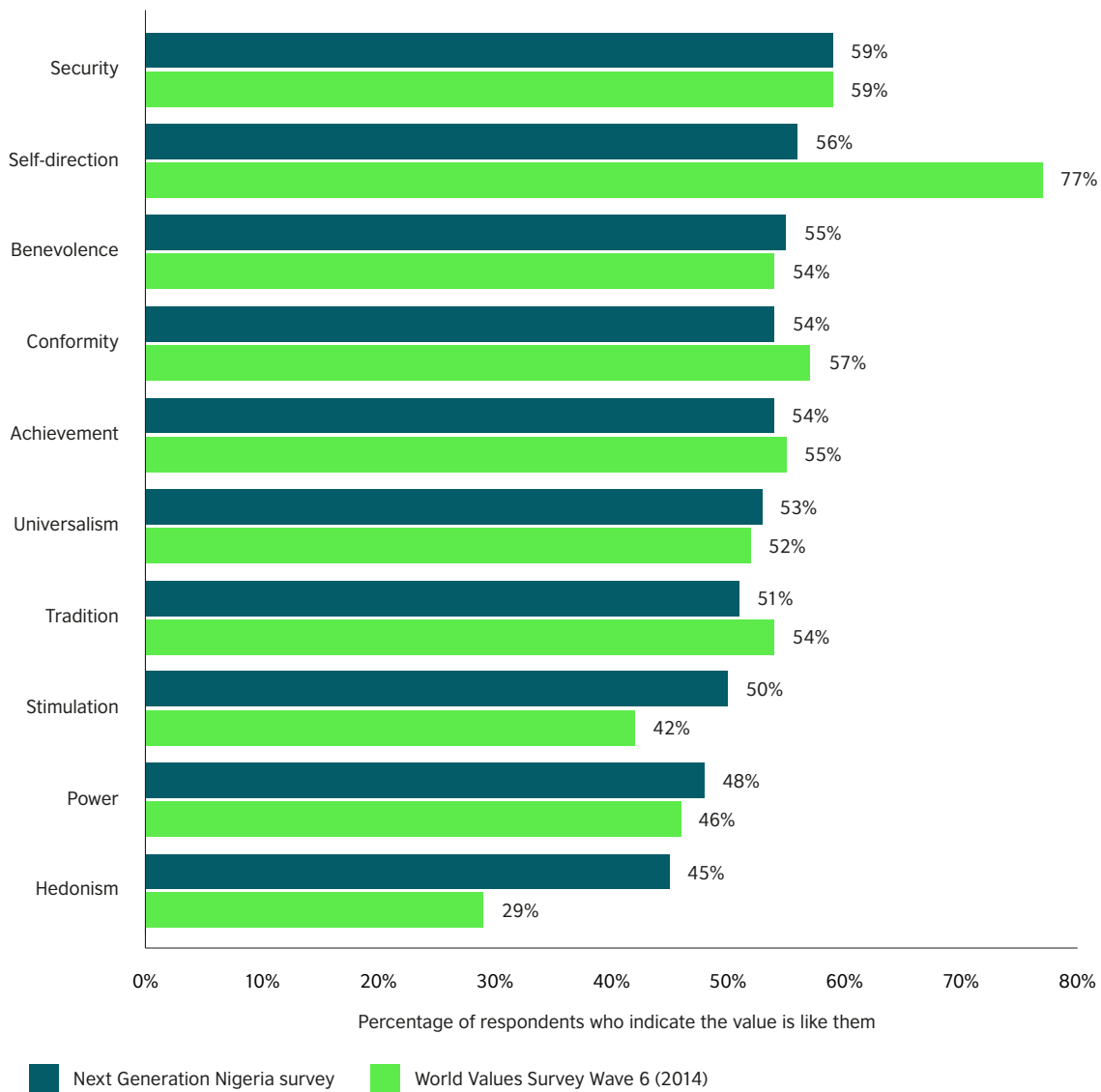
Given the foundational role values play in helping to understand peoples' motivations, attitudes and behaviours, this chapter explores both which values are most important to young Nigerians and what the main sources of influences are shaping these values and informing young Nigerians' value hierarchies.

This chapter does so, moreover, by triangulating primary and secondary data gathered from a range of sources (see Figure 5), in order to provide a ranking of different values in terms of the percentage of young Nigerians who consider them important (see Figure 6), and to map the groups who inspire and embody these values for young Nigerians today (see Figure 7).

Figure 5: Data sources for exploring young Nigerians' values



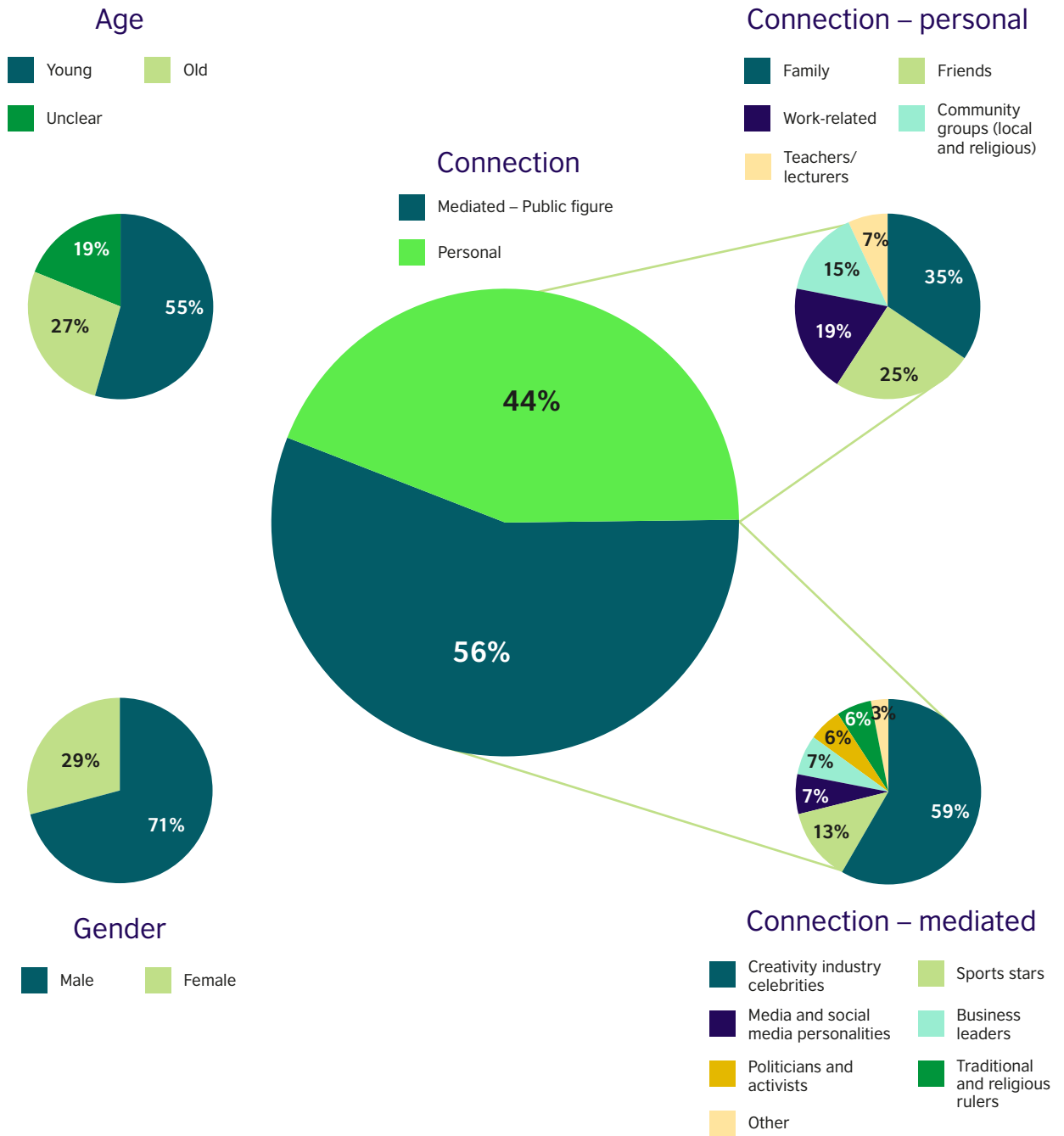
Figure 6: Young Nigerians' most important values



Base (Next Generation survey): General population (n=5,001)

Base (World Values Survey): WVS dataset aged 18–35 (n=856)

Figure 7: Young Nigerians' role models, by age, gender and connection



Important values

This section explores in greater detail the top five values most widely identified as important to young Nigerians, based on their responses to the Next Generation survey. It does so by drawing on insights from the workshops and re-analyses of secondary data, most notably the World Values Survey (WVS).⁷ Five important values are described: security, self-direction, benevolence, conformity and tradition.⁸

Security: Most important for all

Security values are considered important by the largest majority of young Nigerians, regardless of age, gender, education, socio-economic class or location.

Responses to the Next Generation survey show 59 per cent of young Nigerians consider security an important value – the largest percentage of any value. This ranking is consistent across all demographic sub-groups. Security values, as the label suggests, relate to goals such as safety, good health, and a sense of belonging, meaning that the majority of young Nigerians are likely to make choices, and judge positively policies and actions, which serve their basic physiological and safety needs by, for example, helping them to achieve financial security, avoid violence and conflict, and stay healthy (Schwartz, 2012). Figure 8 demonstrates the extent to which this is indeed the case: asked what they think Nigeria's top two priorities should be for the next five years, overwhelming majorities preferred ensuring safety and security (most and second most important priority for 39 per cent and 31 per cent of young Nigerians, respectively) and

prioritising economic growth (most and second most important priority for 34 per cent and 32 per cent of young Nigerians, respectively).

The former response is unambiguously an expression of the value of security. The latter, meanwhile, can be interpreted as such in light of the challenges young Nigerians face today in terms of finding employment and achieving financial security. Data from the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) indicates that, at the end of 2018, approximately 56 per cent of 15- to 34-year-olds in Nigeria were either underemployed (working less than 20 hours a week – 26 per cent) or unemployed (30 per cent) (NBS, 2018). Results from the Next Generation survey, meanwhile, indicate that employment worries and financial insecurity are the most widespread of all matters among young Nigerians, with the majority of the young population personally affected (for further discussion, see Chapter 4 of this report).

As these examples suggest, the relative importance placed by young Nigerians on the value of security is likely a product of under-service in areas including health, education, employment and physical security from conflict and violence. Unsurprisingly, this under-service emerged as a prominent theme in conversations with young Nigerians, who regard it as a crucial inhibitor of development at the individual, community and national levels. For further discussion of these issues, see Chapter 4.

What I will like to change about Nigeria is the security. There is no security of life and property in Nigeria. I would like to change this.

Male (PLWD), Bauchi, Bauchi State (urban)

Benevolence and self-direction: More important for most

Self-direction

Goals and qualities such as independence, creativity, curiosity and openness to change are considered important by the majority of young Nigerians.

Responses to the Next Generation survey indicate that self-direction ranks among the top three values for young Nigerians as whole, as well as for the majority of demographic sub-groups. Results from the WVS reiterate the importance of self-direction for young Nigerians, with a significantly greater majority of respondents (77 per cent for the WVS versus 56 per cent for the Next Generation survey) identifying it as an important value for them personally (see Figure 6).

Self-direction refers to goals of independent thought and action, and is associated with qualities and dispositions including creativity, curiosity, autonomy and openness to change. As such, the results of the Next Generation survey suggest that many young Nigerians are likely to favour actions, policies and events which enable them to secure independence, follow their own path, explore new opportunities, and engage in decision-making for themselves.

That being said, responses to the most recent iteration of the WVS (Wave 7 – 2020) suggest the extent to which the value of self-direction may come into conflict with, and be subordinate to, values of conformity and respect for traditions and expectations in certain contexts. When asked what qualities they think it is important for children to be encouraged to learn at home, for example, a minority of young

7 > Specifically, the secondary data analysis employed data gathered during the two most recent waves of the World Values Survey in Nigeria. The first of these waves started fieldwork in 2010, with data released in 2014. The second, meanwhile, started fieldwork in 2017, with data released in August 2020. For further information, see: www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp

8 > These labels are taken from the Schwartz Theory of Basic Human Values, which specifies ten basic human values: security, conformity, tradition, achievement, power, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism and benevolence (Schwartz, 2012). To measure the relative importance of these values for young Nigerians, the Next Generation survey incorporated 21 survey items included in the Schwartz Personal Values Questionnaire (PVQ-21).

Nigerians referenced qualities related to self-direction such as independence and imagination (30 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively), while a majority referenced qualities such as good manners (89 per cent), religious faith (75 per cent) and obedience (58 per cent – see Figure 9).

Responses to both the Next Generation survey and the WVS indicate that young Nigerians with higher educational attainment are more likely to assign relatively higher importance to the value self-direction, indicating the liberating potential of education to motivate young people to pursue their own aspirations. Conversations with young Nigerians also suggest the influential role played by celebrities within the sports and entertainment industries in embodying

the value of self-direction. These include, for example, music artists such as Falz, 2Baba and Teniola Apata; actors and actresses like Regina Daniels, Toyin Maku and Alexx Ekubo; and social media personalities like Bobrisky, all of whom are admired for having overcome adversity and deciding to follow their own dreams and identities, in spite of what others may have said. The role of these figures in promoting self-direction is further illustrated by the increasing involvement of celebrities in Nigerian politics and activism – exemplified, for instance, by the release of the single ‘Not For Sale’ by artists 2Baba, MI Abaga and Chidinma Ekile, which advocated against vote-selling by youth in the run up to the 2019 election (Vanguard, 2019).

Falz gives people choices. In the music industry, he is breaking through barriers. Most of the artists that you see now, they either go through comedy, music, they make it there, but Falz, he goes into comedy, acting and he also sings, and he is excelling in all points. That is the kind of role model that actually motivates me, that I want to be like.

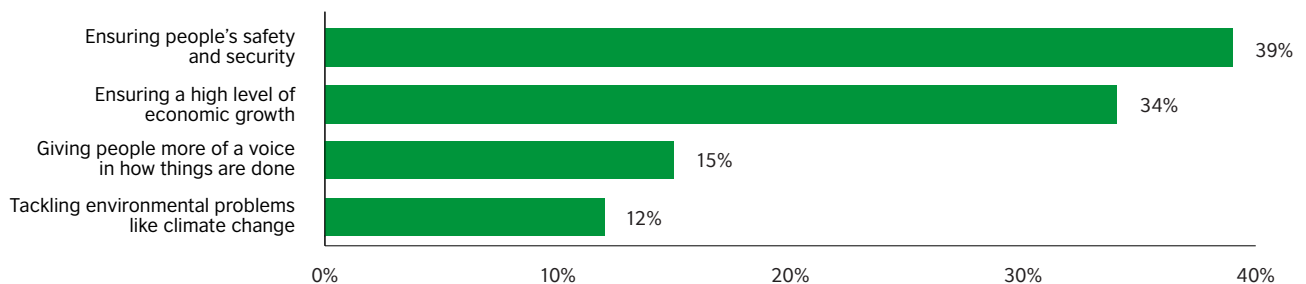
Male, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

The person that inspires me most is Asiwaju Rashidat. She is a model and a fashion designer. She knows how to bring out something in you. She is creative, she is always hard working and she never gives up.

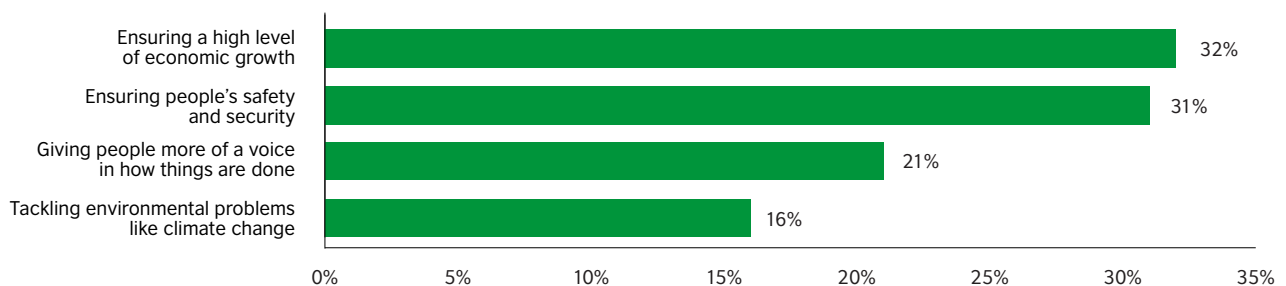
Female, Abuja, FCT (urban)

Figure 8: Priorities for Nigeria for the next five years

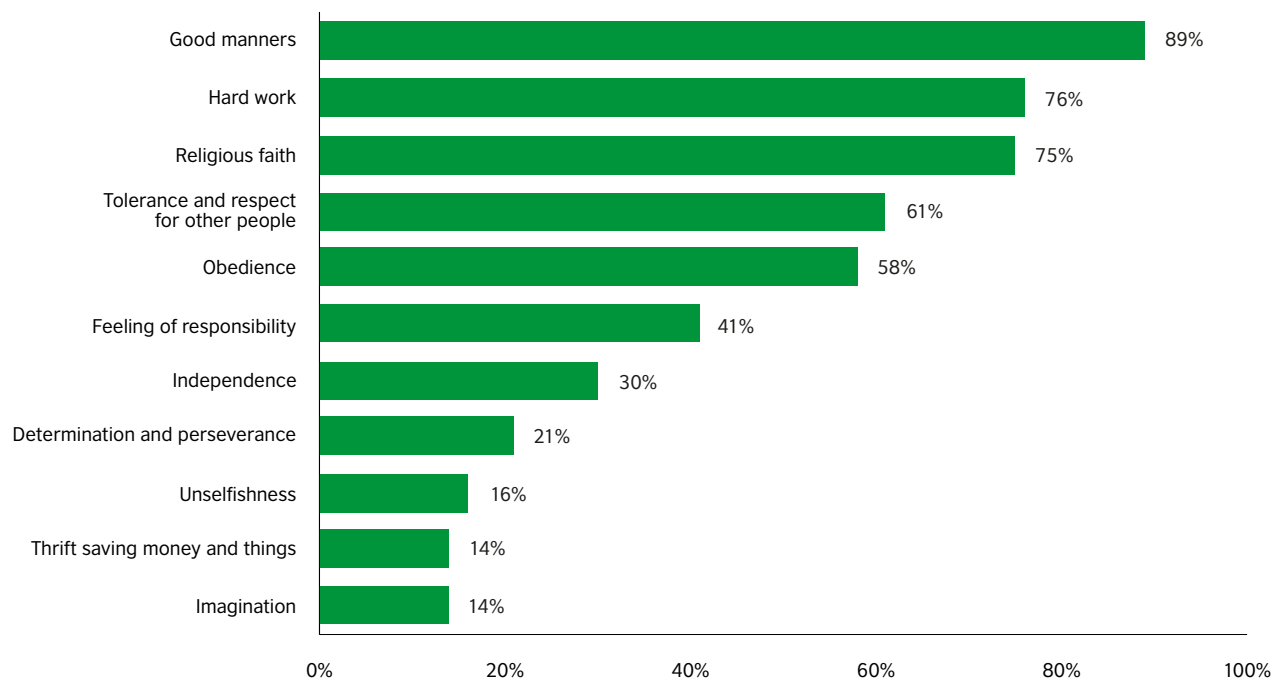
People sometimes talk about what the aims of the country should be for the next five years. Would you please say which one of these you, yourself, consider the most important?



People sometimes talk about what the aims of the country should be for the next five years. Would you please say which one of these you, yourself, consider the second most important?



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Figure 9: Important child qualities

Base: WVS dataset aged 18–35 (n=856)

Benevolence

Young Nigerians place high importance on being kind to and honest with one another, with religion and family playing a formative role in encouraging these values.

The values of benevolence and universalism are both defined by goals of preserving and enhancing the welfare of others. However, whereas benevolence values relate primarily to interactions with people with whom you have regular contact, universalism values – as the name implies – are larger in scope, and indicate the importance of appreciation and tolerance towards all groups, not just those of which you are a member.

The importance of both these values to young Nigerians is reflected by the diverse range of examples provided during workshops of family, friends, teachers, local faith leaders and celebrities who inspire them because of their kindness and generosity towards others.

I am an evangelist and the person that inspires me is Pastor David Ogbuei. He is the kind of pastor who helps the youth to glow. He is into raising the future leaders.

Male, Abia Main Town, Abia State (urban)

The person that inspires me is my relative. Whenever I am disturbed, she tries her best to render help in solving that problem for me. Even if she has something at hand, she helps with it in the family. That is why I liked her and see her as inspirational.

Female (PLWD), Tafabalewa, Bauchi State (rural)

Responses to the most recent iteration of the WVS additionally suggest the importance of religious belief and institutions, on the one hand, and family and home environments, on the other, for the cultivation of these values.

The majority (61 per cent) of young Nigerians, for example, regard tolerance

and respect for other people as an important quality to be encouraged in children at home (see Figure 9), while a similar proportion (61 per cent) interpret the meaning of religion as doing good for other people, rather than following religious norms and ceremonies.

Of the two values, however, benevolence tends to be ranked as more important overall, and for the majority of groups. In spite of evidence of the importance placed by young Nigerians on qualities such as kindness and tolerance, moreover, these qualities also apply in interactions with some other groups more than others. For example, when asked as part of the WVS who they would not like to have as neighbours, drug addicts (90 per cent), homosexuals (88 per cent), heavy drinkers (76 per cent) and people who have AIDS (56 per cent) were by far the least popular groups of people (see Figure 10). Measures of trust additionally indicate the importance of personal connections and shared identity in

terms of religious faith and nationality in determining young Nigerians' attitudes to other groups, with only a minority reporting that they trust people of another religion (41 per cent) or nationality (32 per cent), or people upon meeting them for the first time (27 per cent – see Figure 10). That being said, however, low trust in these groups does not mean young Nigerians would be unhappy having people who are

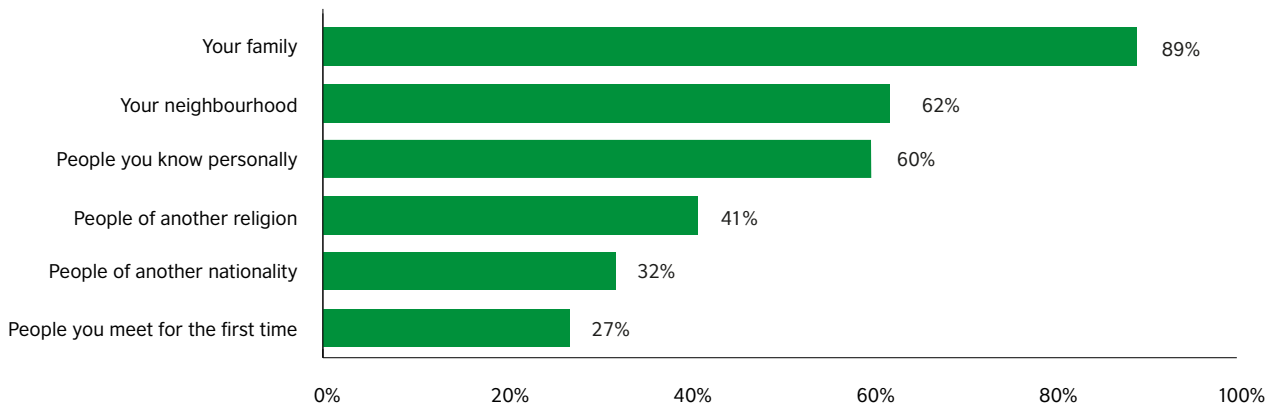
different from them as neighbours (see Figure 10). While responses to the WVS indicate little demographic variation in the relative importance assigned to the values of benevolence and universalism by young Nigerians, the Next Generation survey found that a significantly greater proportion of 18- to 20-year-olds rank benevolence as an important value, compared to other age groups. This trend is likewise apparent in

respect of universalism, suggesting, perhaps, the relatively greater importance placed on positive contact with others by the youngest among Nigeria's next generation.

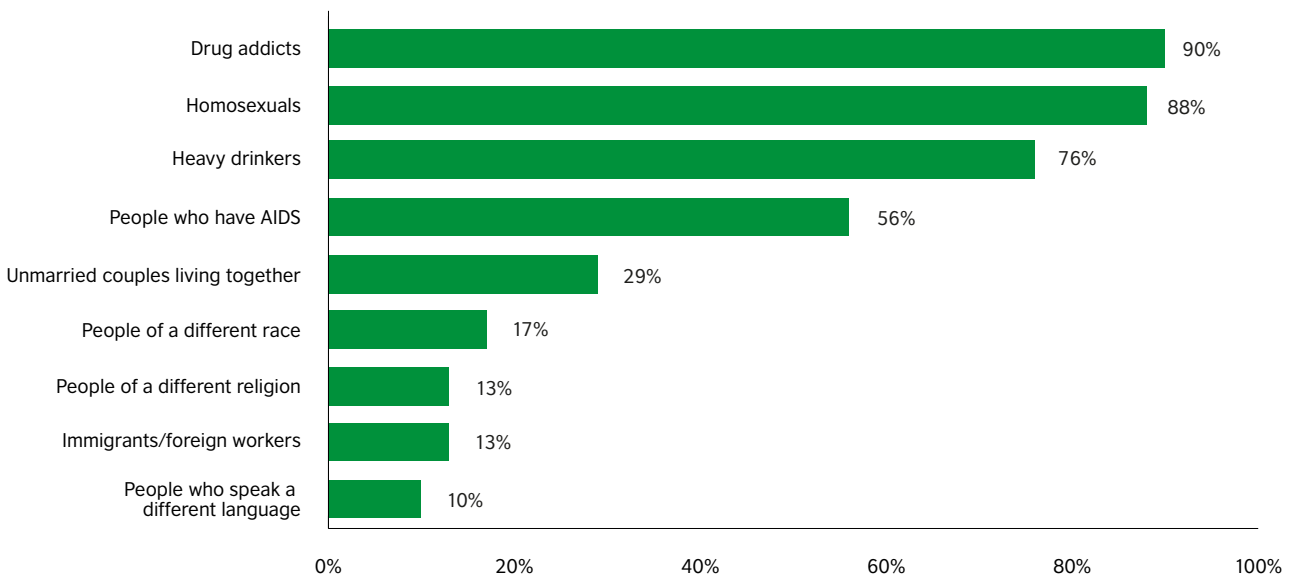
Our Next Generation survey found that younger Nigerians are more likely than other age groups to rank benevolence and universalism as important values.

Figure 10: Groups young Nigerians trust and groups young Nigerians would not like to have as neighbours

I would like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group?



Could you mention any that you would not like to have as neighbours?



Base: WVS dataset aged 18–35 (n=856)

Tradition and conformity: More important for some than others

Young Nigerians as a whole are conscious of the importance of social customs and are highly religious.

The values of tradition and conformity indicate the subordination of self in favour of socially imposed expectations. However, whereas the value of tradition refers to respect towards, commitment to and acceptance of customs and ideas that your culture or religion provides, conformity entails subordination and respect towards persons with whom you frequently interact – for example, parents, teachers and bosses.

In the context of these values, it is important to acknowledge the prominence and high importance placed on both family and religion in the day-to-day lives of the majority of young Nigerians, as well as the diversity and demographic distribution of religious practice across Nigeria generally. While the unavailability of recent, reliable and comprehensive census data on the common practice of involvement in multiple religious traditions makes exact percentages difficult to validate, it has been suggested that about half the Nigerian population is Muslim, 40 to 45 per cent are Christian, and five to ten per cent practise indigenous religious traditions (Olupona et al., 2019).⁹

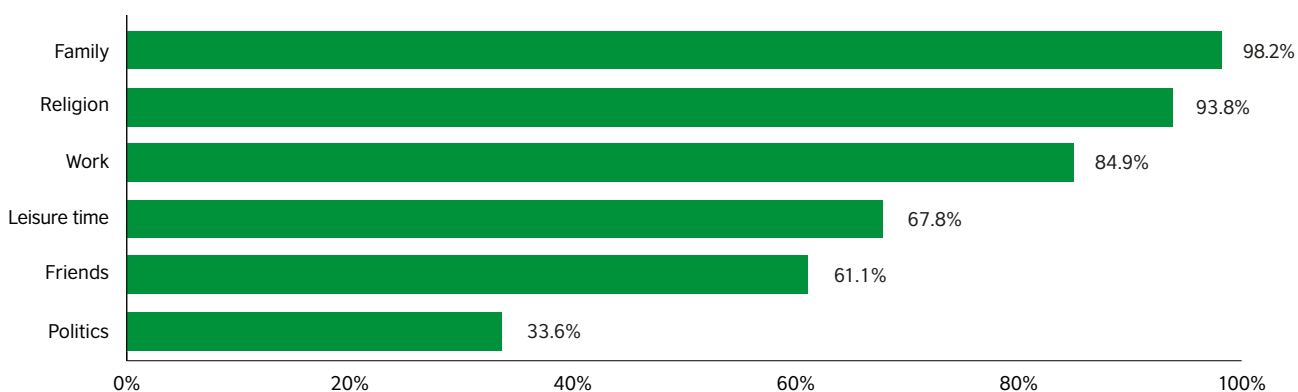
While the North is largely Muslim and the South largely Christian, significant minorities live in each region, and both religious populations comprise a range of sects and denominations (Olupona et al., 2019).

In workshop conversations about the people with whom and places that young Nigerians spend their time in a typical week, the majority of participants in almost all workshops identified time spent with family and various forms of religious participation as prominent parts of their day-to-day lives. Asked by the WVS what they consider important to them in life, almost all young Nigerians identified family and religion as very important to them – with significantly greater proportions reporting such compared to other parts of life, such as friends, work and politics (see Figure 11). As Figure 10 illustrates, family members are the most trusted of all groups for young Nigerians. Similarly, 89 per cent of young Nigerians report having confidence in religious institutions (with 70 per cent reporting ‘a great deal’ of confidence) – the highest of any institution, including banks (72 per cent), universities (68 per cent), WHO (70 per cent), the armed forces (54 per cent) and the government (39 per cent). The majority (84 per cent) of young Nigerians attend religious services once a week or more and 95 per cent pray once a day or more (WVS Wave 7 – 2020).

The value of conformity is relatively important among young Nigerians, ranking fourth overall according to responses to the Next Generation survey, and third in responses to the WVS (Wave 6 – 2014). Responses to the Next Generation survey additionally indicate the relatively greater importance assigned to conformity by rural young Nigerians, those living in the North East and North Central zones, and among Muslim participants – although these differences are not significant in responses to the items from the Personal Values Questionnaire included in the WVS (Wave 6 – 2014).

Measures of the importance placed on tradition, by contrast, demonstrate greater variance between groups, with this finding consistent across both surveys. Commitment to tradition is ranked as important by significantly more young Nigerians with the lowest levels of educational attainment, as well as among young Hausa Nigerians and young Nigerian Muslims. The relatively greater importance placed by young Muslims compared to Christians on respect for and commitment to religious customs is likewise illustrated by the fact that roughly half (52 per cent) of young Nigerian Muslims define the meaning of religion as following religious norms and ceremonies, compared to under a third (28 per cent) of young Nigerian Christians.

Figure 11: What young Nigerians consider very important to them



Base: WVS dataset aged 18-35 (n=856)

⁹ > Nigeria's last full census was conducted in 2006. Furthermore, since the end of the civil war, Nigeria has refrained from collecting information on religion and ethnicity during population census. As such, population statistics on religion and ethnicity in Nigeria are approximations only.

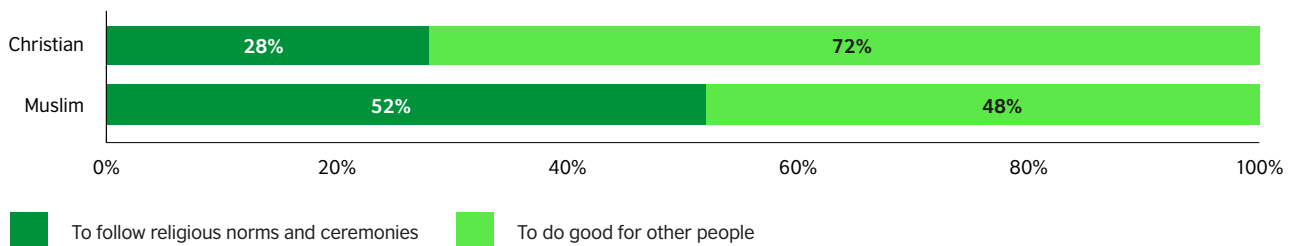
Interpreted together, the evidence suggests that young Hausas and young Muslims are groups for whom religious traditions and customs are especially important. That being said, however, the relative importance assigned to the values of conformity and tradition by young Nigerians as a whole suggests a next generation that is sensitised to the importance of respecting social norms and expectations, and highly religious. Conversations about who inspires young Nigerians suggest that these values are informed by a range of sources, including members of their religious congregations, family members and Nigerian celebrities – in particular those working in the Hausa language film and television industry, popularly known as Kannywood, which is based in the North and concentrated especially in Kano State in the North West.

The person that inspires is my Islamic teacher. She teaches [us] how we can go about our religious activities and how to be social with people in our life.
Female, Bauchi, Bauchi State (urban)

The person that inspires me most is Kabiru Mai Kaba. He is an actor in the Hausa film industry. He inspires me because he acts good roles in his movies that teaches good morals; he is religious, and he respects and helps people a lot. Even in my community, anybody that is respectful inspires me.
Female, Ungogo, Kano State (rural)

I am inspired by my Reverend Father. He is 28 to 29 years, he is a wonderful man who has done so wonderful things in Nigeria, currently he was called in Rome to make a presentation. That is a man that I look up to in terms of morals, ethics and other things.
Male, Abuja, FCT (urban)

Figure 12: Young Nigerian Christians' and Muslims' definitions of the meaning of religion



Base: WVS dataset aged 18-35 (n=856)

Formative influences

When considering values, it is important to understand not just what values are more or less important to young Nigerians as a whole, but also who and what act as formative influences shaping young Nigerians' value hierarchies.

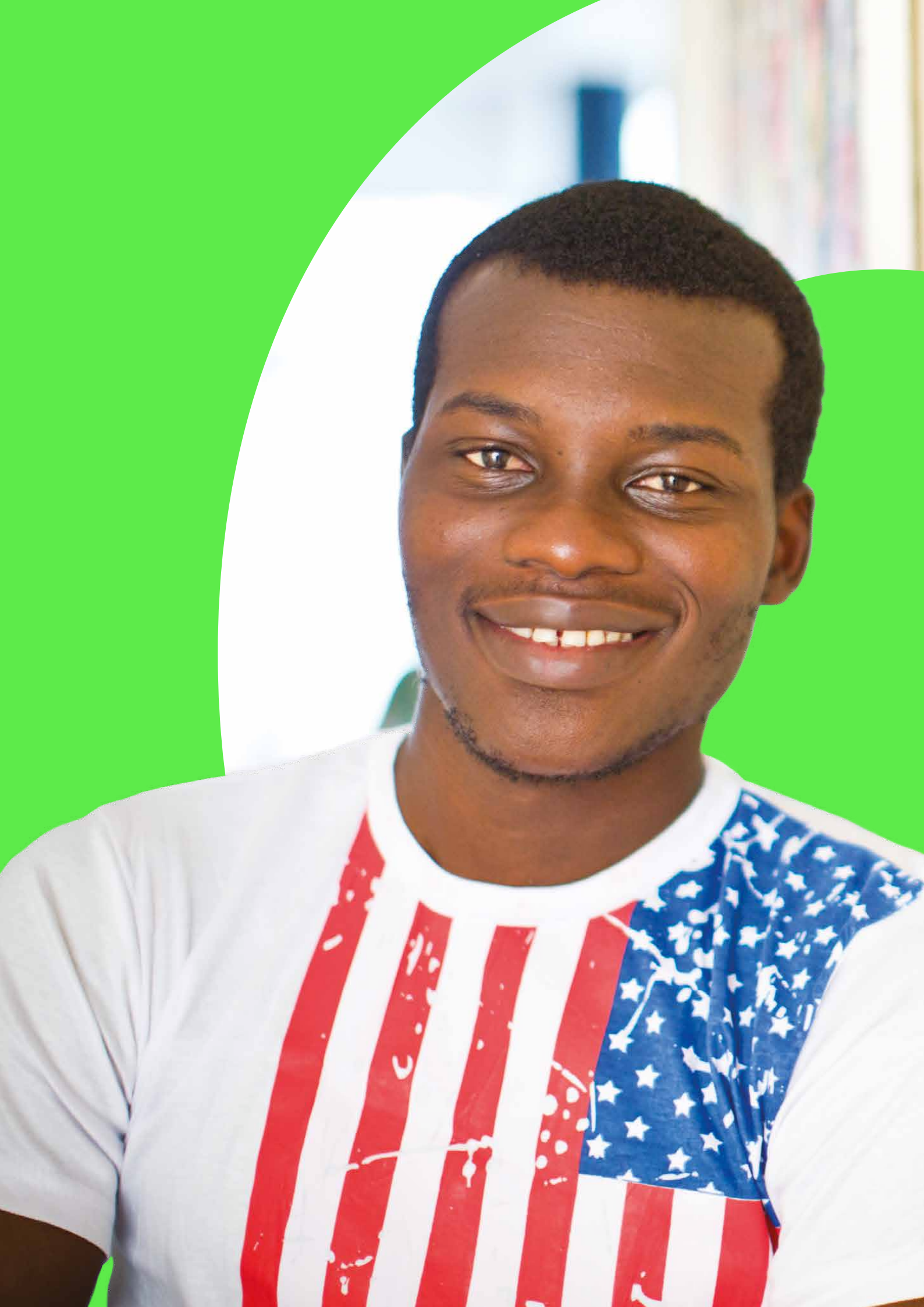
As the discussion of important values above has illustrated, young Nigerians refer to a range of formative influences in terms of encouraging and inspiring different values. Figure 13 presents this range, highlighting the important values most commonly associated with them. Five formative influences are identified:

young Nigerians' personal circumstances and environmental conditions, education, sports and entertainment celebrities, the family, and religion.

Figure 13: Formative influences on the values of young Nigerians



*Especially Kannywood celebrities



> Chapter 3: Voices

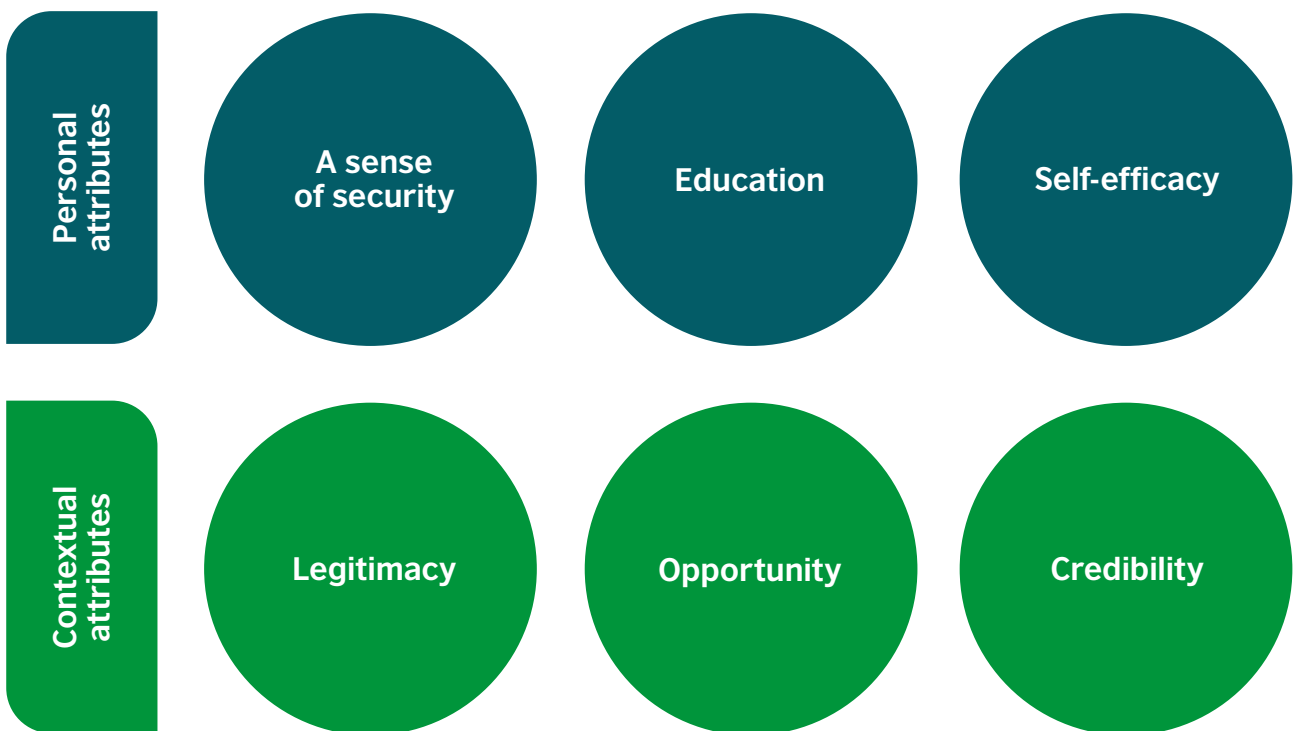
What ‘having a voice’ means to young Nigerians

In line with the Next Generation programme’s mission of exploring youth voice and choice, this chapter begins by exploring what it means to have a voice from the perspective of young Nigerians. Subsequent sections go on to explore the contexts in which young Nigerians feel like they have a voice in day-to-day life, which voices are marginalised and dominant in Nigeria, and the extent to which young Nigerians have and use their voices to influence state and national decision-making.

This initial section presents a framework highlighting the most commonly referenced conditions to having a voice, based on conversations with young workshop participants. These conversations indicated the importance of satisfying six conditions in order for a person to have a voice. These conditions are described in Figure 14, below, as part of a framework which divides them into two categories:

1. **personal attributes**, denoting qualities and characteristics that a person must have in order to be able and willing to use their voice; if not satisfied, these conditions limit the likelihood that a young person will be motivated to use their voice in the first place
2. **contextual attributes**, denoting qualities and characteristics conferred onto an individual by their audience in a specific context; if not satisfied for a particular audience, these contextual conditions limit the extent to which a young person will be afforded the opportunity to use their voice and the extent to which they will be listened to and taken seriously.

Figure 14: Voice conditions framework



		A sense of security	Education	Self-efficacy
Personal attributes		<p>Feeling free to voice out without fear of violence or retribution is paramount for young people to consider using their voices.</p> <p>Young Nigerians in the workshops commonly called attention to the issue of young people being afraid to voice out publicly about issues they care about, for fear of retribution by government, opposing interests and dissenting groups, in particular.</p> <p>This sense of security is especially low among marginalised groups at high risk of discrimination in a variety of contexts, including private settings such as the home.</p>	<p>Having sufficient education to know one's rights and to be aware of issues in society is vital for young people to recognise matters which warrant the use of their voices.</p> <p>Low levels of educational attainment and illiteracy are widely recognised by young Nigerians as a barrier limiting young voices.</p>	<p>Self-efficacy refers to a person's confidence that they can achieve desired outcomes. Low self-efficacy was reported as a barrier limiting young voices in multiple workshops.</p> <p>Contributing factors include young Nigerians' awareness and internalisation of prejudices and biases limiting the likelihood they will be heard, such as those favouring the voices of elders, the rich and the powerful. Concerns about low self-esteem, similarly, are widespread and suggest how negative framings of young Nigerians' competencies have become internalised.</p>
	Voice			
Contextual attributes	Legitimacy	Opportunity	Credibility	
	<p>Legitimacy is defined as a value whereby something or someone is recognised as right and proper.</p> <p>While a number of workshop participants regarded the use of voice as a fundamental human right, in practice, the legitimacy of using one's voice may be limited by a number of factors. These include legal and religious proscriptions against certain groups (e.g. LGBTQI) or viewpoints (e.g. blasphemy) as well as social norms that delegitimise the use of particular group's voices in certain contexts – for example, the subordination of wives and daughters to the authority of male heads of household, which is particularly prevalent in more religiously and socially conservative states and communities.</p>	<p>In addition to having the right to use their voices, young Nigerians recognise the importance of actually having opportunities to do so, as well as of seizing them when they present themselves.</p> <p>During conversations, young Nigerians highlighted numerous instances when they had been denied the opportunity to voice their opinion on matters. Age seniority, wealth and fame are three of the most commonly acknowledged keys that unlock new opportunities to use one's voices. Outside of achieving fame, fortune, or simply 'waiting their turn', young Nigerians in workshops reported participation in unions, activist and advocacy groups, as well as local youth forums as pathways by which to make their voices heard.</p>	<p>In the words of one young Nigerian advocate consulted as part of the research: it is one thing to be permitted a seat at the table; another to be allowed to speak; and another to be listened to by others at the table. This distinction neatly captures the importance of actually being listened to after taking the opportunity to speak, as a prerequisite to truly having a voice.</p> <p>Again, seniority in age and the ability to demonstrate achievements and independence both constitute important markers of credibility for young Nigerians. Pervasive framings of the incompetency of groups including women and people living with disabilities mean that these groups experience particularly high barriers to credibility.</p>	

Young voices in day-to-day life

To understand opportunities and aspects of enabling environments for young people to share stories, convey their perspectives and influence the views of others, it is imperative to map the contexts and spaces within which they exercise voice. This research identifies ten contexts, referred to as ‘voice assets’, within which young Nigerians feel they have a voice.

The identification of these asset classes is based on findings from a communication asset mapping (Villanueva et al., 2016) methodology, employed as part of the workshops, that mapped the virtual and physical spaces within which young Nigerians themselves feel like they exercise voice. The assets identified are:

1. family
2. friends
3. the community
4. school and university
5. workplaces
6. marketplaces and other commercial hubs
7. religious groups
8. sports
9. legacy media
10. online and social media.

As contexts which already form a regular feature of the lives of young Nigerians, and within which many feel able to share stories and convey perspectives, these assets represent areas of opportunity for engaging with young Nigerians in a way that is tailored to their day-to-day realities. With this in mind, this section summarises young Nigerians’ perspectives on each of these assets, to better understand the ways in which they facilitate young voices.

Friends

When you are with your friends, you can actually be yourself.

Female, Port Harcourt, Rivers State (urban)

Along with family, friends represent the group whom young Nigerians feel know them best, and around whom they can be their true selves. Popular spaces within which young Nigerians meet with friends include bars and clubs, viewing centres, gaming centres and recreation centres, together with restaurants and eateries, and special events and ceremonies in the community.

Friendship groups serve as spaces for debating and forming opinions, sharing vital information, and for supporting and advising one another. This is also true for marginalised groups: a number of young Nigerians living with disabilities and young LGBTQI Nigerians, for example, referred to the crucial role of friends as voice assets for them, including both friends who share their identity and those who do not.

Within groups, educational and professional achievement often act as markers of credibility, increasing the strength of voice afforded to those who exhibit these qualities. Broadly speaking, references made by young Nigerians to their friends suggest that same-sex friendships are most common and that non-romantic friendships between members of different sexes are less so.

Family

I feel invulnerable when I am with my family. No matter what, we will be there for each other; we have that strength of support.

Female, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

Family is the first place where you talk and are listened to. They are the people I communicate to with trust.

Female, Kano City, Kano State (urban)

For many young Nigerians, the family is a safe environment for speaking honestly about their lives, thanks to the high levels of mutual trust and understanding that they experience among family members. The range and breadth of family activities also afford multiple opportunities for young Nigerians to voice their opinions. Finally, as has been explored in detail in Chapter 2, the family often plays a formative role in shaping the values that many young Nigerians consider important.

However, the credibility and efficacy of younger family members may be compromised by equations of age seniority with authority, wisdom and experience, as well as other characteristics more commonly associated with a young age, such as financial dependence, a lack of achievement and not being married. Furthermore, conversations with members of marginalised groups indicate that the family sometimes (but not always) serves as a positive voice asset. A breakdown of the groups most likely to have their voices marginalised within family and domestic contexts is presented in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

The community

We have meetings for the development of the compound. I remember a situation where the landlady said that nobody is allowed to come to the compound when it is 7 p.m., and the whole compound refused. We fought it and at the end of the day we won the battle.

Male, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

Conversations with young Nigerians highlighted a range of instances in which they have participated in activities for the welfare of a community. Such activities underscore the importance of community mobilisation as a vehicle for young Nigerians to make their voices heard as part of a collective. They also demonstrate the ways in which community engagement can afford young Nigerians opportunities to contribute to discussions and occupy positions of leadership within their communities.

While references to, for example, neighbours, fellow tenants, compound-sharers, and village meetings indicate the definition of 'community' as a localised entity, it is important to note that the term is used differently by different groups. Most saliently, 'the community' is a phrase that carries a specific meaning for young LGBTQI Nigerians and may refer to the LGBTQI community at the local, regional, national and international level interchangeably. For many young LGBTQI Nigerians, it is this community, rather than their immediate local community, that represents a voice asset for them.

In terms of local communities, there is substantial variance in the composition and organisation of locally defined communities across Nigeria, making generalisations fraught. Broadly speaking, however, young Nigerians living in rural communities, particularly those living in North Western and North Eastern states, more commonly referenced the role played by traditional leaders and elders in the governance of the community. As responses to the Next Generation survey indicate, these groups are also much more likely to report various forms of community engagement, suggesting that 'the community' is more salient in their day-to-day lives than compared with residents of more urbanised areas, particularly in the South. Regardless of location, young Nigerians consistently reiterate the importance of wealth in conferring voice in community affairs.

Responses to the Next Generation survey indicate that younger, female, lower-class, urban and disabled young Nigerians all tend to engage less in their community than their peers (see Appendix 1). Responses likewise indicate that vulnerable female, lower-class, disabled and LGBTQI Nigerians are the most likely to report experiences of discrimination in their community (see Appendix 1). These disparities most likely reflect a combination of the chilling effects of discriminatory attitudes towards women and marginalised groups, on the one hand, and the effects of urbanisation on social organisation, on the other.

School and university

The culture here is that there is no teacher–student relationship. Teachers feel too high above students, so the students feel shy, or they feel scared to go to them. My approach is completely different. You will see my students challenging me. You have to be creative in my class. That's how I was trained, because I had all my academic life in Malaysia, my degree, master's, PhD. And there are other universities that are trying to change, too. Here in Kano, there is Bayero University, Ahmadu Bello University, ABU Zaria. And if you see all the stars that are making an impact, are all those that went to study mostly in Malaysia, India, United States.

Female, KII

Young Nigerians regard educational attainment as a personal condition for having a voice. However, it is also important to consider the extent to which young Nigerians have a voice within educational institutions themselves. Conversations with young Nigerians in workshops and interviews suggest mixed perspectives on this question.

On one hand, young Nigerians in workshops commonly acknowledge times they have been listened to by classmates and teachers alike. They also recognise the opportunities for voice afforded to them by participation in and leadership of student bodies and governments, and commonly regard university-based student union governments (SUGs), in particular, as a crucial pathway to voice for young people in Nigeria.

On the other hand, accounts provided by young Nigerians illustrate the role that privilege plays within classrooms and lecture halls in Nigeria. These accounts suggest that only high-achieving students and those from wealthy, well-connected families are afforded opportunities to use, and credibility when using, their voices in classrooms and lecture halls. Moreover, conversations with young Nigerians, pioneering educators and trainers alike indicate the hegemony of teaching approaches, norms and expectations which deprioritise independence of thought and action among students, in favour of rote-based and factual learning. Critics who promote this interpretation of Nigerian education represent teacher–student relations in Nigeria as heavily one-sided in terms of who has the legitimacy, opportunity and credibility to speak up in the classroom, and poorly suited to cultivating confidence in young people when using their voices.

Taken together, these debates suggest that there are three major challenges that need to be addressed to reduce the marginalisation of young voices in education:

1. unequal opportunities to access and to advance within education
2. the quality of education provided across all levels, in terms of cultivating young voices
3. increased opportunities for young Nigerians to occupy student governance and leadership positions, when enrolled in education.

See Appendix 1 at the end of this report for a breakdown of groups most likely to be marginalised in these ways.

Workplaces

[The office is the] place where you bring out your opinion, where you put in your effort, where you spend most of your time. It is where you are creative [where] your ideas come out.

Male, Abia Main Town,
Abia State (urban)

Young Nigerians recognise the importance of employment and professional success in facilitating the feeling that they have a voice. This sense derives both from the opportunities afforded by the working environment itself, as a context in which young Nigerians can act as leaders, think creatively and lend their voices to problem solving; and from the boosts to credibility that come with being financially independent and successful. At a personal level, conversations with young Nigerians highlight how employment provides them with a sense of security, comfort and satisfaction when done well. In the context of having a voice in public discourse in Nigeria, meanwhile, a number of workshop participants referred to the important role played by professional unions such as the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) in representing the interests of different sectors and occupations.

The range of ways in which employment can facilitate voice suggests that, in the context of work and employment, marginalisation needs to be considered from three angles. First, young people may be considered marginalised if they are unable to find employment and are therefore excluded from the voice opportunities afforded by workplace environments. Second, young Nigerians may be considered marginalised to the extent that the roles they occupy fail to actually afford them opportunities to use their voices safely and productively. Third, and finally, it is also important to consider the extent to which the voices of young Nigerians working across different sectors and parts of the economy are represented in conversations about the evolution and future of the Nigerian economy.

A breakdown of groups most likely to be marginalised in these ways is provided in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

Marketplaces and commercial hubs

In the market, you have different kinds of people, people with their different issues. When you come out to the market to speak out, people that are going through what you're going through will come out and they'll want to support you, and by the time they do, your voice will be heard because there are so many women going through that same situation.

Female (vulnerable), Port Harcourt,
Rivers State (urban)

Young Nigerians believe that 'money talks' in Nigeria – and this extends to having a voice in commercial transactions. To a large extent, this perception owes to their awareness and knowledge of their rights and expectations as consumers, on the basis of which they feel secure, legitimised and confident using their voices in these contexts.

As young Nigerians themselves indicate, the potential of commercial hubs to inspire a sense of collective voice and agency derives in part from the way in which they serve as natural forums for people to come together and communicate. These hubs also tend to help cultivate strong social and professional networks of market goers, providing a ready basis for exchanging information, co-ordinating action and speaking with a collective voice. The realisation of this potential is made evident by examples such as the self-labelled Market March Movement, which in 2019 initiated a series of protests against sexual harassment in public spaces, beginning in Yaba Market, one of Lagos City's busiest marketplaces (Iruoma, 2019). A female-led movement, the protests illustrate how commercial hubs are being re-purposed by Nigerians to raise awareness of other issues.

Religious groups

In my own church, I am the youth president of a certain society of a charitable organisation in my church, under the NGO of Catholic Church, and I am the youth president of my own parish, so I have a voice and I have followers.

Male, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

Conversations with young Nigerians suggest the range of opportunities for having a voice that membership of a religious congregation affords them. Churches and mosques serve as much more than just places of worship for young Nigerians; they act as hubs connecting a range of different activities, including participation in choir and music groups, local outreach and volunteering, fundraising, religious education in the form of Sunday schools and Islamic schooling, and community event planning. They also, critically, afford some young Nigerians the opportunity to occupy leadership positions.

Complementing these opportunities for active participation, young Nigerians commonly regard local faith leaders, such as pastors and imams, as people who will listen to them and provide counselling and support in both spiritual and other matters. A number of young Nigerians also look to religious leaders and organisations as representatives of their interests in national and international affairs, affording these interests the opportunity to be voiced and heard. The credibility and efficacy of these figures and groups in Nigeria is apparent both in the frequency with which young Nigerians associate them with the concept of voice, and in instances in which they have exerted their influence to shape the attitudes and actions of the general population and Nigerian policymakers alike.

Non-believers and critics of the power of religious groups in Nigeria, however, regard religion as a limitation on the voices of the population. During workshops, these attitudes took the form of arguments that religion distracts people from taking up opportunities for other, more concrete forms of action in response to issues, by asking them to trust in God/Allah instead. Moreover, even among believers, there is acknowledgement of the limitations placed on what opinions can legitimately be shared within religious contexts, for instance views that diverge from the teaching of religious leaders and texts.

Sports

So far as you came to play, nobody is going to question you, [not] even the richest man.

Male, Abia Main Town,
Abia State (urban)

Sports play a vital role in addressing societal issues. In 2018 in Plateau State, in Jos, there were communal classes that were used as a tool to teach young people how to be able to co-exist together peacefully. We had a competition, we made them play together, and then we created time to talk with them and get feedback. They enjoyed the togetherness, the peaceful co-existence, the tolerance.

Female, KII

From the perspective of young Nigerians, sport serves as an opportunity for them to socialise with one another freely. Football is especially popular, although a number of young Nigerians who took part in the workshops also referenced tennis, swimming and going to the gym as other sporting activities they regularly enjoy. Talented players benefit from popularity and reputation, while a number of more experienced players take on roles coaching younger generations. Moreover, sport is perceived by some as a leveller of socio-economic inequalities – with wealth disparities meaning little out on the field or when supporting the same team. The socialising and egalitarian aspect of sport is being used currently

in Nigeria to address social cohesion problems at the local level, by encouraging young people belonging to conflicting groups to play together.

In addition to the benefits to those who play and watch sports, sports stars themselves are considered extremely influential, with national players helping boost the reputation of Nigeria internationally. The celebrity status of sports stars tends to be greater for those who have acquired international fame and recognition, such as Odion Ighalo, the first Nigerian player to represent English team Manchester United at senior level.

Legacy media

Human Rights Radio gives voice for the ordinary people, helping the helpless, speaking for the speechless, helping them get in close contact with the people at the upper echelon. Like this morning, [the presenter] called the name of a senator from the South South and the man responded and I am sure he is going to look into the woman's matter.

Male, Abuja, FCT (urban)

'Legacy media' refers to mass media platforms such as radio, television and printed newspapers that predominated prior to the rise of digital information technologies. Of these, radio is the platform most commonly considered a voice asset by young Nigerians. This attitude stems, on the one hand, from the popularity of radio call-ins by programme listeners, which young Nigerians regard as an opportunity to broadcast widely their opinions on important topics. On the other hand, it also clearly relates to the availability and popularity of politics, current affairs and advocacy-focused radio programmes such as Abuja-based Human Rights Radio, which young Nigerians regard as providing important information about, and forums to raise awareness of, major issues affecting their communities. Radio is also, of course, important in the context of the inspirational and, in many cases, youth advocacy-focused role played by young musicians and entertainment celebrities in Nigeria.

Compared with radio, television tended to be discussed during workshops primarily as a source of entertainment, particularly in terms of the music, film and sports programming it provides. That being said, however, conversations with young, pioneering advocates and filmmakers highlight the impact that documentaries, television series and films can have on fostering conversations about important issues and spreading awareness and understanding of the experiences of young people in Nigeria. Printed newspapers were the least commonly discussed legacy media during workshops. Responses to the Next Generation survey likewise indicate the relatively low access to and use of printed newspapers among young Nigerians.

The findings suggest the need to consider marginalisation in respect of media platforms from two angles: first, marginalisation in terms of access to and use of media and, second, marginalisation in the sense of being denied opportunities to create and distribute media content. Further discussion of young Nigerians' access to, use of and role within legacy media industries is provided in Chapter 4 of this report.

Online and social media

I think the role that social media has played is to democratise the media space. Growing up in Nigeria, you always prayed and hoped that some activist would go on TV and address an issue. But today, anyone could literally bring up an issue and if they're able to articulate it well or if you're able to get one or two influencers to jump on it, it could become a dominant issue across the country.

Male, KII

The internet and, most especially, social media are widely acknowledged as having vastly enhanced the opportunities for young Nigerians to use their voices to express a greater diversity of opinions on a wider array of topics and issues than ever before.

The extent to which the opportunities are being taken up is clear from the manifold contemporary instances of young Nigerians turning to online and social media to raise awareness of and mobilise around significant issues (see Table 1). For many young Nigerians, the prospect of increased penetration and use of online and social media by their and future generations is an important source of optimism in terms of the future efficacy of young voices in Nigeria. In terms of impact, meanwhile, studies of the role of social media in Nigerian contexts suggest that they help to shape the agenda of national and international media, thereby increasing the prominence and awareness of important issues within the general population (Oloyede & Elegba, 2020). Young Nigerians also refer to the role of social media in major events such as the Arab Spring as proof of the efficacy of young voices online.

The positive attitudes expressed towards online and social media by young Nigerians reflect a range of factors, including both the massively increased scale and potential of online and social media as platforms for voice, and lower barriers to content creation and distribution online versus using legacy media. That is to say, hypothetically at least, anyone with an internet connection and the basic literary and digital literacy necessary to create an account, is free to create and distribute content online, at a time and in a medium that suits them. This vision of online and social media is manifest in young Nigerians' expressions of online spaces as more egalitarian and democratic than both legacy media and the offline world more generally – a condition which enables young Nigerians belonging to socially marginalised groups, in particular, to speak out on issues affecting them to a degree that would not be possible otherwise.

While attitudes towards online and social media as a voice asset are mostly positive, some young Nigerians in workshops questioned how much can actually be changed by complaining about issues online, while others expressed concern over the exposure of young people to harmful or illicit content. Furthermore, access to the internet remains more limited in rural and many Northern states, meaning that not all young Nigerians can currently enjoy the benefits to voice associated with online and social media. There are also, finally, widespread concerns over the impact of fake news and misinformation, together with ongoing debates over how to combat problems such as hate speech online. Issues related to online media access, usage and freedoms are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this report.

Table 1: Nigerian hashtag campaigns by date

Campaign hashtag	Year	Focus
#LightUpNigeria	2009	A social media campaign to inform people and the government of the need to provide better power generation in Nigeria.
#OccupyNigeria	2012	A movement in response to the removal of the petroleum subsidy by former president Goodluck Jonathan and government corruption in Nigeria.
#BringBackOurGirls	2014	A social media campaign fighting for the plight of 276 schoolgirls kidnapped by the terrorist group Boko Haram.
#StopBokoHaram	2015	A hashtag that highlights the threat posed by the terrorist group and expresses solidarity with the people of the northern Nigerian regions who have been hardest hit by Boko Haram.
#BeingFemaleInNigeria	2015	A hashtag started by a reading group in Abuja, Nigeria, exposing the realities of everyday sexism in Nigeria.
#NotTooYoungToRun	2016	An act of parliament which sought to reduce the age limit for running for elective office in Nigeria. The campaign started in support of bills and motions in Nigeria's National Assembly.
#EndSARS	2017	A social media campaign demanding an end to police brutality in Nigeria, specifically the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), who have reportedly engaged in extortion, rape, physical and verbal assault, extrajudicial killings, wanton arrests and other forms of intimidation tactics against young innocent Nigerians.
#IStandWithNigeria	2017	Protest against the unfavourable economic policies implemented by the Buhari-led All Progressives Congress Party (APC).

Campaign hashtag	Year	Focus
#MarketMarch	2018	Nigerian women embarked on a market march demanding an end to the normalised sexual harassment and bullying of women in markets.
#ArewaMeToo	2019	Northern Nigeria's adaptation of the #MeToo movement, a hashtag fighting against sexual abuse in Nigeria.
#PoliceReform	2019	An effort to provide for a more efficient and effective police service that is 'based on the principles of accountability and transparency; and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms'.
#EnoughisEnough	2020	A call for justice in response to cases of sexual violence and police brutality that took the lives of two individuals, Tina Ezekwe and Uwaila Omozuwa, in Nigeria.
#OpenNASS	N/A	An advocacy campaign that demands an open, transparent and accountable National Assembly in Nigeria, by providing both voter education and a communication platform. As of 31 July 2019, 40,000 Nigerians have signed the petition for an #OpenNASS.
#RampUpNigeria	N/A	Drawing attention to the challenges Nigerians with disabilities encounter in accessing public facilities, in particular banks, which fail to provide adequate infrastructure to aid disabled bank users. However, the hashtag also gives credit to those who have shown great progress by making buildings disability friendly.

Marginalised voices

This section considers which groups of young Nigerians are at highest risk of having their voices marginalised, and in which contexts. Four groups at high risk of marginalisation are identified: young women – in particular, young women living with stigma and those living in the North West; young Nigerians living with disabilities; young LGBTQI Nigerians; and young Nigerians belonging to minority groups in a given state or region.

Not all young Nigerians are guaranteed fulfilment of the voice conditions defined at the beginning of the chapter, nor are the benefits of the ten voice assets described above fully equitably shared among the young population. For the purposes of this report, groups who are more likely to report inadequate fulfilment of voice conditions or exclusion from multiple voice assets are considered at high risk of marginalisation. Based on this definition, four groups are identified as at high risk of having their voices marginalised, each of which is considered in detail below.

Women

Educational disparities, fewer opportunities and a lack of voice credibility mean that young Nigerian women are at a disadvantage when using their voices compared to men.

In Nigeria currently, young women generally are at a disadvantage in terms of the fulfilment of voice conditions. This is due to factors including lower rates of education compared to men, and the prevalence of negative framings of women's competency that harm their credibility in the public domain, such as stereotypical representations of them as the weaker sex whose role centres exclusively around the home (DHS, 2018; Felicia, 2019). These disadvantages are reflected by both women's marginalisation within a number of day-to-day voice assets and the pervasive under-representation of female voices in positions of political and economic leadership.

In terms of voice assets, starting with the community, responses to the Next Generation survey indicate that young women are significantly less likely than men to have participated in a community meeting (27 per cent vs 42 per cent) or gotten together to raise awareness of an issue (21 per cent vs 35 per cent) in the last 12 months, compared to men.

In respect of workplace environments, young women:

- are almost twice as likely as men to be unemployed (33 per cent vs 18 per cent)
- report higher levels of sexual harassment (one in four young Nigerian women has personally experienced sexual harassment in employment, vs 14 per cent of men)
- are less likely to report membership of professional or trade-based groups (ten per cent vs 15 per cent)
- are afforded less credibility and inadequate opportunities to participate in economic and occupation-related policy discussions and decision-making affecting their occupations.

Furthermore, despite a greater percentage of young women than men occupying sales and services roles (25 per cent vs 16 per cent), they are less likely than men to report membership of a group or network (nine per cent vs 13 per cent) – suggesting, perhaps, further opportunities to leverage commercial environments as platforms for female voice, following the model of the Market March Movement.

Young women are also much less likely than men to participate in sports (men are three times more likely to report participation in sports groups/associations than women – 26 per cent vs nine per cent), and are less likely to be daily users of social media (42 per cent of young Nigerian men use social media daily vs only 34 per cent of women).

In terms of female leadership, despite making up half of the population, women currently hold six per cent of seats in the Senate, three per cent in the House of Representatives, and four per cent in the House of Assembly (Ready to Run, 2019). In terms of economic leadership, women own only 20 per cent of enterprises in the formal sector, and only 11.7 per cent of board directors in the country are women (LSE, 2016).

Nigeria's pervasive under-representation of women in positions of authority continues in spite of the country being a signatory to a number of global and regional conventions, declarations and protocols designed to protect and promote gender equality and women's rights (British Council, 2012). At the national policy level, likewise, the actual response to commitments by government has been weak. Adopted in 2006, the National Gender Policy (NGP) set a target of 35 per cent as a benchmark towards gender parity in Nigerian governance. In 2011 the average across both houses was 7.8 per cent, a high from which the

country has since regressed (Kelly, 2019). Opportunities to improve the representation of female voices in politics are explored in further detail later in this chapter.

While the above applies to Nigerian women generally, two sub-groups of women stand out as at especially high risk of having their voices marginalised. These two sub-groups are considered below.

Young women living with stigma

Young Nigerian women who are single mothers; who are divorced, separated or widowed; who were first married below the age of 16; or who first became pregnant below the age of 16¹⁰ face an array of additional barriers within Nigerian society, including heightened barriers to health and education, and more severe threats of stigma, discrimination and violence (see Essien & Basse, 2012; UNICEF, 2014; DHS, 2018). To compare the experiences of these women with the general female population, Next Generation survey respondents reporting these characteristics were classified as 'vulnerable women'. Their responses indicate that vulnerable women are almost twice as likely to report being personally discriminated against (26 per cent) than non-vulnerable women (14 per cent). They are also three times as likely to experience said discrimination in the home (11 per cent and four per cent), and twice as likely to experience discrimination in the community (18 per cent vs eight per cent). As conversations with vulnerable women in workshops indicate, these disparities are associated with social stigmas around, for example, single motherhood and pregnancy outside of marriage, which can lead to vulnerable women facing heightened barriers to voice in terms of both their legitimacy and credibility.

In Nigeria as a whole, I don't think that the females have any voice. For example, I'm a single mum. Even when you come out in your neighbourhood to say something, they'll not listen to you because you don't have a husband. They think the husband is the head; they think that the husband is meant to say something, not you.

Female (vulnerable), Port Harcourt, Rivers State (urban)

Young women living in the North West

Young women living in states in the North West are the most severely disadvantaged in terms of education. The majority (64 per cent) of women aged 15 to 49 in the North West have received no formal education, compared to 38 per cent of men in the North West and 4.2 per cent of women in the South East (DHS, 2018). Reports and comments by interviewees indicate that gender disparities in educational attainment within these states are attributable in part to norms and attitudes which deprioritise the importance of young women's education in preference to that of young men, and are considered particularly prevalent in (although by no means exclusive to) the North West (Ezeilo et al., 2003). They are also connected to the especially high rates of early motherhood and marriage in the North West, which mean that young women are more likely to be pulled out of education at an early age. According to data collected by the Demographic Health Survey (DHS), one in five (21 per cent) young women in the North West aged 15 to 19 has given birth, compared to 4.2 per cent in the South West (the lowest of any region). Meanwhile, the median age of marriage in the North West is 15.8 years compared to 21.9 years in the South East (the highest of any region) (DHS, 2018).

¹⁰ > The legal age of marriage in Nigeria is a contentious issue. In 2003, the Nigerian federal government passed the Child's Rights Act, which ratified the principles adopted by the United Nation's Conventions on the Rights of the Child and set the legal age of marriage at 18 years old. However, within the Nigerian legislative system, each state is required to enact federal laws under its own state laws before it is enforceable. According to UNICEF, 11 Northern states have yet to do so: Bauchi, Yobe, Sokoto, Adamawa, Borno, Zamfara, Gombe, Katsina, Kebbi, Jigawa and Kano (Girls Not Brides, 2018). With the exception of Adamawa, all these states are Muslim-majority states that are fully compliant with Shari'a law. This list also includes the majority of Shari'a states in Nigeria, with the exception of only Niger State (USDOS, 2008).

In terms of voice assets, women living in the North West are the least likely of any zone to report participation in decision-making about their own healthcare, major household purchases and visits to their family or relatives, suggesting marginalisation in family contexts (DHS, 2018). This is supported by conversations with young, vulnerable women living in Kano state, which indicated the lack of voice afforded to them in decision-making about, for example, when and whom they marry. That being said, however, it is vital to note that marginalisation within the family is not exclusive to North Western women, but rather manifests differently in different contexts. For example, while much more likely to report participation in domestic decision-making, women living in Southern zones are significantly more likely to report domestic violence than women in Northern zones (DHS, 2018).

Despite the fact that we don't want to get married at the age of 13, when you are forced to do it you don't have [a] choice.

In my own case, I tried to talk to my uncles and my dad's friend to talk to my dad, but still he never agrees and he wouldn't even listen to you. And when you report to your mother, she will say listen to what your dad is saying. Then, at the age of 16, you already have two children.

If you want to voice out, they will divorce you, and when the marriage is over you will have nowhere to go. When you go to your parents, they will send you back. Even if they allow you to stay, they won't value you, because you have added responsibility for them.

Female (vulnerable), Kano City, Kano State (urban)

Minorities

Minority groups are more likely to experience discrimination, and are also disadvantaged in terms of education.

Nigeria is composed of over 250 ethnic groups speaking over 500 languages, as well as three main religions: Islam, Christianity and followers of indigenous belief systems (CIA World Factbook, 2019; Birchall, 2019). As is discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections and chapters, this diversity is often framed as a causal factor in conflict and instability, with minority groups including indigenous minorities, internally displaced people and economic migrants all considered at risk of experiencing social, political and economic exclusion and inequality in their communities and states (Birchall, 2019).

Accurately defining the majority/minority status of groups is challenging due to factors including the unavailability of recent, reliable and comprehensive census data, significant variations in the composition of populations at both state and local levels, and internal migration (CIA World Factbook, 2019; Birchall, 2019). Broadly speaking, however, it is acknowledged that, from an ethnic perspective, Hausa-speaking peoples, including the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups, form the majority in the North; Igbos form the majority in the Eastern regions of the South; and Yorubas form the majority in the Western regions of the South (CIA World Factbook, 2019). From a religious perspective, meanwhile, the north of the country is predominantly Muslim but also home to a significant Christian minority as well as smaller numbers of practitioners of indigenous faiths; in Central and South Eastern Nigeria, the proportion of Christians and Muslims is roughly equal; and in the South West, Christians are in the majority (Birchall, 2019). For the purposes of this research,

young Nigerians who report living in a state other than the one they were born in and who cited economic or personal security reasons for their most recent move are treated as minorities due to their non-indigene status.

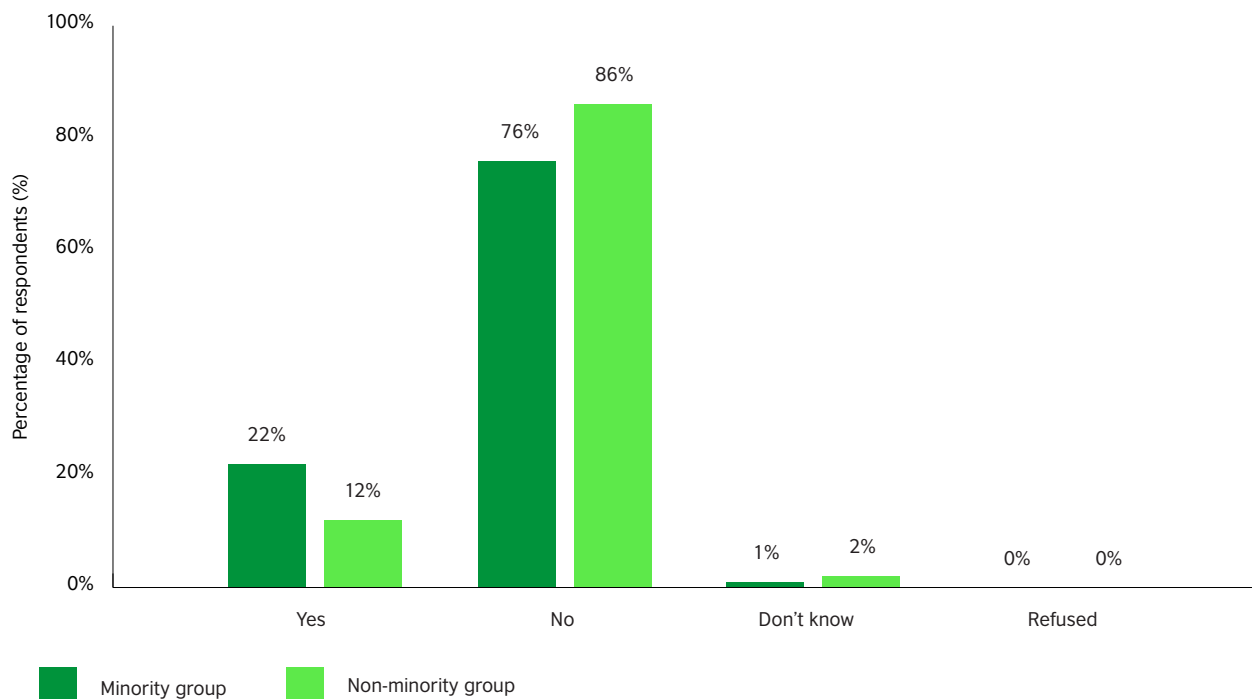
Employing these assumptions, survey responses indicate that young Nigerians who belong to minority groups are more likely to experience discrimination than those who do not (see Figure 15). Members of minority groups are approximately twice as likely to report ethnic discrimination and religious discrimination as factors preventing their selection for employment (36 per cent vs 20 per cent, and 32 per cent vs 17 per cent, respectively), with greater percentages also reporting personal experiences with challenges in employment, including tribalism (39 per cent vs 27 per cent), favouritism and nepotism (53 per cent vs 38 per cent), and mistreatment (34 per cent vs 27 per cent). Conversations with young Nigerians generated multiple observations of the prevalence and negative impact of this discrimination. This evidence suggests that, in the context of voice, young Nigerians belonging to minority groups are at risk of being denied opportunities to use their voices and may face threats of backlash when they do. In addition, the literature indicates that, when disadvantages on the grounds of ethnicity and gender are combined, significant gaps in educational opportunities are found, with these greatest inequalities visible in the North West and North East of the country (Birchall, 2019).

Tribal sentiment needs to be removed. How can there be one cut-off mark for people from the state a school is situated in, and another cut-off mark for people from other states?

Male, Abia Main Town, Abia State (urban)

Figure 15: Minorities' vs non-minorities' experiences of discrimination

Have you ever felt personally discriminated against, for example based on your sex, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.?



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Nigerians living with disabilities

Nigerians living with disabilities are disadvantaged in education, with pervasive deficits in understanding of disability fuelling an array of social stigmas and misconceptions.

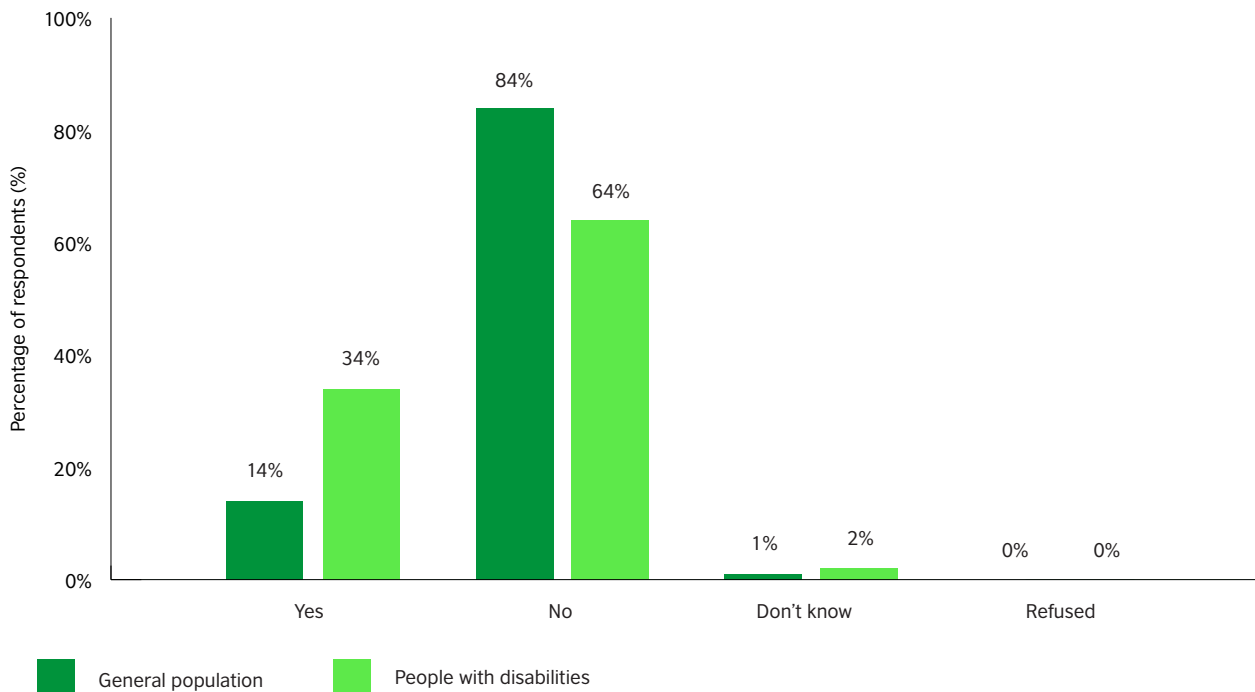
While a lack of reliable and up-to-date census data makes estimates difficult, assuming that the WHO's estimate that 15 per cent of the global population has at least one disability is true for Nigeria, approximately 25 million people in Nigeria are living with a disability (WHO, 2011; Ewang, 2019). While the voices of all young Nigerians within this population are likely to be marginalised to some extent, the range and severity of barriers faced varies regionally and in terms of the nature of a young person's disability.

Among the most likely common barriers limiting the voices of young Nigerians with disabilities are low levels of educational attainment and basic lack of security. A 2017 study of disability gaps in educational attainment covering 19 developing countries, for example, found that, among children aged 11, the likelihood of having ever enrolled in school was 13 percentage points lower for children with disabilities than for those without (Male & Wodon, 2017). While Nigeria was not eligible for the study due to a lack of census data, it is likely that similar inequalities exist. Moreover, as consultations with young, disabled advocates and members of disability rights advocacy groups highlighted, these educational barriers are likely to be especially severe for cognitively impaired young Nigerians, for whom there exist fewer provisions to ensure access to appropriate education.

Consultations with advocates also underscored the threats to personal security experienced by young Nigerians with disabilities, in particular women. Responses to the Next Generation survey show that young Nigerians with disabilities are more than twice as likely to report feeling personally discriminated against as those without. They are also three times as likely to report discrimination in the home (13 per cent vs four per cent) and in the community (25 per cent vs eight per cent).

Figure 16: People living with disabilities' vs non-disabled people's experiences of discrimination

Have you ever felt personally discriminated against, for example based on your sex, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.?



Base: General population (n=5,001)

As advocates' explanations of the roots of these barriers frequently indicated, limitations on the personal conditions required for young Nigerians with disabilities to have a voice are themselves linked to their perceived lack of legitimacy and credibility, and the lack of opportunities afforded to them across multiple contexts. Commonly referenced stigmas and misconceptions about disability include, for example, that disability is a punishment for past sins (undermining legitimacy) and that people with disabilities are necessarily intellectually incompetent (undermining credibility). These attitudes are considered to be especially prevalent in many Northern states, and in rural locations. They are founded, primarily, on pervasively low knowledge and understanding of the causes and actual impact of disabilities on individuals who have them. The challenges presented by this lack of general education and sensitisation are perhaps

most severe in cases when children are born with disabilities and parents lack the knowledge, experience or access to information and services required to care for them properly.

Information and resources for parents of children with disabilities are very few. For instance, parents of a child with cerebral palsy asked me whether they should let her have her period. They did not know, because unfortunately the public healthcare system does not consider the sexual reproductive rights of the disabled, or the need to educate the disabled or their parents. The good thing is that there are now parent support groups springing up now, so parents are learning from each other, asking parents that are further along on the journey: what did you do? How did you handle this?

Female, KII

Despite the many barriers faced by young Nigerians with disabilities, there have been recent signs of progress. In 2018, President Buhari signed into law the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities Prohibition Act, which includes provisions for the penalisation of discrimination on the basis of disability; stipulates a five-year period for the modification of public buildings and workplaces to make them accessible for people with disabilities; and establishes a commission responsible for ensuring equal access to housing, education and healthcare (Ewang, 2019). This act has the potential to address, among other issues, disparities in the unemployment rates of young Nigerians with disabilities versus those without (33 per cent vs 19 per cent, according to responses to the Next Generation survey), although conversations with young disabled advocates and disability rights advocates indicate that, as yet, employers have been slow and appear insufficiently motivated to respond to the requirements mandated by the act.

In addition to the new act, the paradox of Covid-19 lockdown measures has afforded opportunities for people living with and without disabilities to showcase their capacity to work productively from their homes. This, in turn, has the potential to overcome longstanding barriers to employment based on a lack of accessible infrastructure in many workplaces across Nigeria.

LGBTQI Nigerians

The voices of young LGBTQI Nigerians are among the most marginalised of all groups in Nigeria.

Same-sex acts and marriage; the gender identity and expression of trans people; participation in and operation of gay clubs, societies or organisations; and public demonstrations of a same-sex relationship are all criminalised in Nigeria. In Southern states, breaches of anti-LGBTQI laws, including Section 214 of the Criminal Code Act (Carnal Knowledge Against the Order of Nature) and the 2003 Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA), carry the threat of imprisonment. In Northern states that have incorporated Shari'a law as part of their criminal justice system, LGBTQI Nigerians may face capital punishment (Human Dignity Trust, 2020). As well as criminal penalties, young Nigerians accused of being LGBTQI may be subjected to conversion therapy under the guise of moral and behavioural correction. The quote below is from a senior member of the Hisbah Corps in Kano State, a religious police force responsible for enforcing Shari'a law, following the arrest of 15 graduates at a party in Kano City.

We arrested and transferred the errant students to our correctional centre at our headquarters in Sharada. While at our correctional centre, they will be re-oriented and at the close of the day, they will desist from their waywardness and turn a new leaf. Islam is opposed to same-sex partners, which is a taboo.

As an institution, our responsibility is to correct youth who are going astray, reminding them that devout Muslims forbid homosexual acts, which will not be tolerated.

Deputy Commander General Shehu Tasi'u Is'haq, Kano State Hisbah Corps, January 2020¹¹

In addition to legal and religious prescriptions, LGBTQI Nigerians face an array of hostile attitudes, stereotypes and perceptions that are hegemonic in Nigerian cultures and society. These include, for example, equations of homosexuality with paedophilia and the perpetration of sexual abuse more generally, and male homosexuality with hyper-femininity and social and moral deviance. The prevalence of, and impact of experiencing, these homophobic attitudes is conveyed by the fact that 89 per cent of young LGBTQI Nigerians report having felt personally discriminated against, by far the largest proportion of any group engaged as part of this research.

Young LGBTQI Nigerians may encounter these attitudes and stereotypes within a range of contexts that might otherwise be considered potential voice assets. Accounts provided during interviews indicated that family contexts, for example, rarely present conducive environments for young LGBTQI Nigerians to freely discover and express their sexual and/or gender identities, or even communicate positive attitudes towards LGBTQI subjects, without fear of retribution or harm. The risks of doing so are considered especially acute for those who are dependent on family financially and for shelter, in which cases young LGBTQI Nigerians may be unable to draw on other forms of support, should family members reject them. This lack of immediate, external sources of support is likewise reflected by the fact that the majority (67 per cent) of LGBTQI Nigerians have experienced discrimination in the community.

Because of what society will say, an LGBTQI Nigerian is scared. He doesn't want his family to know because it's wrong. To them it's a sin. To them it's so illegal. It's totally wrong.

Now, young girls in Nigeria that are lesbian, they are forcefully asked to go to get married to a man even when they don't want to get married to a man. Why? The family wants to hide or portray that image that they have disdained daughters. A woman should be always under a man. I don't see it like that.

Young lesbian female, FCT

I remember once, when the SSMPA was passed, I had family, friends, cousins discussing the issue, castigating queer persons, even jumping to conclusions.

I was about to make a contribution, but at that point, I had to withhold my statement. Because I could see there were four of them, and the level of backwardness and ignorance I observed then was on the high side.

So I was like, OK, in order for me not to tag myself as a queer person, even though that's painful, I rather keep quiet, so they don't just automatically assume that I'm a queer person.

Young gay male, Rivers State

Despite these barriers, there is some evidence of progress in respect of the voices of young LGBTQI Nigerians. Online spaces are affording young LGBTQI Nigerians with new opportunities to use their voices openly in ways that would otherwise put them at risk in the offline world. According to a survey of 2,400 Nigerians conducted by The Initiative for Equality Rights (TIERS), while the vast majority (75 per cent) of Nigerians continue to support the SSMPA, there was a 15 per cent reduction in support for the SSMPA and a ten per cent increase in opposition between 2015 and 2019 (Okolo, 2019).

¹¹ > Reported by Punch Nigeria (2020).

Conversations with young LGBTQI Nigerians themselves, meanwhile, generated individual accounts of journeys towards claiming their right to a voice, in spite of the adversity they face.

Six years ago, I didn't know what love was, I didn't know who I was. But right now, with all I've been through, I can be very confident to tell you that I know myself 101 per cent. It's as a result of all my experiences, my gay experiences especially, that has made me 101 per cent. I feel like I'm my own friend. I listen to my own self, that kind of thing.

Young gay male, Plateau State

My dad is Christian, my mum is a Muslim. But I grew up with my mum, because when I was like five years old, she divorced from my dad. I lived with her until I was 17 years old, but after that time, due to challenges and prejudice from her side, I moved out of the house. They were thinking of getting me married at actually. So I left the house. I left the house because the pressures were all on me, families, from home, the way I dress, it was not really cool with them and all, bringing shame. So I left the house, and that is how I landed to getting a job for myself. Making my decision to leave the house, I think I had a voice, and I left and started a life for myself.

Young lesbian female, Kaduna State

Dominant voices in Nigeria and internationally

This section explores young Nigerians' perspectives on which individuals' and groups' voices are currently dominant, both within Nigeria and internationally. It serves as a prelude to the fifth and final section of the chapter, which presents findings and insights to inform strategies for amplifying the voices of young Nigerians in local and national governance and decision-making.

Dominant voices in Nigeria

Nigerian voices

Within Nigeria, young Nigerians perceive their own voices as relatively limited and insignificant relative to a number of other, much more dominant voices. These include politicians and government officials and departments first and foremost, followed by senior figures and powerful organisations within Christian and Islamic faith traditions, and celebrities from film and television, the music industry and popular culture. In multiple regions, but most especially in the North, young Nigerians identify traditional leaders as embodiments of 'having a voice' in Nigeria. Young Nigerians also identify a number of high-profile human rights activists, including Nobel Prize in Literature winner Wole Soyinka and lawyer Femi Falana. In all cases, young Nigerians identify these groups as those who are most able to use their voices to make things happen. While young Nigerians are represented within some of these groups, and most prevalently within the celebrity class, the majority of references made by young Nigerians during the workshops indicate these groups are comprised predominantly of older Nigerians, most of whom are male.

If Sheik Dahiru Bauchi says something, his followers always listen and abide by what he says. Like in the 2019 gubernatorial election that was held in Bauchi State here, he came out and tell his followers to vote for Kaura and they all did because they follow and listen to whatever he says.

Female, Bauchi, Bauchi State (urban)

Ebere Magnus, there is a real man of God. I can boldly say that this man is the only real man of God I have seen on eastern part of Nigeria: his ministry has helped a lot of youth to progress and get what they want. He is exceptional.

Female, Abia Main Town, Abia State (urban)

In addition to these groups, several groups involved in violence in Nigeria were credited with efficacy by young Nigerians during the workshops. These groups include, for example, the terrorist organisation Boko Haram, as well as perpetrators on both sides of the herder–farmer conflicts currently affecting North Central Nigeria in particular. Explanations of why workshop participants consider these groups as dominant voices highlighted their efficacy in capturing the attention of and mobilising a response from the Nigerian government and the international community alike.

International voices

Young Nigerians commonly identify the UN, through its various agencies such as UNICEF, and China, thanks to the visibility of Chinese investment, as two international voices with substantial influence within Nigeria itself. Saudi Arabia is also acknowledged as an important dominant voice in the context of Nigeria's substantial Muslim population, specifically, because of its influence over the attitudes and behaviours of Islamic faith leaders and the Nigerian Muslim population more generally. The UK, although rarely identified as a dominant voice by young Nigerians during workshops, nevertheless occupies a prestigious place in the imagination of young Nigerians generally, and is among the top ranked countries globally in terms of the educational and employment opportunities it provides (for further discussion, see Chapter 4 below).

The reason why I see Saudi Arabia as voice was that if we enter the month of Ramadan and the rumours keep spreading whether to start fasting or not, Saudi Arabia can announce that every Muslim should start fasting and every Muslim will fast because we believe that Saudi Arabia can never deceive the Muslim community.

Female, Bauchi, Bauchi State (urban)

Dominant voices internationally

Other countries' voices

On the international stage, young Nigerians consider the USA, China and the UN as the most dominant voices, due to the wealth and resources at their command. Russia was similarly identified by young Nigerians as a dominant voice in this respect, although much less often. In addition to being recognised as a global superpower, the USA was also commonly judged by young Nigerians as the epitome of what it means for citizens to have efficacious voices. Countries with relatively young leaders – for example France, whose current president, Emmanuel Macron, entered office at the age of 39 – are also judged positively in this respect.

People in the USA have freedom to say what they want to say. They have freedom to decide something without their parents' involvement. They can go on Twitter to criticise their president without caution. They can even change their gender. They have more freedom than we do. Only the rich have voice in Nigeria.

Female (vulnerable), Kano City, Kano State (urban)

Nigeria's voice

Young Nigerians view Nigeria as a dominant voice among African nations. This dominance is attributed, in large part, to the country's immense human capital and potential, combined with its current prominence within international African unions such as ECOWAS.

Why I said Nigeria has a voice, we are the biggest black African nation and we are model to other African nations.

We also just hosted the ECOWAS meeting at Abuja.

According to statistics, Nigeria has the strongest economy in Africa.

Males, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

However, young Nigerians also view their country as lagging behind in terms of ensuring the efficacy of the voices of its young people. This is in contrast with other African nations that young Nigerians see as empowering their youth, including Ghana, Kenya, Zambia and South Africa. References to the Arab Spring in North African states, meanwhile, suggest how these events showcased the potential of young people to drive change by taking collective action.

In Zambia a young man contested for House of Representatives. He had nothing; he was even carried on a bike by a friend, but he still won the election. In Nigeria, if you don't have the money, nobody will even support you.

In a country like Egypt also they just had election and it get to a point the youth came out with a banner protesting they want Mohamed Salah. So in a country like that it show that youth has a voice and Salah is just 27 years old.

Males, Bwari, FCT (rural)

Young Nigerian voices in state and national decision-making

In Nigeria currently, young Nigerians perceive their own voices as relatively limited and insignificant. In response, this section explores the conditions under which young Nigerians today participate in state and national decision-making, as voters and as candidates for and holders of elected office.

This section does so, first, by providing an overview of the recent constitutional reforms secured by the Not Too Young To Run movement in 2018, paying particular attention to the process by which this movement evolved and to the effect it had on the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. Subsequently, the final section of this chapter presents findings and insights from a quantitative segmentation of Next Generation

Nigeria research. The segmentation is based on young Nigerians' self-reported interest in politics and in running for election, measures of how engaged they are in their communities, and certain political behaviours, including voting and offline and online forms of political participation.

Not Too Young To Run

The Not Too Young To Run Act (NTYTRA) is the product of a youth-led, inclusive and diverse movement developed and co-ordinated by young Nigerians, for young Nigerians.

On 31 May 2018 Nigerian President Muhammed Buhari signed the Not Too Young To Run bill into law. The resultant NTYTRA lowered age restrictions on holding elected office from 40 to 35 for presidential office, 35 to 30 years in the Senate, and 30 to 25 years in the House of Representatives and State House of Assembly. The event marked the culmination of a campaign that was first conceived in 2009, following the Nigerian House of Assembly's rejection of a submission by youth-based civil society organisation YIAGA for the reduction or removal of age restrictions on running for elective positions. While first-hand accounts of the initial rejection by members of YIAGA reiterate the barriers faced by young Nigerians in terms of their legitimacy and credibility within public and political spaces, the trajectory taken by the campaign, meanwhile, highlights a number of best-practice principles for overcoming these barriers effectively (see Figure 17).

So the first time, YIAGA Africa made a presentation but we were turned down at the point of presentation and told, well, you want to amend the constitution to reduce the age. That's not possible. It's not the time for youth. We need more time. They basically laughed at the point of presentation.

Cynthia Mbamalu, YIAGA

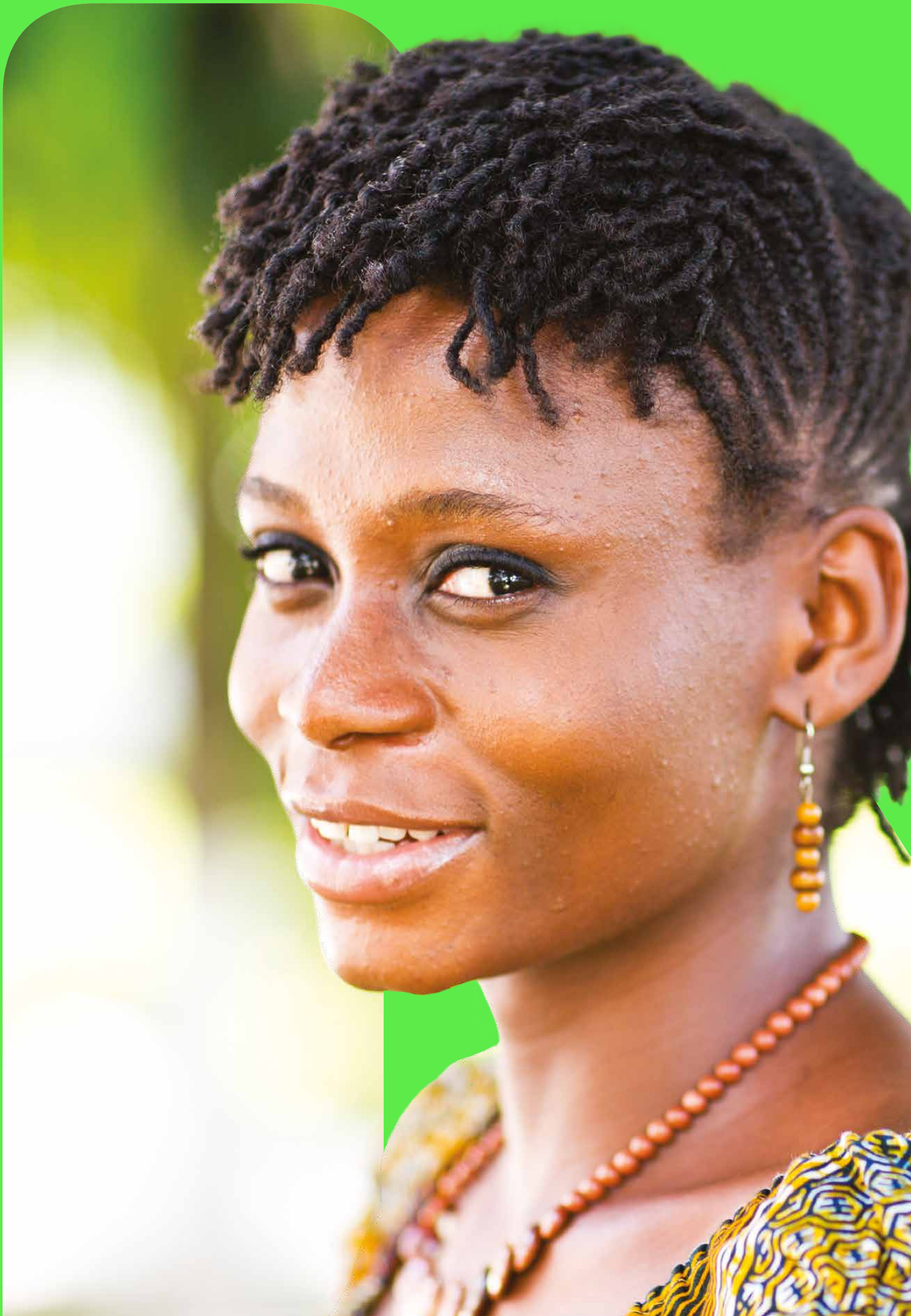
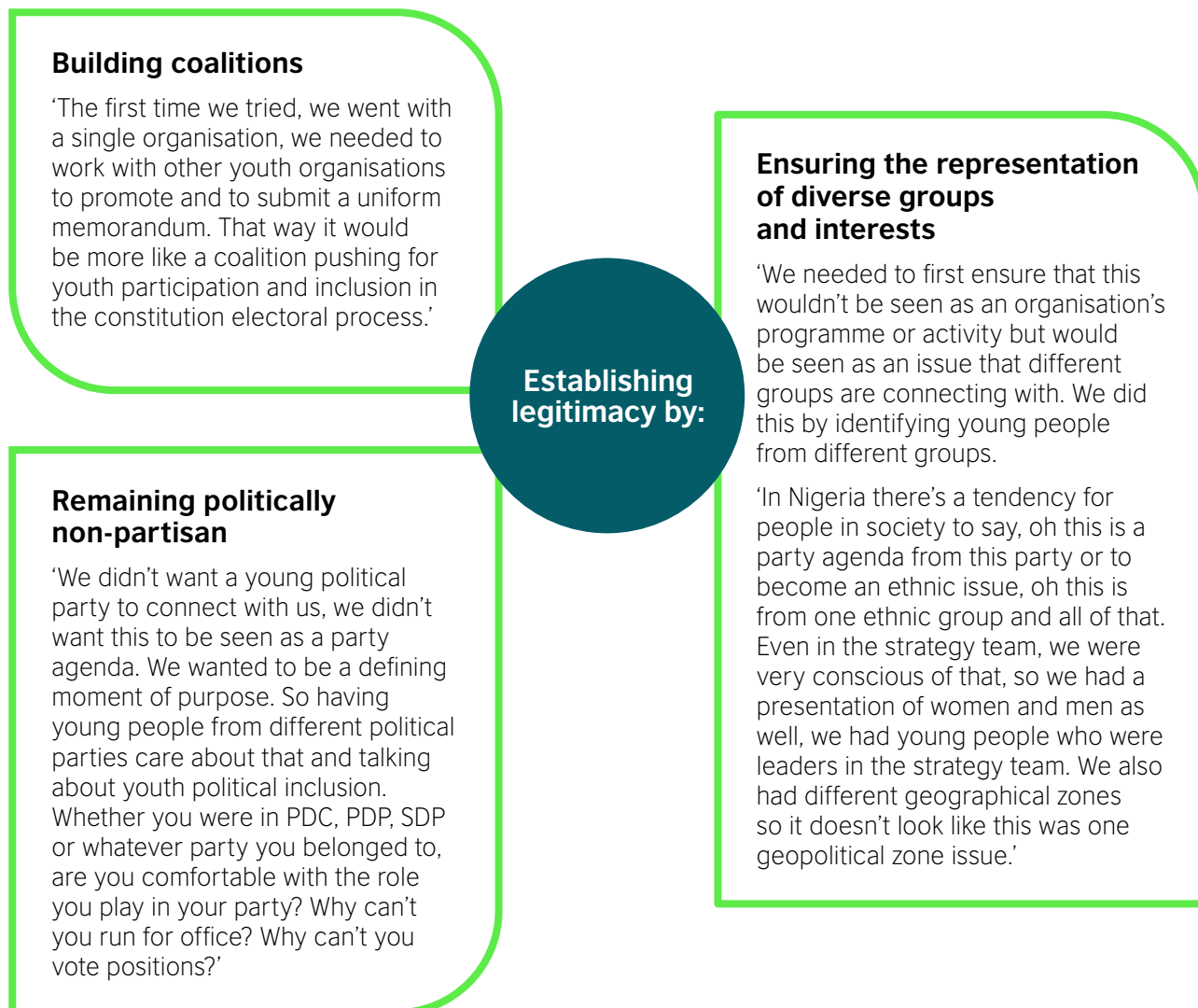


Figure 17: Learning from the NTYTRA

Source: These quotes have been taken from an interview with YIAGA Programme Manager Cynthia Mbamalu, a major figure in the NTYTR campaign.

Using robust data and evidence

'After the 2015 general elections, we conducted a youth candidacy report, getting the list of candidates and then identifying how many persons were below 35. We had a reasonable number of young people, including women, who actually were candidates but if they had won the elections would have lost in court, because they were below the age... Now we had data and information and recognition to push for that advocacy.'

Building and maintaining credibility by:

Allying with voices with credibility among the opposition

'The two times we had done this, we went and waited for a person to be committed to the centre and then we went to submit the memorandum and all of that. And we thought this time around maybe identify young champions in both houses, and so that's the Senate and the House of Reps, have them sponsor the bill as a private member bill. And then build strong advocacy around this bill.'

Engaging the support of already-dominant voices

'A thing about government, when they see international partners talking about something, that also adds to the pressure. After the UN did that the young people pushed it for the African Union who also started talking about Not Too Young to Run and echoed that because Nigeria is based in West Africa.'

Highlighting the injustice of rendering certain voices illegitimate

'Looking back we think some young people in communities didn't even know it was about amending the constitution. They just felt, I'm a young person. Why can't I be part of the process? I'm not too young to run.'

Maximising engagement by:

Leveraging opportunities for collective voice afforded by social media

'One of the things to get the youth's attention is to make something a trend on social media. In order to get young people to connect with the bill and make it strong on social media, we basically identified a different approach and strategy, that is, strong communication using specific messaging and then building a very solid movement around that. And one of the ways to make this a trend was a catchy name.'

Evidencing common gains and added value

'One major message for the members of the National Assembly and those in government was for all those who at any point had made a commitment to lead youth development, was that this is you fulfilling a campaign promise. This is not necessarily us pushing for an idea – this is us working with you to fulfil the promise. We also collected evidence connecting the political inclusiveness of youth development to national security and economy and sustainable democracy.'

In the wake of the NTYTRA, the number of young Nigerians both running for and holding elective office increased significantly.

Nigeria held a general election in 2019, during which candidacy by young Nigerians aged 18 to 35 increased by 13 per cent, from 21 per cent of all candidates in 2015 to 34 per cent. These increases were visible across all electoral offices for which young Nigerians were newly eligible, with young candidates making up ten per cent of candidates for governor seats, 42 per cent for the State House of Assembly, 27 per cent for the House of Representatives, and 14 per cent for the Senate (Ready to Run, 2019). The positive impact of the NTYTRA was likewise visible in electoral outcomes, with young Nigerians increasing their share of elective seats by almost double (60 seats in 2015; 103 in 2019), with gains concentrated in the House of Assembly (Ready to Run, 2019).

Despite the impact of the NTYTRA, significant work remains to ensure that all young Nigerians are properly represented within elective offices, and during elections.

The majority of young Nigerians still identify a lack of voice in national and local decision-making as a matter affecting young Nigerians (see Figure 18). Moreover, in terms of political representation, while the 2019 general elections saw significant increases in the number of young Nigerians elected to office, young Nigerians remain heavily under-represented. Roughly 20 per cent of the country's population is aged 18 to 30, with around 70 per cent aged under 35; 18- to 35-year-olds, meanwhile, made up over half (51 per cent) of registered voters ahead of the 2019 election, yet currently hold only 6.6 per cent of elective office seats in Nigeria (Ready to Run, 2019). Political representation is especially low for women, who across the Senate and the Houses of Representatives and Assembly hold six per cent, three per cent and four per cent of seats

respectively; as well as for people living with disabilities, who, despite numbering an estimated 25 million in Nigeria, did not achieve representation in the general elections even though candidates with disabilities did stand. It goes without saying that criminalised groups such as LGBTQI Nigerians remain entirely unrepresented.

There are also significant demographic disparities in terms of voter registration and turnout. As responses to the Next Generation survey indicate, rural, lower social class¹² and female young Nigerians are significantly less likely to report voting in either the last general election or their most recent state election than other groups. According to voter registration data, meanwhile, young Northerners comprised 57 per cent of the young registered electorate ahead of the 2019 elections, while the Next Generation survey results indicate that a significantly larger proportion of Northern Nigerians, the majority of whom are Hausa and Muslim, report voting in the most recent general election compared to their majority Christian, Yoruba or Igbo peers in the South (see Figure 19; Ready To Run, 2019).

These disparities reflect not just the under-representation of particular groups at elections, but also the potential for the continued politicisation of regional, ethnic and religious differences.

Expressions of concern made during the workshops about regional politicisation in Nigeria highlight the importance of ensuring that young people belonging to all groups use their voices effectively at election times and in politics more generally. Currently, the evidence suggests that Northern voices tend to be more dominant overall, with a greater proportion of young Nigerians living in the North voting compared to other groups.

Permit me to say something. Out of the 15 head of states that have ruled this nation, 11 are from the North and the remaining four are from other parts of the country. People have been asking who have been the best president: no president is the best, but the Northern youth themselves are promoting their elders, they still want their elders to continue and when you go there, they created Arewa Youth Forum and they will say that this president we like him and all that.

Male, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

These concerns are not new. Artificially constructed by colonial powers out of an exceedingly diverse range of hitherto distinct groups, commentators have frequently observed how the linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity of Nigeria's population poses a serious challenge to the prospect of national integration and identity in Nigeria. These commentators argue, for example, that the prioritisation of religious or ethnic over national identities in Nigeria creates fertile conditions for inter-ethnic rivalry and contest across a wide variety of fields and sectors, including politics, access to education and competition for jobs, particularly in the public sector (see Mustapha, 2005; Agunwamba et al., 2009; Adeforit, 2018).

In the context of supporting young Nigerian voices during elections, the potential negative role of this politicisation is twofold. First, as young strategists who contributed to the NTYTR campaign recognised, the politicisation of regional, ethnic and religious differences may serve as a weapon to delegitimise certain voices and opinions by casting them as serving the interests of specific groups over others (see Figure 17). Second, as is reflected in the approach to diversity and inclusion of post-NTYTR initiatives such as the Raising New Voices campaign, it may distract from the pursuit of youth-focused agendas that aim to support young Nigerians as a distinct identity with their own needs, challenges and aspirations.

¹² > Socio-economic class (SEC) is a classification of individuals into different classes using different measures of wealth and social status. The highest ranked class is class A and the lowest is class E. Specifically, rankings A and B are the upper classes, and C1 and C2 are upper middle and lower middle, respectively. Those in class D are seen as the lower class and class E the poor or subsistence class, often living below the poverty level. The measures used for the classification include education, type of job, income, dwelling structure of home, household amenities, durable ownership, foreign travel, and specific club membership.

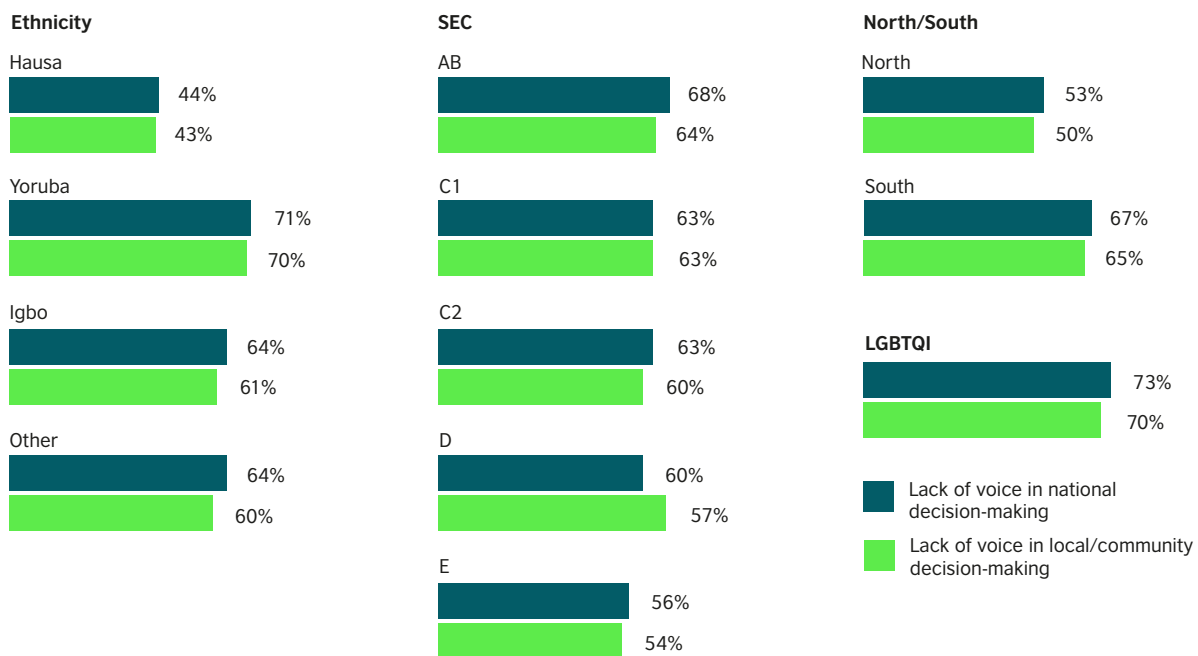
Overcoming these challenges constitutes an important criterion of what success looks like in terms of supporting young Nigerian voices during elections. In the next section, this criterion forms an instrumental part of the analysis of young Nigerians' attitudes towards politics and standing for election, as well as their political and community engagement behaviour.

Supporting young Nigerians' political voices: Insights from a segmentation approach

To optimise the participation and impact of young Nigerian voices within political processes and the political economy moving forward, it is important to understand the range and configuration of political attitudes and behaviours exhibited by young Nigerians today, and to tailor initiatives and strategies

accordingly. To that end, Figure 20, below, outlines the profile and relative proportions of young Nigerians who fall into four segments, each of which is comprised of young Nigerians sharing similar political attitudinal and behavioural characteristics. As is explained in detail subsequently, each of these segments presents a unique set of challenges to optimising young voices in Nigerian politics.

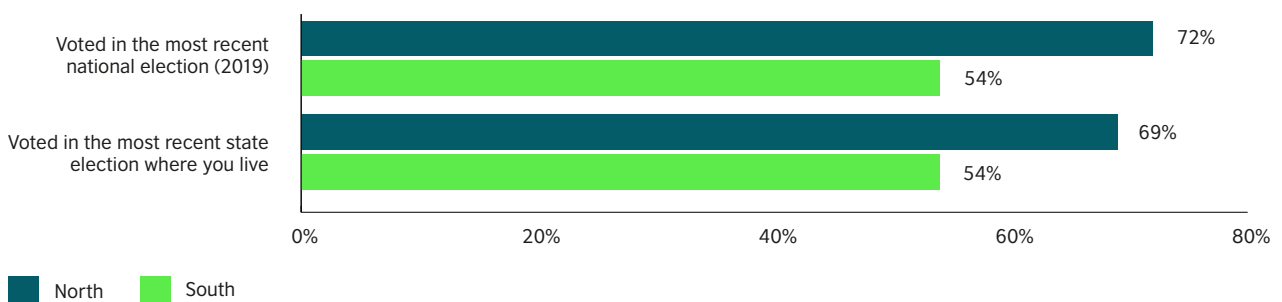
Figure 18: Young Nigerians who report lack of voice as a problem



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Note: The LGBTQI data was taken from a separate sample, surveyed online to avoid putting respondents at risk.

Figure 19: Respondents who voted in the most recent election, by geography



Base: General population (n=5,001)

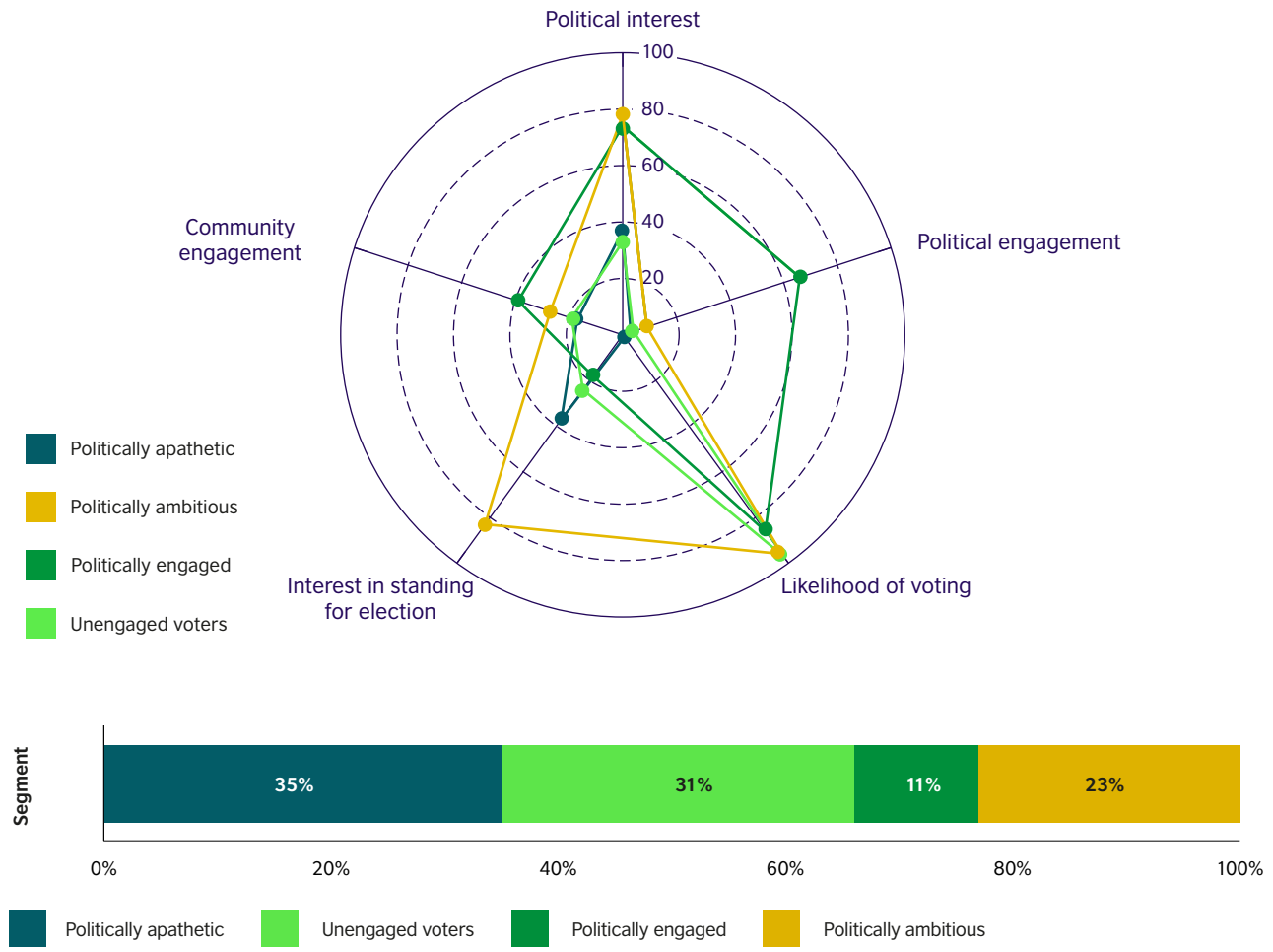
Figure 20: Results of the Next Generation political segmentation

Politically apathetic (35%)

The apolitical segment are relatively uninterested and extremely unengaged in politics and their community. Their political uninterest translates into their voting habits, and they did not vote in any previous elections. However, their political ambitions, while still moderately low, are higher than that of the politically engaged and unengaged voter segments.

Unengaged voters (31%)

The unengaged voters report low interest in politics, very low political engagement and ambition, and very low community engagement. Despite this lack of interest and engagement, they do all vote in national and regional elections.



Politically engaged (11%)

This segment is the smallest segment: They are interested in politics, they engage in politics online and offline, and they have a moderate level of engagement in their community. They are regular voters; however, they have no ambition to stand for election at any point in the future.

Politically ambitious (23%)

The politically ambitious are interested in politics and have ambitions to stand for election one day. They generally all voted in the last two elections (where applicable) and engage slightly with the community. However, they do not engage in political activities such as protests, marches, party membership or online political activities.

Politically apathetic (35 per cent)

The challenge to optimise engagement

The voices of politically apathetic young Nigerians are mostly silent when it comes to local and national decision-making.

The vast majority of young Nigerians classified in this segment did not vote in the 2019 general election or their most recent state election; have not engaged in other forms of political behaviour, such as becoming members of a political party, attending protests or demonstrations, or online activism; and tend not to engage in their communities. They also show little evidence of an interest in politics generally, or in standing for election. As a result, the evidence suggests that their voices are mostly silent in respect of local and national decision-making.

Contributing factors

There are four factors contributing to the challenge of supporting this segment.

Asked why they did not vote, 12 per cent of the segment reported that they had not yet turned 18 at the time of the last general election (or the most recent state election) and were, therefore, ineligible to vote. Discounting age ineligibility, major contributing factors to the challenge presented by this segment are as follows:

1. Poor compliance with voter requirements

The most common reason for not voting reported by respondents in this segment was the lack of a personal voter's card (PVC) (20 per cent), while a further 11 per cent reported that they were not registered to vote at the time of the election. Together, this indicates that just under a third (31 per cent) of the segment were barred from voting due to poor compliance with voter

requirements. This is in line with the responses of the general, non-voting youth population, 20 per cent of whom reported a lack of a PVC as their reason for not voting.

Demographic variations highlight that these barriers are more concentrated among certain groups than others.

- Almost a quarter (23 per cent) of non-voting urban young Nigerians do not have a PVC, versus 17 per cent of non-voting rural young Nigerians. Non-registration was less prevalent and more evenly distributed across both groups (nine per cent among urban non-voters, and ten per cent among the rural non-voters).
- Almost a third of non-voters in the North Central (30 per cent) and South West (28 per cent) zones do not have a PVC, compared to between 12 and 15 per cent of young Nigerians in other regions. Non-registration is most common among young non-voters in the North West (13 per cent), North East (13 per cent), South South (12 per cent) and South West (11 per cent) zones, and least common in North Central (eight per cent) and South East (eight per cent) zones.
- Almost a third of non-voting young Igbos (30 per cent) do not have a PVC, compared to between 15 and 18 per cent of other groups. Registration is again a less commonly reported barrier overall, but highest among young Hausas (12 per cent) and young Nigerians belonging to tribal groups other than the largest three (11 per cent).

2. Low political efficacy and disinterest in political processes

Ten per cent of respondents in this segment chose not to vote because they did not think their vote would make a difference, with an equal proportion (ten per cent) saying they simply were not interested in the elections.

Both proportions are aligned with those of the general, non-voting youth population. As in the case of poor compliance, survey results indicate that these attitudes are distributed unevenly among different demographic groups, suggesting the value of a more targeted approach to including and amplifying young voices at election times. Reports of not voting because of a lack of perceived efficacy, for example:

- are significantly more common among young Nigerian Christians (12 per cent) than young Nigerian Muslims (six per cent)
- are least common among young Nigerians living in the North West (six per cent), and most common in the North East (14 per cent)
- are most common among young people belonging to ethnic groups other than the three largest (i.e. not Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo – 15 per cent), with significant differences also apparent between the three largest groups: young Igbo Nigerians most commonly report low voter efficacy (12 per cent), followed by young Yorubas (nine per cent), and finally young Hausas (six per cent).

Not voting because of disinterest in national elections, by contrast:

- is more common among young Muslim Nigerians (13 per cent) than young Christians (nine per cent)
- is most common among young Hausas (13 per cent), and lowest among young Igbos (seven per cent)
- is most common among young Nigerians living in the North West (17 per cent), and lowest among young Nigerians in the North East (five per cent)
- is more common among young urban (12 per cent) than young rural Nigerians (eight per cent).

Possible reasons for the relative prevalence of apathetic and disinterested attitudes among young Nigerian voters include:

Disillusionment with Nigerian democracy and governance is widespread.

A survey conducted by SBM Intelligence in the wake of the 2019 general election found that Nigerians aged 18 to 30 are the least likely of any age group to report interest in politics (SBM Intelligence, 2019). The researchers explained their findings by pointing to evidence of widespread disillusionment with the Nigerian democratic system, based on the perception of government and elected representatives as not fulfilling their obligations to the people, in preference for serving their own ends. The survey found that only 20 per cent of survey respondents believed that the definition of democracy as ‘for the people and by the people’ applies in Nigeria. The majority (55 per cent), meanwhile, said they believed that Nigeria is run by an anocracy (SBM Intelligence, 2019).

In addition to highlighting concerns that the social democratic contract between elected representatives and the electorate is not guaranteed in Nigeria, this disillusionment may also reflect deeper anxieties, expressed in both workshops and interviews, about the credibility and fairness of electoral processes in Nigeria. These anxieties are rooted in historical precedent: since Nigeria re-democratised in 1999 following 15 years of military rule, for example, six presidential elections have been held, all of which have been marred by both administrative failings and concerns about the fairness and credibility of the results (see Carter Centre, 1999, Human Rights Watch, 2004; 2007; 2011, Commonwealth, 2019; Reuters, 2019). Given this, it is possible that young Nigerians question the efficacy of casting their vote.

The way that the elections happened in 2019 and later this year in [the gubernatorial elections] ask the question: are we sure that young people and alternative candidates, people who have ideas, have a fair ground to contest election in the country? And to be honest with you, the answer is no.

Male, KII

There is a lack of youth-tailored modes of political participation, outreach and engagement.

Consultations with advocates and activists working to improve political participation among youth in Nigeria consistently highlighted the slow rate at which political processes are adapting to the patterns and preferences of young Nigerians.

For example, in light of the evidence that young Nigerians are increasingly online, it is striking that the first Nigerian political party to introduce online membership registration and voting in party primaries – the KOWA Party – only did so in late 2018 (Eagle, 2018).

Similarly, advocates called attention to the as-yet unsatisfied imperative of communicating the relevance of politics to the day-to-day realities, lifestyles and pastimes of young Nigerians.

There's a need to be deliberate about programmes that really focus on the problems of political participation and why young Nigerians are not interested in politics. We want to be able to use what young people are currently interested in to create a conversation.

Male, KII

There are inadequate attempts to engage young Nigerians across all stages of the electoral cycle.

Workshop participants and interviewees alike consistently called attention to the tendency of stakeholders to focus their efforts on motivating political participation among young Nigerians at election times only. This tendency overlooks the value of maintaining consistent engagement across the full electoral cycle, as a way of ensuring that young Nigerians are afforded opportunities to use their voices at all times rather than just once every electoral term – and that they remain sensitised to the importance of political participation in their day-to-day lives.

3. Fear of becoming involved in political processes

Eight per cent of those in this segment who did not vote in the 2019 general election did not do so out of fear, with the same proportion (eight per cent) reporting fear as a reason for not voting in their most recent state election. This is equivalent to the percentage reported by the general, non-voting youth population.

Political violence is a widespread concern among young Nigerians generally, as well as an issue that has drawn substantial commentary since Nigeria's transition back to democratic rule in 1999. Election-related violence typically includes clashes between political party supporters, incidents that take place at campaign events and attacks on existing or aspiring politicians (Campbell, 2019). A number of commentators have called attention to the complicity of politicians themselves in this violence, either by directly hiring perpetrators of political violence, or inciting violence by stoking underlying ethnic, religious and regional tensions (Aliyu, 2019).

Survey responses indicate that not voting because of fear of violence is relatively more common among young Nigerian women (nine per cent) than men (six per cent). They also suggest that, during state elections specifically, these fears are most acutely felt by young Igbos, approximately twice as many of whom report not voting out of fear of violence (11 per cent) compared to young Hausas (five per cent) and young Yorubas (six per cent).

4. Inaccessibility of political processes

Ten per cent of those in this segment who did not vote in the most recent election did not do so because they were unable to reach a polling station, due to disability of illness (three per cent), a need to stay at home and care for the family, or the time and/or cost of travel. These proportions are in line with the general, non-voting population. Responses to the Next Generation survey indicate that different groups are more likely to experience accessibility barriers that prevent them from voting (see Table 2).

Table 2: Groups most affected by accessibility barriers

Barrier to accessibility	Most affected groups
Illness/disability	Young Nigerians living with disabilities
Domestic responsibilities	Young female Nigerians
Time/cost of travel	Young Nigerians belonging to lower social classes (DE)

Priority groups

The politically apathetic are the youngest segment and have the largest proportion of females. They are predominantly from the South, and in particular the South West. Ethnically, they are most likely to be Yoruba or Igbo and they are notably more likely than the sample average to be Christians. That being said, however, as the above discussion indicates, a more targeted approach may be warranted depending on the contributing factor being targeted.

Opportunities to reach and support

The politically apathetic have the lowest engagement with media – they use all forms of media less than the other segments with only 36 per cent reporting being daily users of social media, 35 per cent daily television users and 35 per cent daily radio users. Among social media users, Facebook and WhatsApp are the most popular with 51 per cent and 41 per cent respectively.

In terms of sub-groups who may be considered high priorities within this segment:

- a quarter (25 per cent) of young, politically apathetic Igbos are daily radio users, 36 per cent are daily television users and 43 per cent are daily social media users
- young, politically apathetic residents of North Central states use social media more than any other media: 38 per cent are daily users, compared to 31 per cent who watch television daily and 25 per cent who listen to radio daily

- young, politically apathetic residents of South West states reported by far the highest number of daily television (44 per cent) and social media (42 per cent) users, as well as the second highest number of daily radio users (39 per cent).

Unengaged voters (31 per cent)

The challenge to optimise engagement

Unengaged voters are not using their voices to their fullest potential.

Unengaged voters are comparable to politically apathetic Nigerians along most of the measures that informed the segmentation, with the exception that they do vote. This means that while their voices are used at election times, they remain silent at all other stages of the electoral cycle, and also do not use their voices to influence their community or local groups.

Contributing factors

1. **Poor education – particularly civic education on the rights and expectations of the electorate in respect of governance**

Compared with politically engaged voters, unengaged voters exhibit a range of characteristics which suggest the impact of educational attainment on political participation behaviours. Unengaged voters are significantly less likely than politically engaged voters to have received a tertiary education, with almost double the proportion of politically engaged voters who have received no education (nine per cent vs five per cent). They are also much more likely to be female (65 per cent of

unengaged voters, compared to 39 per cent of politically engaged) and from the north of Nigeria – groups which consistently report lower educational attainment than their peers.

These disparities are important for political participation. Studies have demonstrated, for example, that, in Nigeria, better-educated citizens are more attentive to politics, more likely to vote and more likely to participate in local government and community associations (Larreguy & Marshall, 2014). Post-secondary education has also been identified as the most significant predictor of Nigerian women's political participation (Dim & Asomah, 2019).¹³ These insights suggest that poor education may be a contributing factor to unengaged voters' lack of engagement in forms of political participation other than voting, and also help explain this segment's low levels of interest in politics and standing for election.

Furthermore, consultations with interviewees highlighted accounts of uninformed voting practices that may align with the attitudes and behaviours that characterise the unengaged voter segment. These include anecdotal evidence of women voting out of custom rather than in their own political interest and from a fully informed perspective, and the practice of selling votes in exchange for various incentives. In explaining these practices, interviewees again pointed to educational barriers, specifically poor civic knowledge and understanding of the rights and expectations of the electorate in respect of the candidates for whom they vote.

13 > The study measured political participation in terms of responses to the following question asked in the 2014–15 Afrobarometer survey: Have you done any of the following things during the past year: join others in your community to request action from the government; contact the media; contact a government official for help; attend a demonstration or protest march?

Women organise at a rural level for elections. But when they do, they ask for nothing in return. They do not get gender-inclusive services. They're not told why they are voting or if it's debated on the floor when candidates are having debates and all of that.

Female, KII

A lot of us don't have an understanding of civic education. The fact that we've never really had a steady democracy has cheapened our approach towards governance and what we think the role of government should be. A lot of young people think that it is the government who is just expected to make everything perfect, while ignoring the perks of holding power accountable.

Female, KII

Priority groups

Unengaged voters are older: 56 per cent are over 25 and only 11 per cent are 18 to 20; they have a higher representation of women; and they are more likely to be from the North (57 per cent) than the South. They are a segment that often exists within different demographics and sub-groups. As the above discussion of contributing factors indicates, less-educated groups, in particular, should be considered a priority.

Opportunities to reach and support

Radio is the dominant source of information for the unengaged voters, with 46 per cent listening daily compared to only 38 per cent who use social media and 36 per cent who watch television on a daily basis. Among social media users, Facebook (50 per cent) and WhatsApp (42 per cent) are the most used social media platforms, and unengaged voters are the most likely segment to use WhatsApp. They rely on legacy media to get news and information about elections (53 per cent) ahead of family and friends (31 per cent), in particular radio (25 per cent). In line with the segment's low rates of community engagement, unengaged

voters are unlikely to join in community groups, and the only group that they are likely to be a part of is a religious group or association (32 per cent).

Politically engaged (11 per cent)

The challenge to optimise engagement

Among the politically engaged there is a predisposition towards violence, which manifests most prominently in the North West and North East.

In many respects, the politically engaged segment represents the most optimal political attitudes and behaviours of all the segments identified. They are engaged in their community, participate politically in ways other than just voting, and are highly interested in politics. Their engagement in the community involves religious groups, political parties, sports groups and campaigning/lobbying groups. The majority (63 per cent) have joined a protest or demonstration, while 74 per cent report having shared political material online. More concerningly, however, 49 per cent of the segment report that they have used force or violence for a political cause, with survey responses indicating that, of all regions, it is politically engaged young Nigerians living in the North West and North East who are the most likely to have done so. In the sections below, contributing factors to both the positive and negative aspects of the politically engaged segment are considered.

Contributing factors

1. **Interethnic tensions, manipulation by political elites and frustration at underservice in a variety of areas**

Educational attainment, and awareness of and concern about the challenges facing young Nigerians all contribute to more optimal political attitudes and behaviours.

In terms of the contributing factors to these positive differences, politically engaged Nigerians perceive a great number of challenges in Nigerian society, with a higher proportion

reporting issues as prominent, both for themselves and young Nigerians in general, than all other segments. This suggests that they may be motivated by their relatively high levels of awareness of and concern about the challenges faced by people living in Nigeria. Education is also a significant contributing factor, with 49 per cent of politically engaged Nigerians having received a tertiary education.

Political violence is most commonly attributed to interethnic tensions and the manipulation of political elites – yet frustration at persistent underservice of needs may also be a factor.

This politically engaged segment still experiences important challenges, however, with 49 per cent of the segment reporting that they have used force or violence for a political cause. A number of contributing factors to this challenge have already been discussed, for example in terms of the role played by interethnic tensions and rivalries in fuelling political violence, together with the role of politicians themselves in stoking these animosities for personal gain. The coincidence of violence with high awareness of societal challenges faced in Nigeria may additionally suggest how frustration at these challenges is contributing to otherwise politically engaged young Nigerians' decisions to pursue change through harmful means.

Priority groups

Politically engaged young Nigerians are mostly male, Hausa, belong to a higher social class and live in urban areas.

They are strongly over-represented by Hausa respondents and male respondents. The segment also has the highest representation of urban dwellers and upper and upper-middle classes. They are the most likely segment to be working full-time (21 per cent) or part-time (15 per cent) for a regular salary, and 22 per cent of them are self-employed. Despite this they have the highest proportion of people

that have applied for a job but did not get it (35 per cent). Their most common jobs are farm workers (12 per cent), professionals (ten per cent), or public or health service workers (ten per cent), and for all three occupations these are higher than the sample average among other groups.

Use of political violence is most common among young male Nigerians, those who live in the North West and North East, and those in middle social classes.

Responses to the Next Generation survey do not indicate a pattern in terms of educational attainment and use of violence, but do show that significantly larger proportions of young Nigerians living in the North East and North West have used violence for political ends in the past: 11 per cent and ten per cent respectively, or approximately twice as many as the next nearest group (six per cent in the South East) and more than three times as many as young Nigerians living in the North Central zone (three per cent). Political violence is also most commonly reported by middle-social-class Nigerians (C1 – ten per cent), and by young males more than females (eight per cent vs six per cent).

Opportunities to reach and support

Taken as a whole, politically engaged young Nigerians are relatively heavy social media users, with 47 per cent being daily users of social media, compared with 45 per cent daily radio listeners and 41 per cent daily television users. Facebook is the most popular platform, with 57 per cent of social media users reporting using it the most, followed by WhatsApp, while the politically engaged also use a wider range of social media platforms than other segments. Their primary sources of news and information about elections are friends (20 per cent) and family, more specifically the father (13 per cent).

The media profiles of members of this segment most likely to report violence – that is, young males living in the North West and North East – are, however, very different. Within the politically engaged segment, respondents from the North East have by far the lowest daily media usage, with only 26 per cent listening to the radio daily, 22 per cent watching television daily and 18 per cent using social media daily. The politically engaged that live in the North West are among the most likely regions to listen to radio daily (52 per cent), and 40 per cent are daily social media users and 36 per cent are daily television users. This indicates that radio is clearly the most popular media platform for the politically engaged that live in these zones; however, twice as many North West as North East dwellers listen to radio daily.

Politically ambitious (23 per cent)

The challenge to optimise engagement

The leadership aspirations of politically ambitious young Nigerians may be frustrated by their lack of exposure to and experience in other forms of political and community engagement.

Despite their ambitions to stand for election one day, the politically ambitious have relatively low political party membership (22 per cent); rarely engage in online political activities (only ten per cent have ever followed a political social media account, for example); and also do not commonly participate in informal political activities such as joining a protest demonstration (seven per cent) or signing a petition (two per cent). They also tend to report low levels of community engagement. As consultations with leading young Nigerian advocates and activists consistently mentioned, this suggests that, in spite of their aspirations, young Nigerians in this segment tend to lack the experience and skills necessary to actually realise their goals unsupported.

It is likewise important to acknowledge the uneven representation of particular groups in this segment as a challenge to be overcome. As is the case for the politically engaged, the politically ambitious are vastly over-represented by men and are most likely to be Hausa. They are also the most likely segment to be Muslim – who still make up less than half (46 per cent) of the segment – and they have the highest proportion of Northern respondents compared with other segments. As previous sections have illustrated, ensuring that all groups are evenly represented both at the ballot box and on the ballot paper constitutes a main criterion for success, if political participation by young Nigerians is to not become politicised along ethnic, religious and regional lines.

Contributing factors

Recognising the dual challenge manifested by the politically ambitious segment, the discussion of contributing factors is divided in two.

1. Factors contributing to the challenge of supporting young Nigerians who already aspire to leadership

There is limited access to leadership positions within political parties for young Nigerians.

In addition to lowering the age restrictions on holding elected office, the NTYTRA secured the right for candidates in both state and federal elections to run as independents. Prior to this, membership of and nomination by a registered political party were required for a candidate to stand. Despite this progress, however, advancement within major political parties remains a major route to elected office – a point exemplified by the fact that the majority of young representatives elected in 2019 came from the two main political parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressives Congress (APC).

The expediency of political party membership and leadership is related to several factors, one of which is the resources required to run for office. According to estimates provided by former parliamentary MPs and relevant civil society practitioners, for example, the cost of campaigning for aspiring federal MPs is around 200 million naira –160 million naira over the legal threshold set by the 2010 Electoral Act (Olorunmola, 2016).¹⁴ In addition to this, however, as young advocates for youth political participation in Nigeria observe, political parties provide environments within which young people can gain skills and experience that are vital both to be able to run for office and to operate effectively if elected.

Political participation for young people in Nigeria has, to a very large extent, been focused on young people running for office and getting elected, and then participating as an elected official. But that link to participation in the definition is very literary, because if young people are not participating in the political parties, then it's very difficult to see how they can participate as elected officials.

Male, KII

While the election of young candidates representing major parties, including the APC and PDP, illustrates the progress that has been made, major political parties in Nigeria are still criticised for not doing enough to ensure that young Nigerians can gain access to and occupy leadership positions within them. This is attributed to factors including an unwillingness on behalf of current, older and more senior figures within the parties to cede authority to younger peers, as well as doubts over the credibility of young Nigerians due to aforementioned socio-cultural biases equating ability with age and experience. Furthermore, widespread evidence of corruption and

godfatherism within political parties, particularly when it comes to securing the financial and social capital required to win a nomination, calls into question the extent to which major political parties provide a hospitable environment for aspiring young leaders (Olorunmola, 2016; Akoni, 2018; Egbas, 2018).

There appears to be insufficient provision and uptake of opportunities for youth leadership at the community and group membership level.

Community engagement, membership and leadership of local community groups act as vehicles by which young Nigerians can develop competencies important for leadership. However, uptake of their opportunities is not prevalent among young Nigerians, and is generally lower among those who are younger, female and of lower social class, in particular.

2. **Factors contributing to the challenge of improving the representativeness of the cohort of young Nigerians who aspire to leadership**

The aforementioned barriers to political interest and perceived self-efficacy are contributing factors for young Nigerians as a whole.

As discussions of barriers to political interest and participation generally have suggested, young Nigerians of different ethnicities, living in different regions and locations, both male and female, indicate a range of attitudes that are also likely to limit their interest in standing for election. Overcoming these constitutes an important first step in improving the representativeness of the cohort of young Nigerians who aspire for leadership.

Moreover, there are concerns over the security of electoral candidates – particularly female candidates and candidates representing marginalised groups and interests.

Security during elections in Nigeria is a serious concern. The country's record of violence against, especially, women and minorities who aspire to political leadership means that acknowledging and pursuing leadership opportunities may put members of these groups at risk of harassment and violence.

The problem is that a woman can be punished in more ways than a man can be punished for aspiring to power. So, we need to have that reorientation as well that it's OK for a woman to be a leader [...] We need to address the issues that are happening now, and it's an issue of violence against women, women in politics, women in every space in Nigerian society.

Female, KII

Priority groups

As discussed above, the politically ambitious are vastly over-represented by men and are most likely to be Hausa and Muslim. They have the highest proportion of Northern respondents and are the most likely to be self-employed compared with other segments.

Opportunities to reach and support

The preferred media of the politically ambitious is radio, with 45 per cent reporting using it on a daily basis. This is equivalent to the politically engaged and the unengaged voters; however, their consumption of television and social media is lower with only 38 per cent daily users. They tend to trust most news sources, slightly more than the sample average. They rely on legacy media such as radio (21 per cent) and television (18 per cent) for their information about elections, with only 31 per cent relying on family and friends.

14 > While paid-for political patronage and godfatherism is accountable for a significant portion of these costs, necessities such as security and media buying still impose high financial burdens (Olorunmola, 2016).



> Chapter 4: Visions for Nigeria

Eight aspirations

Building on previous chapters' insights into young Nigerians' values and what needs to be addressed to support and amplify young voices, the final chapter of this report explores the goals that young Nigerians envision and are working towards, for themselves, their communities and their country. Eight goals are identified. For each goal, this chapter provides an overview of current obstacles, together with initiatives and evidence of progress towards their achievement.

The eight goals are as follows:

1. advancing positive, values-driven leadership
2. assuring economic security and prosperity for all
3. realising potential through education
4. fostering unity, peace and tolerance
5. maintaining justice and security
6. guaranteeing media access, freedom and safety online
7. promoting health and well-being
8. safeguarding against climate change and environmental problems.

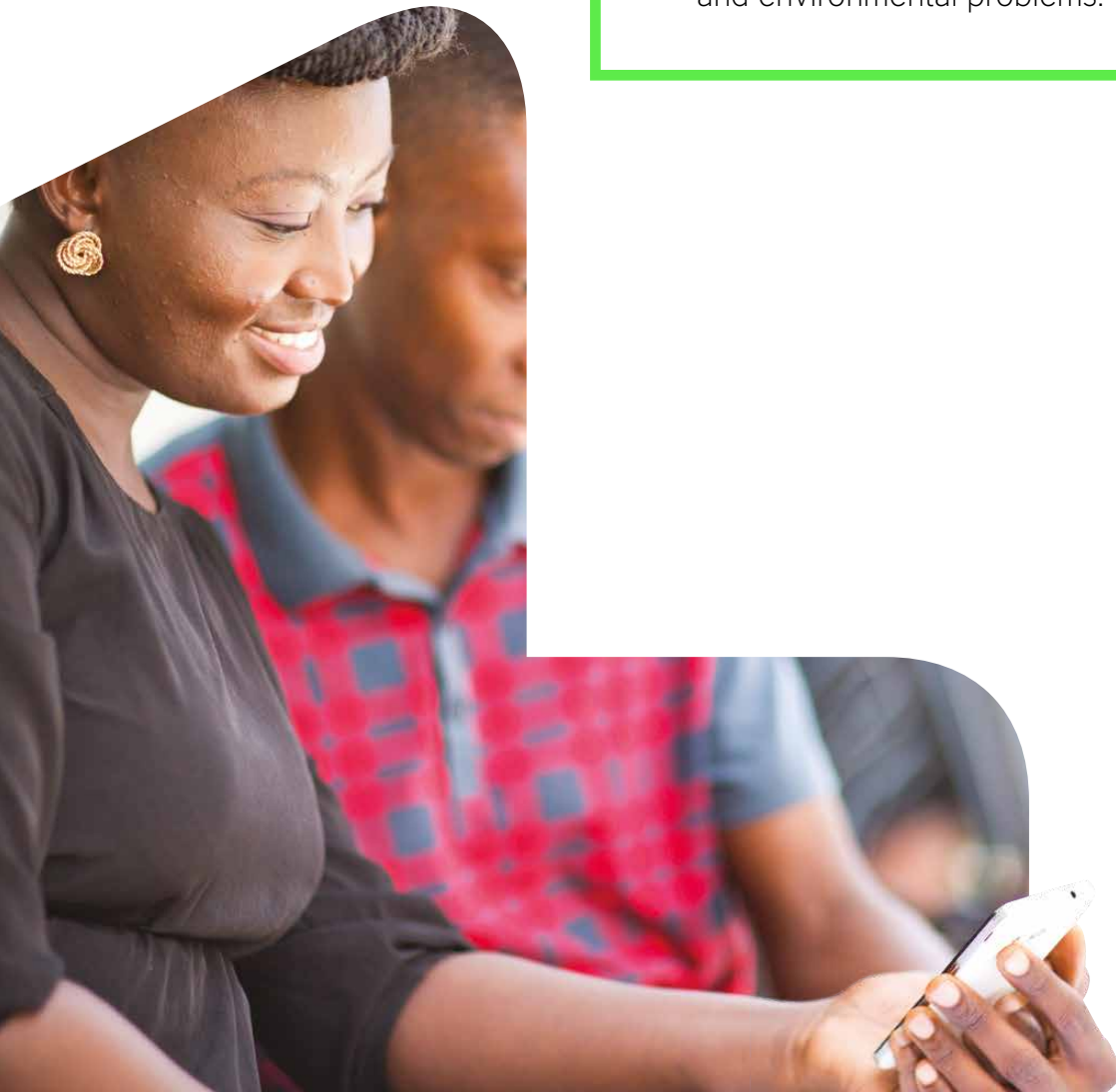
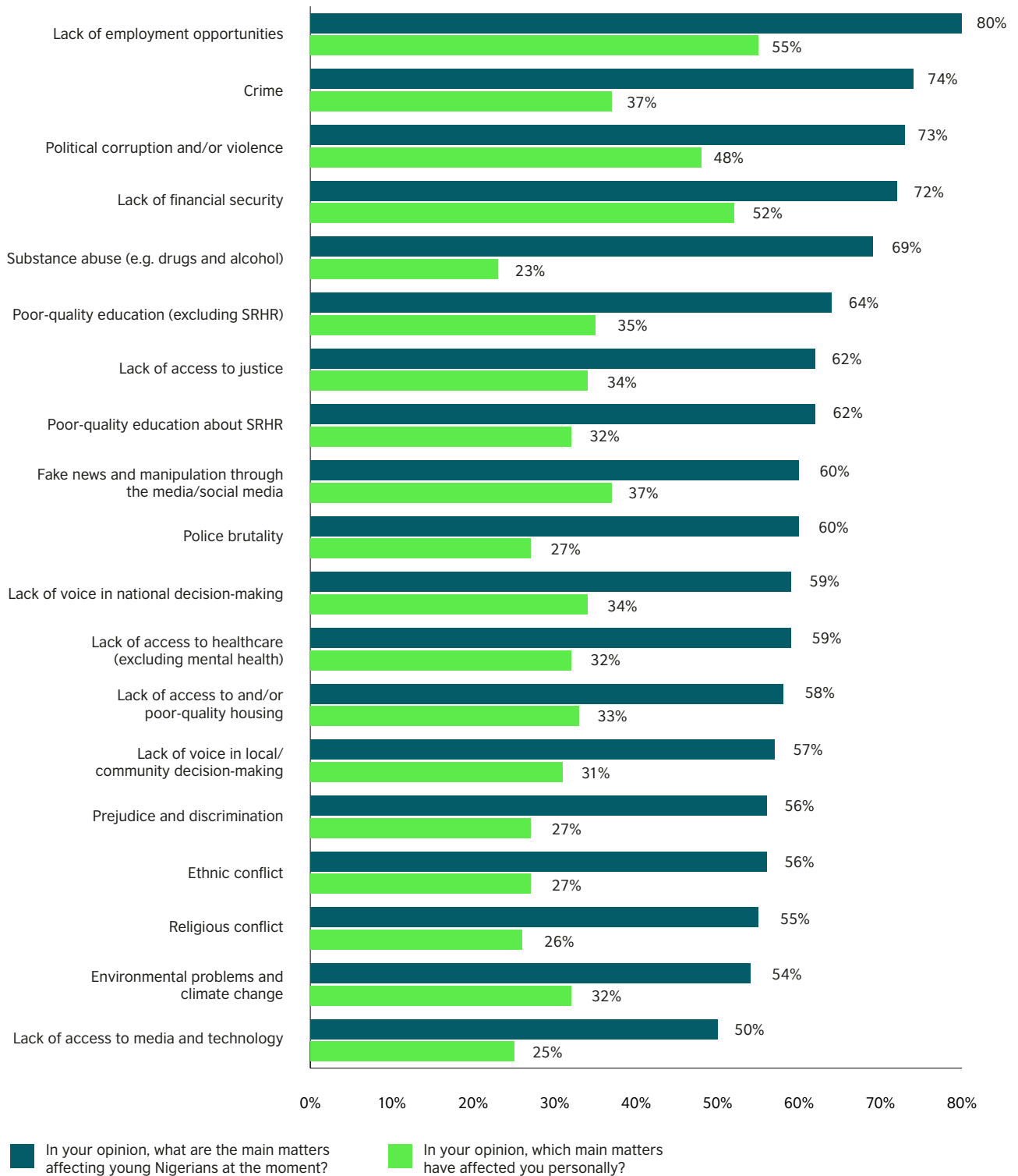


Figure 21: Main matters affecting young Nigerians



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Advancing positive, values-driven leadership

At a fundamental level, young Nigerians want to see their country led in a way that positively advances their most important values.

Conversations with young Nigerians highlight the extent to which they identify good leadership with values including security, self-direction and benevolence. As subsequent sections in this chapter demonstrate, young Nigerians across the country believe that more needs to be done to ensure the safety, financial security, prosperity and good health of the population. They also widely recognise the need for initiatives to educate and empower people, so that they express themselves and pursue their aspirations freely and effectively. To achieve these goals requires, in their view, leaders who are honest, selfless and motivated principally by the good of the population rather than themselves.

For our laws to stand, we need to put capable people [in charge]. People with the spirit of God in them. People without corrupt minds, people who would stand for the truth and would not be compromised no matter who is involved, whether the rich or poor.

Female, Bwari, FCT (rural)

Politicians should try to be selfless, so they can render good service, [rather than] serving based on their family or people they know.

Female, Obikabia, Abia State (rural)

Today, however, young Nigerians believe that many who enter politics are motivated principally by the value of power – especially the pursuit of personal wealth and influence.

As a value, power is defined by goals of social status and prestige, control or dominance over people, and resources (Schwartz, 2012). Responses to the Next Generation survey indicate that, compared to other values, power ranks as relatively unimportant for young Nigerians (see Figure 6 in Chapter 2 of this report). However, it is considered as very important for the majority of Nigerian politicians, who young Nigerians widely perceive as motivated by self-interest, a desire for wealth and a reluctance to relinquish control. As a result, young Nigerians feel alienated from many of today's political leaders.

We talk about exemplary leadership, whereby people can say that I like to be like this person. Nobody wants to be like our politicians – maybe you want to be as rich as them, but you cannot really say that there is anything that you want to copy about them.

Male, Umuka-Mba, Rivers State (rural)

This image of Nigerian politics and politicians as power-driven is founded, in part, on widely shared associations between Nigerian politics, on the one hand, and corruption, on the other. This corruption is both fiscal and nepotistic, with young Nigerians citing stories of government officials and politicians embezzling public funds to amass huge personal wealth, as well as using their position to confer jobs, wealth and power on those closest to them. Both the perpetrators and beneficiaries of these acts are seen as above the law, due to a judicial system heavily undermined by bribery and a lack of independence from other branches of the state.

If I want to change anything in this country, I will love to change our political leaders. They are only fighting to gather money for their next ten generations to come and embezzle. We are not moving, rather we are standing still. The leaders are our problem.

Male, Abuja, FCT (urban)

I want to change the amount of money given to political leaders. The representatives and senators are collecting up to 36 million naira to take home. If that money is slashed into two, it can be used to create jobs and development.

Male, Kano City, Kano State (urban)

When I commit a crime and the daughter of a senator commits the same crime, my case will be different. My [sentence] will be more than the person whose dad or mum have rank, or who knows people and can communicate to the top people in the society.

Male, Abia Main Town, Abia State (urban)

Instances of electoral malpractice by politicians also fuel the association between entering politics and being driven by power values. These instances include, for example, false promises by candidates seeking re-election, vote buying, incitements to violence, and first-hand accounts of fraud and misconduct on election days. Young Nigerians themselves were seen as often complicit in these acts, due to the manipulation of politicians and government officials.

The governments are full of lies. I was a corper¹⁵ two years ago and I was also opportune to work during the general election. I saw a lot during the general election that I wouldn't want to say.

Female, Port Harcourt, Rivers State (urban)

Associations between politics and the pursuit of power also contribute to young Nigerians feeling like the government is not doing enough to help Nigeria achieve its potential.

Concerns about political corruption and violence are very widespread: just under half (48 per cent) of young Nigerians report being personally affected by political corruption and/or violence, while almost three out of four (73 per cent) say these are among the main matters currently affecting young Nigerians (see Figure 21). These statistics suggest not just the extent to which young Nigerians share a negative perception of politicians and politics, but also the negative effects that self-interested leadership can have on wider society.

During conversations, young Nigerians across the country expressed concerns about poor governance, a national government disengaged from local realities and problems, and a lack of public investment. These factors are understood as underlying factors causing local problems such as poor-quality roads and transport, patchy access to basic amenities like water and energy, and underfunded and struggling public services, including healthcare and education. While the exact composition of local grievances varies by both state and residence type (urban/rural), overall, infrastructure, water, energy and poor public services constitute a common set of problems that are perceived as limiting both the development of communities and the livelihoods and well-being of youth in particular, and which are felt to be the responsibility of government to provide.

In Abia, there is no security, there is no road. The essential amenities that government [is] supposed to provide for the people, [they] are not doing it, so everybody is striving to survive.

Male, Abia Main Town, Abia State (urban)

Many young Nigerians see youth leadership as vital to advancing positive, values-driven leadership in Nigeria, yet acknowledge multiple barriers to achieving this goal.

The belief that radical increases in youth participation in decision-making will benefit Nigeria was expressed by young Nigerians living across all six regions. At the same time, many pointed to barriers such as an unwillingness of current political elites to cede power to the younger generations; political apathy, disengagement and poor political knowledge on behalf of young Nigerians; and young Nigerians' susceptibility to bribery and corruption due to widespread insecurity. For further discussion of these and other considerations for amplifying young Nigerians' voices, see Chapter 3.

They tell us we are leaders of tomorrow, but at the end of the day is grandparents are still the leaders of yesterday while the youths are still suffering.

Female (vulnerable), Bwari, FCT (rural)

I will like every Nigerian youth to have a different perception of how they see the country now. I want them to see the changes that we need in our country. God isn't going to come down from Heaven and do it for us. We shouldn't wait for the government, rather we should empower ourselves.

Male, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

Assuring economic prosperity and security for all

Young Nigerians consistently highlight the importance of assuring economic prosperity and security.

Together with ensuring people's safety and security, young Nigerians believe that ensuring a high level of economic growth should be the main priority for Nigeria over the next five years (see Figure 8, Chapter 2 of this report). This priority can be considered as especially urgent given the high rates of poverty across Nigeria, which overtook India in 2018 as the country with the greatest number of people living in extreme poverty (approximately 95 million; WPC,

2019). Forecasts provided by the World Poverty Clock suggest that extreme poverty in Nigeria is increasing by nearly six people every minute, with an estimated 46 per cent of the population expected to be living in extreme poverty by 2030. Analysed alongside demographic forecasts, the rise in extreme poverty has resulted in the projection that, between 2018 and 2030, young Nigerians could see their mean disposable income decrease by approximately nine per cent.

As an important step towards achieving this goal, young Nigerians recognise the importance of taking further action to address youth un- and underemployment in Nigeria. Of all matters affecting young Nigerians today, employment worries are the most widespread, with more than half feeling personally affected. This ranking is consistent across demographic characteristics including gender, social class, education, residence type (urban/rural) and geographic zone. Data from the NBS additionally indicates that issues of un- and underemployment disproportionately affect younger Nigerians, with 15- to 34-year-olds much more likely to be under- or unemployed compared to the general population (55 per cent vs 43 per cent), and 15- to 24-year-olds more likely to be un- or underemployed compared to 25- to 34-year-olds (69 per cent vs 45 per cent; NBS, 2018).

Young Nigerians connect the achievement of this goal with the prospect of tackling a range of other societal challenges.

From the perspective of young Nigerians, youth un- and underemployment problems are at the root of a number of other matters affecting young Nigerians today. These include, for example, the prevalence of substance abuse among young people, youth's susceptibility to becoming involved in criminal activities, and homelessness.

Once the young ones [prospects] are improved, there will be hope for Nigeria. Now you will see a good-looking young man smoking, joining armed robbery, because he has nothing to do.

Female, Abuja, FCT (urban)

The informal sector is and will continue to be crucial to achieving this goal in Nigeria.

Results from the Next Generation survey indicate that just 16 per cent of 18- to 35-year-olds spent the last 12 months working full-time for a regular salary. By contrast, almost a quarter (24 per cent) were mainly self-employed, and another quarter (25 per cent) were engaged in some form of part-time work, including those who work part-time for a salary (seven per cent), those who work seasonally (three per cent), those who work whenever work is available (nine per cent), and students who hold a job on the side (six per cent). Of those who report not working – including full-time students (14 per cent), those unable to work because of illness and disability (two per cent), and those looking but unable to find work (eight per cent) – the vast majority (73 per cent) are dependent on financial support from family and friends, with an additional 15 per cent buying and selling goods when possible.

The low proportion of young Nigerians occupied in full-time, salaried employment is due, in large part, to mismatches in the growth rate of Nigeria's formal job sector versus the country's population. Between 2010 and 2017, average labour force growth in Nigeria was 3.9 per cent, yet formal sector job growth was only 1.6 per cent (PwC, 2018). From the perspective of young Nigerians, this supply–demand imbalance is rendered visible on a daily basis by the number of young university graduates working menial jobs such as taxi driving to make ends meet, or else trying to start their own businesses.

Graduates in other countries, they already know the field they will fall into, but here you will hunt for jobs like God knows when, some of us our shoes have fallen out, because the government doesn't have anything good for you.

Female, Port Harcourt, Rivers State (urban)

Many of those not working full-time for a regular salary are employed as part of Nigeria's informal sector, which in 2017 accounted for approximately 65 per cent of Nigeria's GDP, and which the UN International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates accounts for 80 per cent of employment in Nigeria (Medina et al., 2016; ILO, 2018). Given its huge importance as a source of employment for Nigerians generally, achieving the goal of economic prosperity and security in Nigeria is likely to require initiatives that address the risks associated with informal employment. These include, for example, the fact that informal enterprises are typically unregistered, unregulated and untaxed – meaning that informal workers are generally exempt from legal protections normally guaranteed to employees in formal employment, while enterprises themselves have limited access to funding and other forms of support. These factors contribute to increased susceptibility to shocks and competition – realised most recently, and evidenced in the prelude to this report, by the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns have had on the livelihoods of young and older Nigerians alike (CSEA, 2020).

Variance in the barriers to employment warrant a nuanced and targeted approach to supporting different population segments to achieve this goal for themselves.

The top four barriers to finding employment that are most commonly identified by young Nigerians are a lack of personal connections (56 per cent), favouritism (54 per cent), a lack of work experience (43 per cent) and a lack of credentials (36 per cent – see Figure 22).

Well-educated (tertiary and above) young Nigerians are the most likely to report favouritism and a lack of connections as barriers preventing them from being selected for a job. These barriers are also cited by larger proportions of middle- and upper-class (ABC1C2) Nigerians, and are more commonly reported in the North Central and South West regions than other parts of the country – both of which are home to two of the most developed cities in Nigeria: Abuja and Lagos respectively. For less well-educated (secondary and below) and lower socio-economic class (DE) Nigerians, by contrast, a lack of proper qualification credentials is more commonly cited as a main barrier preventing selection for employment opportunities.

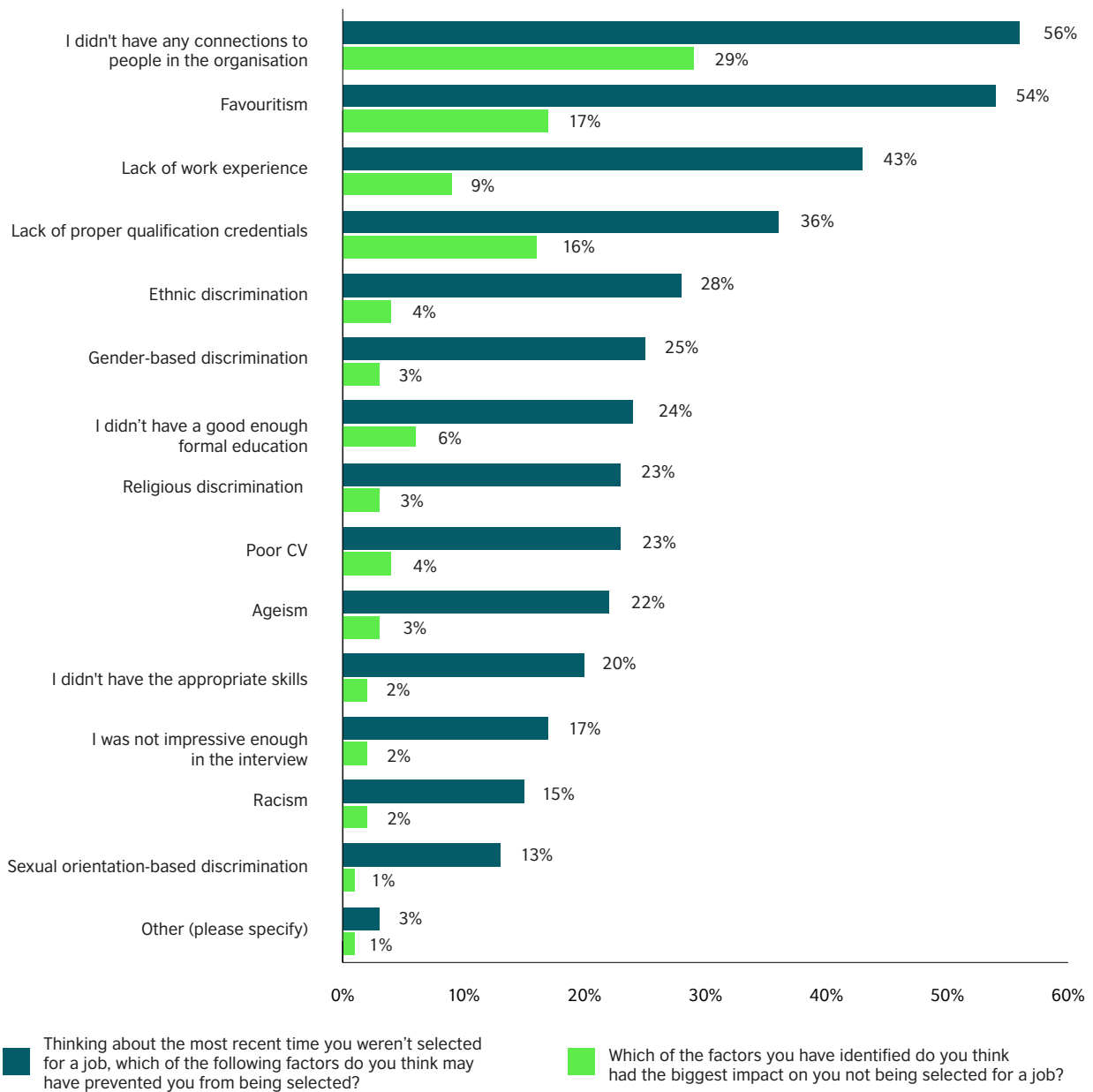
These findings point to two distinct barriers blocking young Nigerians from formal employment, which are experienced at different points in the application process. Those lacking in qualifications are likely to be excluded during the initial cull of applicants, without even being considered as suitable candidates. As survey responses and conversations with experts working in the field of youth employment both suggest, this group includes a substantial majority of young Nigerians without a university degree.

Those who don't have a tertiary education are then going to be blocked out of formal sector work, so they'll go online, they'll look for work in Lagos, in Abuja, in Port Harcourt, the major cities, for those who have access to data to actually embark on the cost of job searching. They'll hustle in the informal economy. They'll develop some of these skills for those of them who are open-minded, driven, motivated.

Female, KII

Meanwhile, for those young Nigerians with a university education, connections become the most valuable currency. Those without connections are likely to face additional challenges to securing a job, highlighting the limits of educational attainment to secure employment prospects and social mobility for young Nigerians.

Figure 22: Factors contributing to young Nigerians not being selected for jobs



Base: Number of people who have applied for a job and didn't get it (n=1,267)

Youth entrepreneurship presents an opportunity for advancing goals of economic security and prosperity—yet is limited by a number of factors.

In the context of high youth un- and underemployment, investing in youth entrepreneurship has been repeatedly hailed as a source of employment and job creation in Nigeria. In 2013, a survey conducted by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) found that young Nigerians themselves report high levels of self-belief in their capacity as entrepreneurs, with 82 per cent believing that they have the relevant skillset to become entrepreneurs and to identify business opportunities, irrespective of gender (GEM, 2015). Actualisation of this potential, however, was found to be much lower, with half as many (40 per cent) respondents reporting that they actually intend to start a business themselves, and half as many again (22 per cent) actually reporting being in the process of setting up their own (GEM, 2015).

A subsequent report by the GEM attributed this mismatch to factors including:

- limited availability of information about how to set up a business
- poor knowledge and understanding about what is actually required to become a successful entrepreneur
- a lack of financing
- poor awareness and uptake of government schemes intended to support youth entrepreneurship (GEM, 2015).

It also suggested that, for those young Nigerians who do seek to become entrepreneurs, a shortage of adequate training and advice, combined with widespread lack of knowledge about government-sponsored support programmes, means that many are at risk of making poor decisions about activity sectors, leading to unmanageable levels of competition (GEM, 2015). Skills deficits in terms of how to run a business, meanwhile, further stifle opportunities for the growth and sustainability of business ventures (GEM, 2015).

Since 2013, Nigeria has taken positive strides in easing restrictions for young people to set up businesses. These are reflected in, for example, Nigeria's 15-place rise to 131 out of 190 countries in the World Bank's 2020 Ease of Doing Business rankings (World Bank, 2020). This trend promises to continue following the signing of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 2020 (CAMA 2020) in August 2020, which provides a framework for identifying legal, regulatory and administrative bottlenecks that impede investment and limit the ease of doing business for micro, small and medium enterprises especially (Banwo & Ighodalo, 2020). Another significant positive shift relates to the exponential growth and consolidation of Nigeria's tech and innovation hub ecosystem. These hubs offer a range of services to young people and aspiring entrepreneurs alike, including skills training, mentorship, incubation and accelerator programmes, and access to workspaces. Data provided by GSMA indicates that Nigeria is currently home to at least 85 active hubs – the largest number in Africa (Briter-Bridges, 2019).

Despite these advances, however, interviews with successful young Nigerian entrepreneurs and hub managers alike indicated that a number of the barriers observed in 2013 still persist today. Moreover, hub managers spoke about the barriers that hubs themselves face specifically, for example in terms of achieving a sustainable funding model.

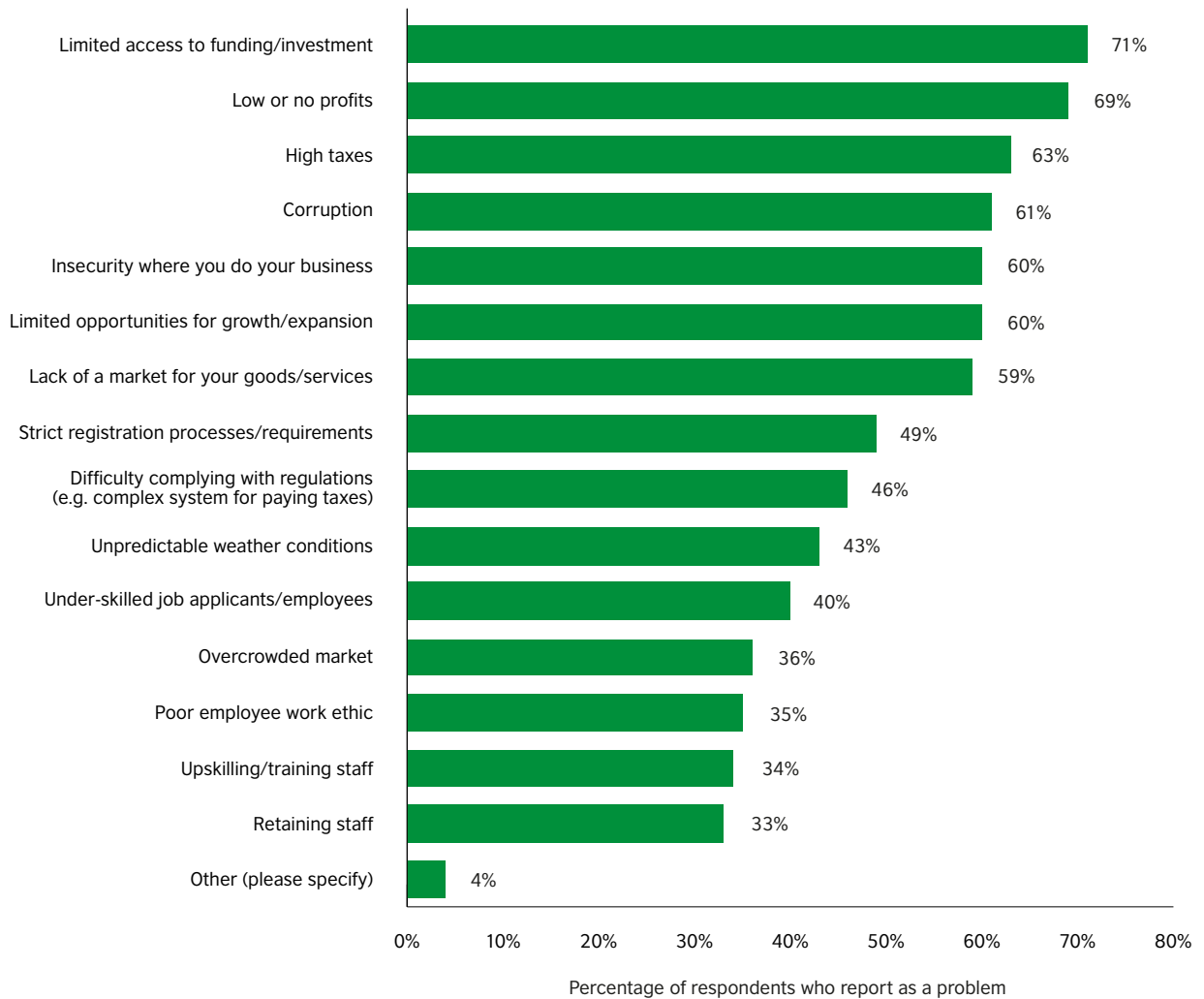
It's difficult to come up with a sustainability model for hubs. It's rather more of a passion to have a hub where you engage youths because most of those youths in your local region can't pay for the services you want to offer, the trainings you want to offer, and so on. They have business ideas but they can't pay for an incubation programme, so you have to run one for free while you still pay the bills, staff bills, and all the bills that there is to pay.

Male, KII

Finally, responses to the Next Generation survey indicate that, of the 140 respondents who self-identified as either an entrepreneur or a self-started business owner, the most commonly reported problems affecting business owners in Nigeria include limited access to funding/investment (71 per cent) and low or no profits (69 per cent – see Figure 23).

Figure 23: Main matters affecting business owners in Nigeria

In your opinion, what are the main matters affecting business owners in Nigeria?



Base: Those who report starting their own business (n=140)

The UK is optimally positioned in the imaginations of young Nigerians as a partner to help them secure economic security and prosperity.

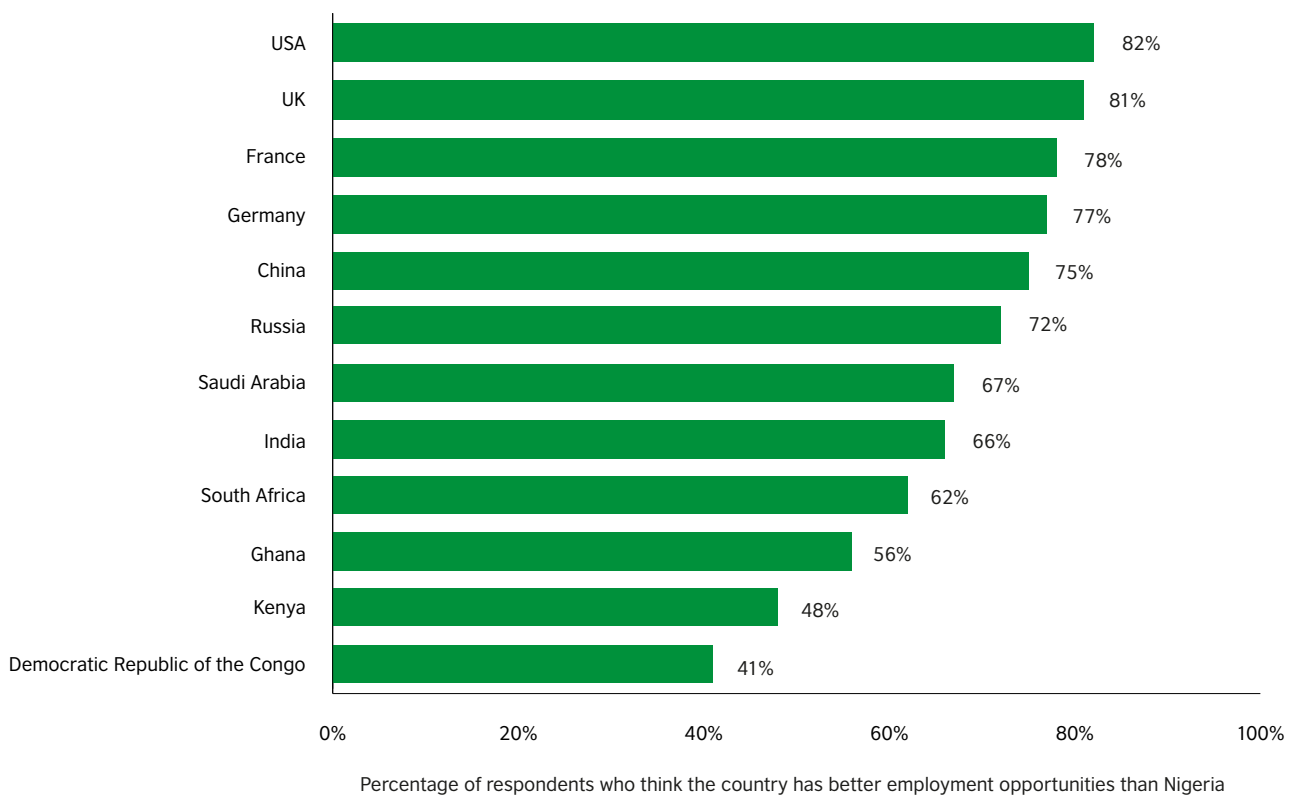
The vast majority (81 per cent) of young Nigerians believe that the UK offers superior employment opportunities than

Nigeria does currently (see Figure 24). This is the second largest percentage of all countries included in the survey, and the highest in Europe. Within Africa, the majority of young Nigerians tend to think that South Africa (62 per cent) and Ghana (56 per cent) present better

employment opportunities than Nigeria, while less than half think the same about Kenya (48 per cent), and only a minority think the same of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (41 per cent).

Figure 24: Comparing the employment opportunities in Nigeria versus other countries

Thinking about the employment opportunities provided in the following countries, to what extent do you think they are better or worse than the opportunities in Nigeria?



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Realising potential through education

Young Nigerians commonly recognise the instrumental value and importance of educational attainment.

Young Nigerians who participated in workshops often referred to the fundamental need of ensuring universal access to high-quality education in Nigeria, both as a means to achieve aspirations and financial security, and as a prerequisite to having a voice (for further discussion of the connection between education and voice, see Chapter 3). Further, as the values analysis presented in Chapter 2 demonstrates, educational attainment is also important in influencing the extent to which young Nigerians value qualities such as imagination, creativity and independence.

Education has a way of exposing and equipping someone and getting him informed. By so doing, that person will know how to surmount the barriers he faces.

Male, Abia Main Town, Abia State (urban)

Education is light, you know in the society are not educated are in darkness. We are in social technology age, so education is the key. So, it's very important that in our society the younger ones become enlightened with what's happening in the world and how to improve their lives and their world.

Female, Abuja, FCT (urban)

Increasing access to and the quality of education has been a consistent focus of government efforts in Nigeria – priorities that are shared by young Nigerians.

In 1999 the Nigerian government launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, which took full effect in 2004 following the signing of the UBE Act in April 2004. The goal of the UBE programme is to provide 'free, universal and compulsory basic education¹⁶ for every Nigerian child aged 6–15 years'.¹⁷ Federal responsibility for achieving this goal currently sits with the UBE Commission, working with and through state and local governments, which are principally responsible for the management of secondary (state government) and elementary (local government) school, respectively (WES, 2017). Complementing the work of the commission, the Federal Ministry of Education is responsible for overall policy formation and ensuring quality control, and is also the government agency primarily involved with tertiary education (WES, 2017).

Since the signing of the UBE Act in 2004, Nigeria has taken positive steps towards its goal. A 2015 UNESCO review of education in Nigeria, commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Education, for example, found that enrolment at primary and junior secondary levels had greatly increased by 2000 (Federal Ministry of Education, 2015). Despite these advances, however, educational attendance at the elementary level in Nigeria currently stands at approximately 70 per cent, equal to 10.5 million out-of-school children, the highest number globally (UNICEF, 2018). The majority (60 per cent) of these out-of-school children are female, and 60 per cent live in Northern Nigeria.

Furthermore, the UNESCO review flagged a number of challenges limiting the quality of education received by many students who do attend, including poor teacher training, inadequate building infrastructure and equipment,

poor data collection processes, and gender-based disparities in access to education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2015).

Finally, for those who do enter and advance within the Nigerian education system, pathway analyses suggest that less than half (48 per cent) of upper secondary-age adolescents in Nigeria successfully transition to upper secondary education (UNICEF, 2016). At the tertiary level, meanwhile, Nigeria's education system presently leaves over a million qualified college-age young people without access to post-secondary education on an annual basis – suggesting that problems of capacity continue beyond the basic education sector (WES, 2017).

I want to change the number of students per class. The number is up to 100 students if not more. Some of them sit on the ground, some on the window, because there is no chair for them [...] to seat. Even the chalk board is bad.

Male, Kano City, Kano State (urban)

Something needs to be done in area of education. You will see in every street, there is a school which is not up to standard. The government needs to check all the schools, whether kindergarten, nursery, primary or secondary schools to know if there are up to standard.

Male, Abia Main Town, Abia State (urban)

Most of the schools around are not in good condition. It needs to be improved as children fail their exams also because no good teachers. School has to be improved infrastructural wise.

Female, Abuja, FCT (urban)

16 > Nigeria's education system encompasses three sectors: basic education (nine years, encompassing elementary and junior secondary education), senior secondary education (three years), and tertiary education (four to six years, depending on the programme of study (WES, 2017).

17 > See <https://www.ubec.gov.ng/about/who-we-are>

Conversations with young Nigerians affirmed the visibility of these issues at the community level. Perhaps most urgently, they discussed the fundamental incapacity of schools to keep up with demand, together with their general state of disrepair and low quality of service – comments which mirror those reported by UNESCO to the Federal Ministry of Education in 2015.

Many young Nigerians with lower educational attainment feel unprepared in terms of core work-related skills and competencies.

In the context of skills, it has become common to distinguish between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ skills. The former refers to skills associated with abstract reasoning power, such as writing, reading and mathematics; the latter, to character traits and interpersonal skills that influence how well a person can work or interact with others (British Council, 2015; British Council, 2018).

[The situation today] requires you not to focus not so much on your technical skills or the course you’re studying but on future employable skills that apply irrespective of what exactly you’re doing. Skills like critical thinking. Like critical reasoning. Like problem solving, like questioning. Like project management. Like self-management, like self-regulation. These are the things that should be the outcome of our education system, not training people for 19th-century, 20th-century jobs or training for professions that no longer exist.

KII, Male

The government needs to look into our educational system. They need to re-orientate the lecturers and put a lot into the curriculum. The class should be more practical. Most of all these things start from primary school, when the foundation is destroyed, so our educational system needs to be restored.

Female, Lagos Metro,
Lagos State (urban)

Interviews and workshops alike emphasised the extent to which the Nigerian educational system is perceived as privileging theory- and factual-based learning over training in the practical application of knowledge and soft skills development. In response, the research set out to understand how prepared young Nigerians feel across a range of competencies. These include:

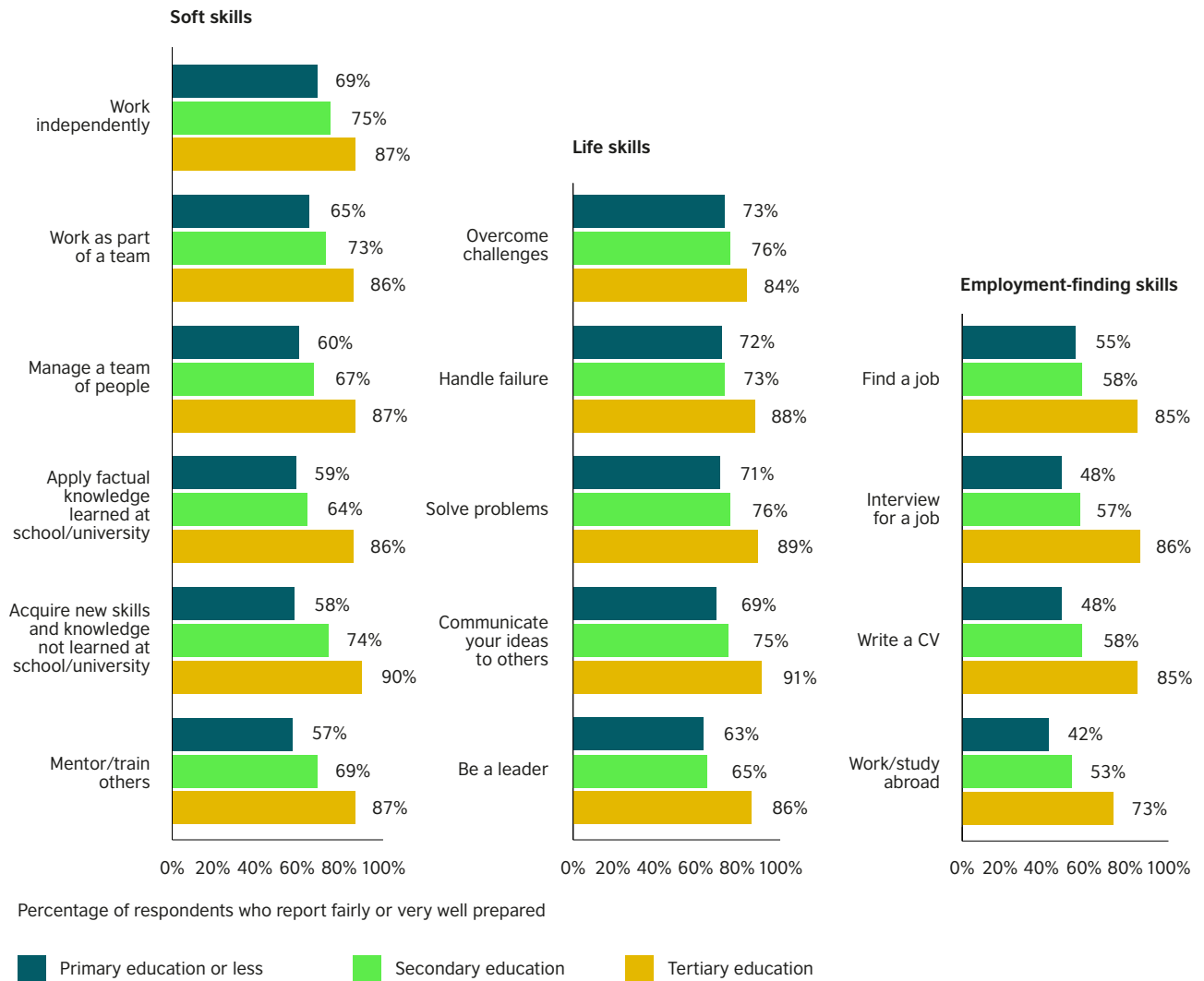
- general soft skills, or ‘life skills’, such as being able to overcome challenges, handle failure and solve problems
- soft skills that are more specific to the workplace, for example being able to manage a team, and mentor and train others
- employment-finding competencies such as writing a CV and interviewing for a job.

The results indicate significant, education-based disparities. Among young Nigerians who have accessed extracurricular educational opportunities, for example, those educated to secondary school level and below are more likely to report feeling unprepared across all skills and competencies. These disparities are most pronounced in respect of employment-specific skills, such as finding a job, interviewing and writing a CV (see Figure 25).



Figure 25: Preparedness in terms of key work-related skills and competencies

How well or not do you feel your education to date has prepared you to...



Base: Those who have attended educational courses outside of school (n=693)

During interviews, three steps were commonly identified by experts as important for advancing the education of these skills in Nigeria:

1. Promote educator training in teaching methods for soft skills development

At the basic and secondary level, experts argue that the soft skills deficit will persist in spite of the new curriculum, introduced by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) in 2015, which requires the teaching of vocational subjects such as agriculture, entrepreneurship and business, alongside traditional academic subjects such as languages, sciences and mathematics.¹⁸

This is due to teachers being ill-equipped in terms of teaching methods for soft skills development, with the result that even ‘applied’ subjects such as entrepreneurship continue to be taught and measured predominantly from a theoretical and fact-based learning perspective. University teaching methods, similarly, were viewed primarily as vehicles for communicating factual knowledge and theory, as opposed to cultivating soft skills. At university, these practices were perceived as doubly entrenched due to prevailing norms about, and expectations of, the types of people who should be employed at a university and their role in the education process.

A problem with the Nigerian curriculum, is that, apart from updating the curriculum, who is interpreting the curriculum? When the university undergrads take a course on the curriculum, it is not taught like it should be taught. It is very theoretical. It is not experiential.

Male, KII

2. Expand opportunities for practical experience- and work-based learning

Owing to their intrinsically practical nature, ‘learning by doing’ constitutes an effective means for improving soft skills development. These opportunities include, for example, work placements,

internships and community-based projects giving young people the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios and to practise soft skills such as leadership, teamwork and collaboration.

There are limited opportunities for work-based learning. So, does he have any work experience, has never interned, has never done anything. So, he has just been in a cocoon that is far from reality and comes out and can't fend for themselves.

Male, KII

Currently, however, access to these opportunities is limited by factors including poor private–public sector co-operation, limited places and poor employment skills in terms of young Nigerians knowing where and how to apply for places.

3. Encourage and support businesses to strategically cultivate soft skills in the workplace

Building on the opportunities afforded by work-based learning for soft skills development, multiple interviewees reported the imperative to encourage businesses to actively cultivate these skills in the workplace.

There are three places that young people learn: at home, at school or at work. And for me, for Africa, school is going to be really difficult to do much with for the next 20 years. It's a slow process. The fastest place is the workplace. In the workplace, you can try to instil the right values because there is already an incentive system built in to do that, you can try to instil the right skills, and then you can help channel their aspirations.

Male, KII

In Nigeria currently, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) account for about 50 per cent of industrial jobs and nearly 90 per cent of the manufacturing sector, in terms of number of enterprises; they are also strategically positioned to absorb up to 80 percent of jobs (PwC, 2018). This makes them a priority both as a source of work-based learning

opportunities and for ensuring workplace environments which foster soft skills development. A basic problem of small businesses, however, is the inability of the owner-manager to plan, organise, direct, co-ordinate and control both material and human resources, limiting the extent to which SMEs can provide nurturing environments for soft skills development (Tom, Glory & Alfred, 2018).

Despite widespread concerns and pessimism about the quality of education in Nigeria, young Nigerians remain committed to the value of high educational attainment.

The vast majority of young Nigerians agree that a good education is essential for success, but fewer than half believe the quality of education in Nigeria is improving (see Figure 26). These attitudes are broadly consistent across different regions, by socio-economic class and by educational achievement. While on the one hand positive in the sense that young Nigerians recognise the importance of education, this finding also illustrates a severe disconnect between the aspirations of and actual opportunities provided to young Nigerians. Conversations with young Nigerians across the country pinpointed this disconnect as a common source of frustration.

After we finish university, instead of the government giving us job they like us to pay money; meanwhile, we here we are looking for that money. What does the government expect us to do? Is it not stealing?

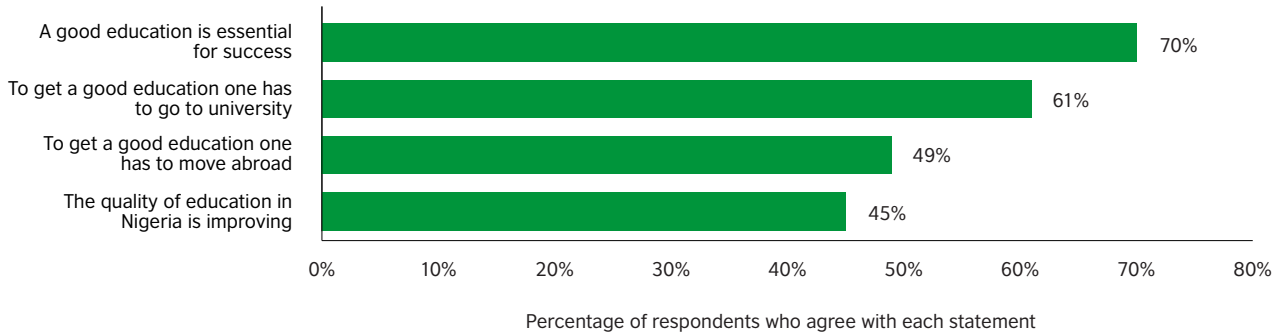
Male, Obikabia, Abia State (rural)

Young Nigerians living in North Central and South Western zones are significantly more likely to identify a good education with a university education – indicating, perhaps, the increased currency of a university degree in major business hubs such as Abuja and Lagos. Compounding indications of an aspirations–opportunity disconnect, young Nigerians of a lower socio-economic class and those with no formal education were the most likely to view a university education as a requirement of a ‘good’ education.

18 > For a full list of curriculum subjects, see NERDC (2015).

Figure 26: Young Nigerians' perspectives on education

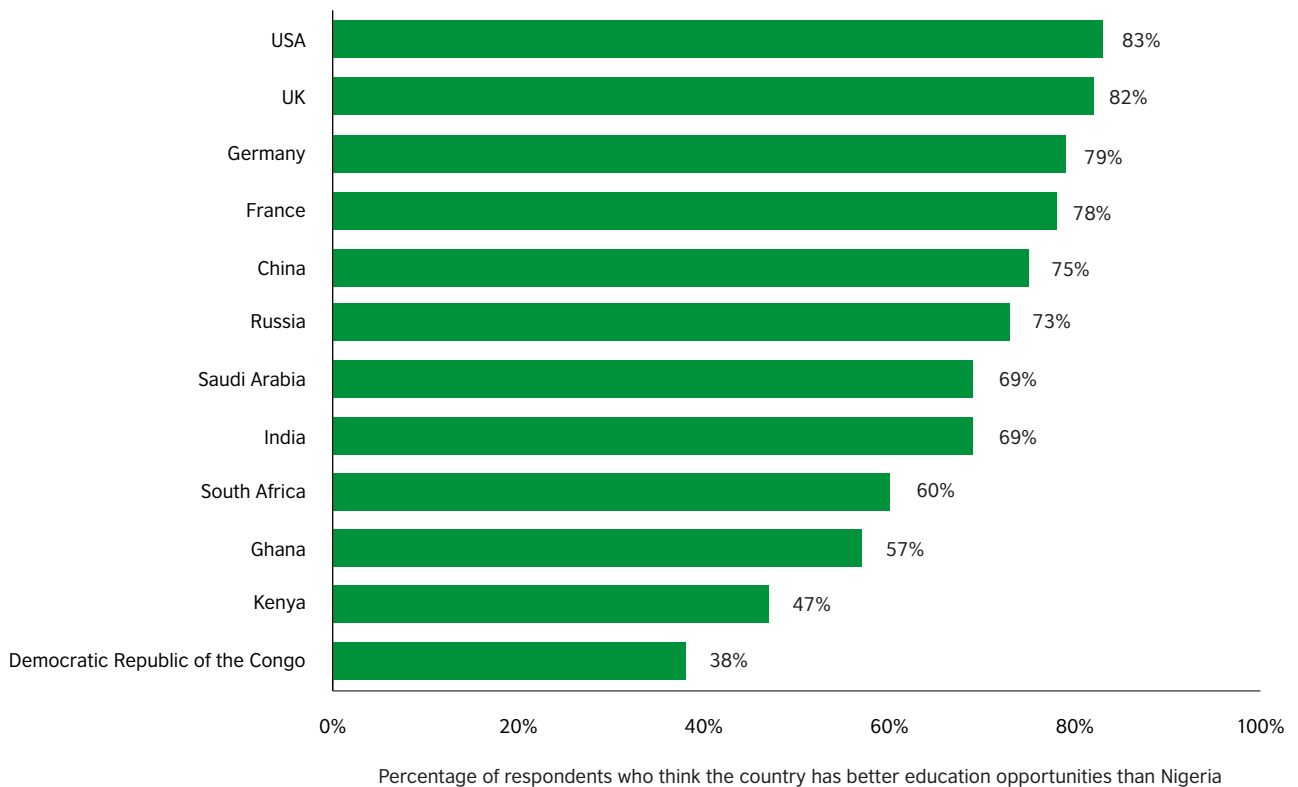
To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Figure 27: Comparing the educational opportunities in Nigeria versus other countries

Thinking about the educational opportunities provided in the following countries, to what extent, if at all, do you think they are better or worse than the education opportunities in Nigeria?



Base: General population (n=5,001)

The UK is optimally positioned in the imaginations of young Nigerians as a partner to help them realise their potential through education.

The vast majority (82 per cent) of young Nigerians believe that the UK offers superior educational opportunities than Nigeria does currently (see Figure 27). This is the second largest percentage of all countries included in the survey, and the highest in Europe. Within Africa, the majority of young Nigerians tend to think that South Africa (60 per cent) and Ghana (57 per cent) present better educational opportunities than Nigeria, while less than half think the same about Kenya (47 per cent), and only a minority think the same of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (38 per cent).

Fostering unity, peace and tolerance

Young Nigerians are highly concerned about prejudice, conflict and violence in Nigeria.

Political violence (73 per cent), prejudice and discrimination (56 per cent), ethnic conflict (56 per cent) and religious conflict (55 per cent) are all considered to be main matters affecting youth today by the majority of young Nigerians (see Figure 21). In response, they call for a values shift among the population at large towards a greater emphasis on love and unity.

To stop tribalism and religious discrimination, we need a change of mindset. We need love and unity.

Female, Bwari, FCT (rural)

The salience of these concerns is mirrored in modern-day discourse about social cohesion in contemporary Nigeria, much of which is marked by concerns including regional politicization; outbreaks and fluctuations in the levels of violence and conflict; the

role of ethnic and religious motivations in fuelling violence; and the internal displacement of discriminated-against groups (see Azad et al., 2018; Agunwamba et al., 2009; Çancı & Odukoya, 2016). These concerns have been magnified significantly in recent years, in part due to the media visibility of, for example, the Boko Haram insurgency and attempts to set up an Islamic state in North East Nigeria; as well as violent clashes over land resources between herdsman and farmers in North Central and North Eastern states (OHCHR, 2019).

It is important to situate these issues in their appropriate historical context. Nigeria is home to more than 250 ethnic groups, the origins of which largely predate the creation and subdivision of the nation by British colonial powers guided by interests other than understanding and respecting the diversity and relations between the different groups who already called the land home (Agunwamba et al., 2009). This – combined with factors including high levels of competition for economic and political resources both within and across states, geographical zones and regions – has helped create conditions which are highly conducive to inter-group rivalry, for example, along ethnic, religious, regional or political lines (Mustapha, 2005). While these conditions are not limited to any specific region or group in Nigeria, it is important to acknowledge that these rivalries manifest in different ways at different times, and in different places. For example, as results from the Next Generation survey indicate, while young Nigerians living in Northern states are more likely to have been personally affected by religious conflict, reports of being personally affected by ethnic conflict are significantly higher for young Nigerians living in the North Central zone (see Figure 28).

Young Nigerians believe that ending discrimination and prejudice and fostering unity will have a positive impact on the voices and prospects of the Nigerian population as a whole.

For young Nigerians, addressing these rivalries is of paramount importance. In workshop conversations, for example, many were critical of the existence of prejudice and discrimination within their communities, suggesting that it limits development by denying opportunities to those otherwise qualified to perform crucial roles. Results from the Next Generation survey validate this assessment, with roughly a quarter of young Nigerians who have been refused a job citing religious or ethnic discrimination as a factor in the outcome (23 per cent and 28 per cent respectively). Others, meanwhile, particularly those living in states most affected by conflict and violence today, spoke of the detrimental impact that these issues have on their day-to-day lives and livelihoods.

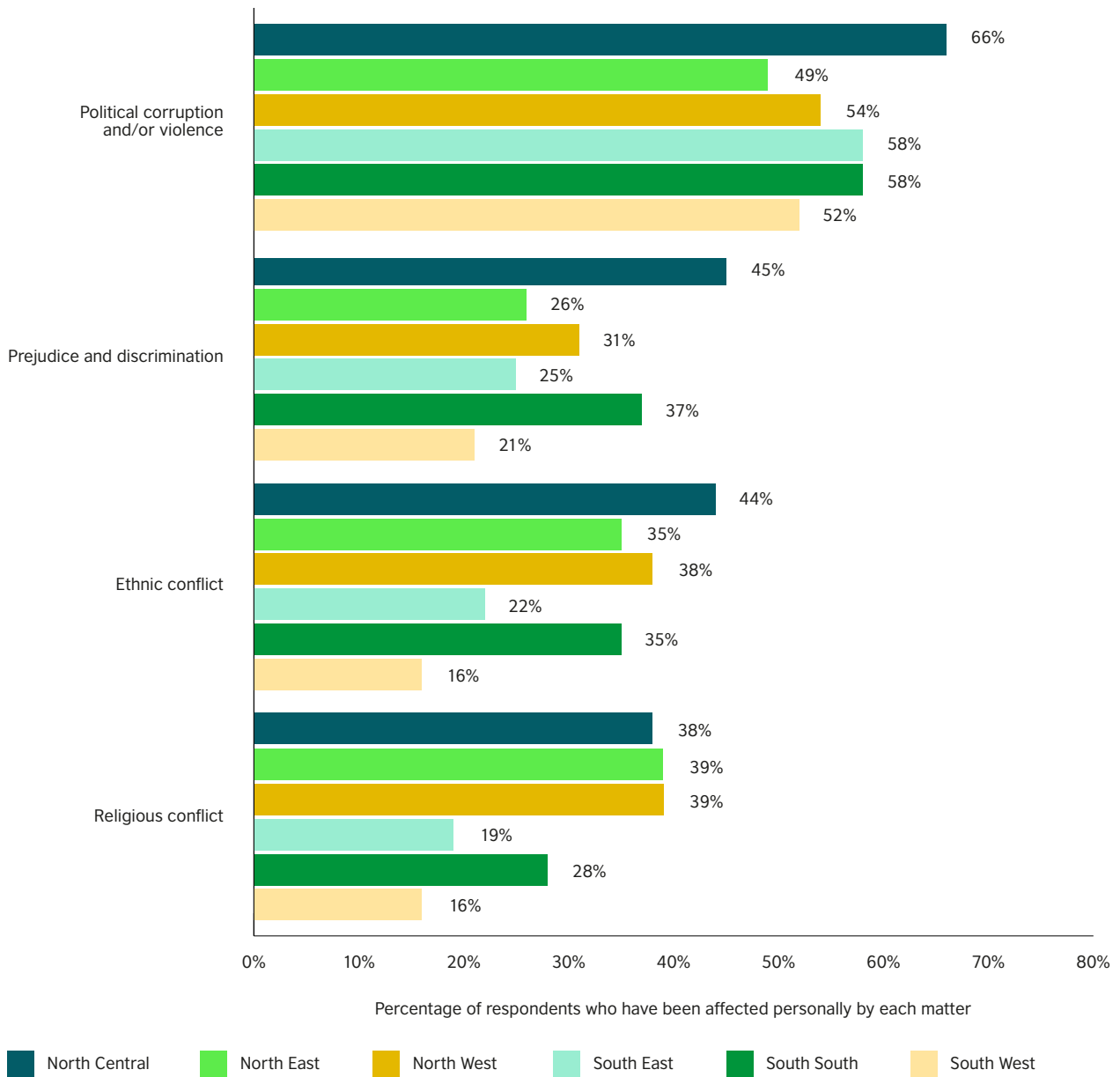
There are people capable of doing a particular job, but they are not given the opportunity. If our mentality is changed you will not tell me that this one is a Hausa man, he is a Muslim, he is not from your village and so you would not put him there, and then the country would be suffering from your mistakes.

Female, Bwari, FCT (rural)

What I would like to change about where I live is the herdsman farmer clashes. Because we ourselves, we go to farm and farm ourselves, but if the herdsman come with their cows, they destroy our crops and leave us with loss at the end of the day.

Female (PLWD), Tafabalewa, Bauchi State (rural)

Figure 28: Matters personally affecting young Nigerians, by geographic zone



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Maintaining justice and security

Young Nigerians are vocal advocates for the importance of safety and security.

For young Nigerians, a sense of personal safety is considered as fundamental to youth voice (see Chapter 3). The majority also recommend ensuring safety and security as the most important priority for government going forward, while the value of security itself is the most widely shared important value among young Nigerians (see Chapter 2). Many, however, report lacking this sense of safety personally, with an even greater proportion cognisant of threats to the safety and security of others in Nigeria. These include crime, reported as a matter affecting young people by 74 per cent of young Nigerians, lack of access to justice (62 per cent) and police brutality (60 per cent – see Figure 21).

Young Nigerians commonly frame crime thematically as a symptom of challenges including unemployment and financial insecurity.

Nigerian cities have been noted as being particularly conducive to crime, with sources indicating that widespread youth unemployment is contributing to growing crime rates in the country, as young Nigerians turn to criminal activities such as theft and fraud to maintain themselves (Alabi, 2014). Studies indicating positive correlations between local youth empowerment, on the one hand, and local crime reduction, on the other, have led to calls from researchers for the adoption of empowerment policies as part of overall crime control approaches (Ukwayi et al., 2017). Conversations with young Nigerians echoed these conclusions.

There are many youths that have business ideas, but because [...] they don't have money to start up, you see them misbehaving or staying in the streets.

Male, Obikabia, Abia State (rural)

[Empowering youth] will reduce crime rate, especially for our youth that go around gambling and stealing, those walking around snatching bags and phones. They will stop all that.

Female, Kano City, Kano State (Urban)

The evidence indicates heightened awareness of crime in Southern states, as well as increased vulnerability among highly educated yet frustrated young Nigerians.

A greater proportion of Southern young Nigerians reported crime as a problem affecting Nigerian youth compared to their Northern peers (79 per cent vs 70 per cent), although roughly equal proportions report having been personally affected. By contrast, a significantly greater proportion of Northern Nigerians report being personally affected by ethnic and religious violence (see Figure 28, above).

Across Abia, Lagos and Rivers states, young Nigerians voiced anxieties over 'agberos' or 'area boys' – a label denoting loosely organised gangs of street children, teenagers and young adults, mostly male, notorious for extortion activities in cities like Lagos – as well as 'cultists' – illegal secret society groups within Nigerian higher education that are known to have engaged in a variety of criminal activities, ranging from theft to beatings to murders. Recent reports on both cultist and agbero gangs suggest a connection between the risk of young Nigerians becoming involved and an inability to find suitable employment upon leaving education (see BBC, 2020; IFRA Nigeria, 2019; Rotinwa, 2017).

For me I feel unsafe, scared of the city, because of the recent robbery and cult issues. When you drive around, they will tell you not to go to certain areas, because of cult clashes here and there. I also feel angry because of what security people do, they stop you for no reason, they see a young person driving, they think you are a Yahoo boy¹⁹ and there are lots of incidents.

Male, Port Harcourt, Rivers State (urban)

One thing that I don't like about this area is the bad boys on the road, all these agbero, moving around and harassing people, sometimes they will block the way and collect 20N from Keke riders.

Female (vulnerable), Obikabia, Abia State (rural)

Police brutality and extortion are likewise widely reported.

Many young Nigerians spoke of various forms of misconduct by police and security forces. These included extortion, shake-ups, intimidation and violence. Once again, survey results suggest more widespread concern about police brutality among Southern Nigerians compared to their Northern peers (70 per cent vs 51 per cent). They also indicate that personal experiences with police brutality are significantly more common among young people living in the South West. Despite these variations, however, police misconduct appears to be a national issue, with young people in all zones voicing concerns during conversations.

Just recently, we heard of the incident of Chima Ilkwunado in River State.²⁰ Policemen beat him up, they said that they did autopsy and all that, and it turned out to be a lie. That same week, something similar happened in Lagos where SARS²¹ men beat a man and beat him to death. It is a national thing, it happened in Lagos, River State; I haven't heard of Abuja, but I know somebody somewhere is crying for something similar.

**Female, Umuka-Mba,
Rivers State (rural)**

Commentators have suggested that workers and student radicals (including human rights activists) are among some of the groups most likely to become the target of police brutality, indicating the increased risk posed to young Nigerians (Ojo, 2014). This view was echoed during workshops. Women of all ages are similarly regarded as especially vulnerable in this context, with threats of rape or other forms of sexual assault by members of security forces widely reported by human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria and the Open Society Justice Initiative (Agbibo, 2013).

Both poor education and fear of retribution for speaking limit the likelihood that justice will be sought by victims of crimes.

Education is critical for a person to be properly aware of and understand their fundamental rights, as well as to comprehend options for recourse in cases where these are transgressed. This is, perhaps, especially true in Nigeria, given the fact that the 1999 Constitution, written in English, has not been translated into the major languages spoken by local people, leading to the vast majority of illiterate and functionally illiterate Nigerians being prevented from attaining an awareness

or knowledge of their fundamental rights (Brems & Adekoya, 2010). Low rates of education nationally, and among poorer, female, rural Nigerians living in the North West, most especially, mean that many young Nigerians may not seek justice for this reason.

Social norms and attitudes which discourage victims of certain crimes from speaking out publicly and to the requisite authorities constitute an additional set of barriers limiting their motivation to seek justice. These are compounded by the very real threat of violence at the hands of security services, elaborated above.

The #ArewaMeToo movement has highlighted the extent to which these issues affect young women in socially and religiously conservative states in Northern Nigeria, in particular. The movement, which manifests in a local context the global #MeToo movement, began after Khadijah Adamu, a young Nigerian woman living in Kano, shared her experiences of being sexually and physically abused by her partner on Twitter. Her tweet was met with a wave of online support and an outpouring of similar recollections of sexual violence through a hashtag movement started by Fakhriyyah Hashim (2019). The hashtag on social media was described as a safe, online space for victims, in lieu of institutions that restrict access to the justice that young women ought to be entitled to (Unah, 2019). Today, the team co-ordinating the #ArewaMeToo movement is focused on verifying the authenticity of the victim and their reports before connecting them to NGOs to provide psychosocial support and legal aid (Unah, 2019). The team also speaks at schools to discuss gender-based violence (Egbejule, 2019).

Gender-based violence is a very sensitive topic, but what I have seen is that very young girls from the North

will have access to social media, and that changes how they construct their opinions and the way they push out their opinions on public platforms. When the #ArewaMeToo campaign peaked, there were so many young girls that forgot that talking about sexual violence in public was taboo – not necessarily forgot but they didn't care anymore because someone that they identify with had already broken this wall, has torn the wall down, and now it was almost normal to talk about sexual violence in public places. I believe has had a remarkable impact on the confidence of northern Nigerian women.

Female, KII

Those who are motivated to seek justice, meanwhile, face institutional barriers including inequality before the law and the inadequate separation of legislature, executive and judiciary.

Access to justice speaks to the rule of law and quality of governance in a society. In Nigeria, well-documented obstacles to accessing justice include limited finances, lack of education and illiteracy, and discrimination. This means that access to justice is a critical issue to young Nigerians who are poor, poorly educated, or who experience discrimination due to gender, sexual orientation or disability (Ladan, 2006).

Access to justice is compromised by the high costs of litigation, which can include funding the professional and transportation fees²² of legal practitioners, alongside upfront expensive filing fees (Okogbule, 2005). These costs can be compounded by the length of cases before they conclude, with reports suggesting that Nigerian citizens often have to endure cases taking three to four years to resolve. This understandably has led to a hesitance to initiate processes to administer justice, and an overall lack of

20 > A young Nigerian mechanic who was arrested, detained, extorted and tortured to death by men of the Nigerian Police Force in Rivers State, before later being found innocent after the police reported they could not prove a case against him (Sahara Reporters, 2020).

21 > Special Anti-Robbery Squad.

22 > Likely to be especially expensive in rural locations, where accessibility to law courts is lower – see Brems and Adekoya (2010).

public confidence in the judicial process. From the perspective of the young Nigerians engaged in the workshops, inequalities in access to justice are most visible in the ability of the rich and powerful to routinely escape justice, or else to use their money and influence to mitigate judgments against them.

Nigeria seems to be a lawless country. It's only the poor masses that are affected by the law.

Female, Bwari, FCT (rural)

Guaranteeing media access, freedom and safety online

Consumption of radio, film, television and online content constitutes an important and influential part of the lives of an increasing number of young Nigerians.

As previous chapters have highlighted, legacy, online and social media form an integral part of the lifestyles of an increasing number of young Nigerians, acting as critical touchpoints for the production and transmission of Nigerian youth culture today. These media are also widely considered by young Nigerians as vehicles for young voices (for further discussion, see Chapter 3).

Considered from the perspective of access and usage, radio is the most popular mass media in Nigeria. However, its status as such is becoming less secure over time, as other forms of media, notably television and the internet,²³ become increasingly available to larger proportions of society (BBC Media Monitoring, 2019). These changing media patterns are reflected in, for example, the significantly larger proportion of Nigerians aged 31 to 35 who listen daily, compared to those who are 18 to 20 (see Figure 29).

Television access is reported by a significantly larger proportion of young urban Nigerians, who also report much higher rates of home ownership of television sets. The relatively smaller difference between the proportions of

urban versus rural respondents who report television access in the community suggests the relatively greater importance of communal television viewing – for example at viewing centres, recreation centres and bars – for young Nigerians living in rural areas. Among groups who are less likely to watch television on a daily basis, including Nigerians living in the North and rural locations, power supply problems represent the main limiting factor (BBC Media Monitoring, 2019).

Finally, while access to the internet is growing, it remains heavily concentrated in the Southern and North Central zones (Figure 30), and is most limited in rural areas and among the less wealthy. The majority (64 per cent) of young Nigerians in rural locations have no access to the internet, versus 43 per cent of urban residents. Similarly, 71 per cent of young Nigerians in the lowest wealth quintile (E) have no access, compared to only 17 per cent in the highest (AB). A lack of infrastructure, obstacles to investment, consumer affordability and digital literacy are all considered barriers to access and uptake (Okunoye, 2019). Among those with internet access, use of social media platforms is widespread, yet daily usage is similarly concentrated in the South, in urban areas, among higher social classes, and among young males. University-educated young Nigerians are by far the most likely to use platforms such as YouTube, Twitter and Instagram, usage of which is otherwise relatively niche compared to the far more dominant and widespread Facebook and WhatsApp.

While widely recognised as an instrumental voice asset for young Nigerians, the control and regulation of mass media and the internet remains a contentious issue in Nigeria.

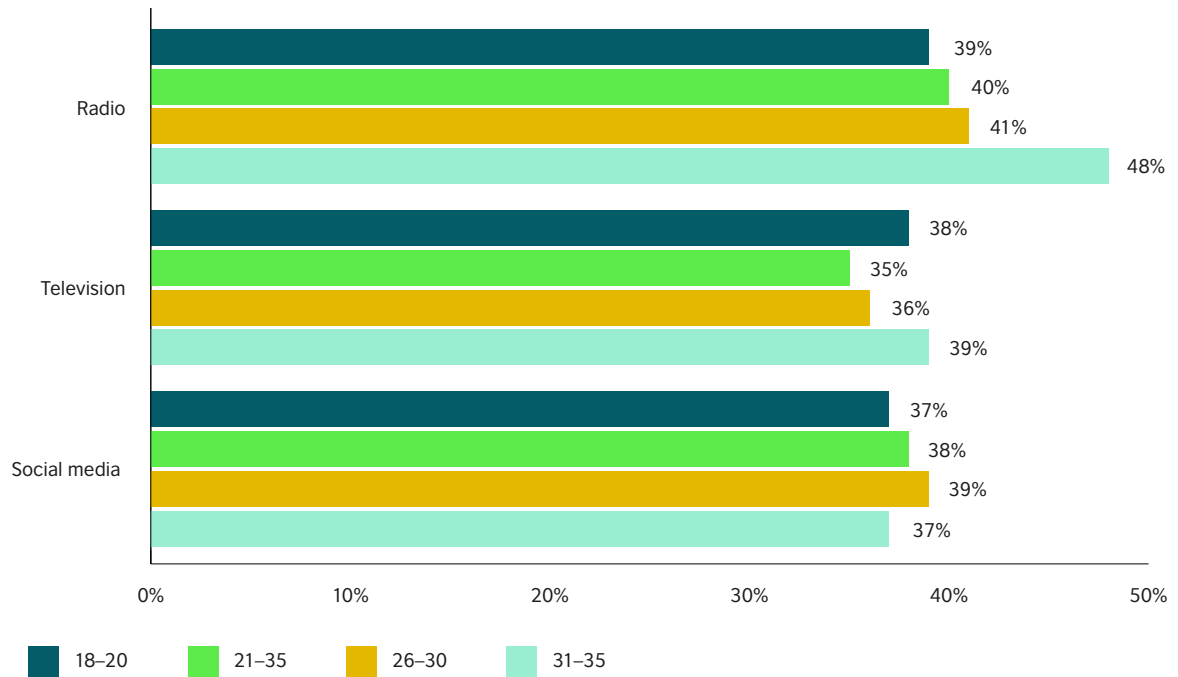
Conversations with young Nigerians indicated that control of legacy media content creation and distribution tends to be concentrated among the rich and powerful, with concerns raised

regarding the threat of censorship, in particular by the government. These concerns are likewise reflected in Nigeria's poor ranking on global media freedom lists. The most recent Freedom House report, for example, indicates that in spite of constitutional provisions of freedom of speech, expression and the press, in practice media freedom and independence is limited in Nigeria by factors including laws on sedition, criminal defamation and the publication of false news; severe penalties for press offenses in Shari'a states, in particular; and practices including widely documented cases of government officials publicly criticising, harassing and arresting journalists (Freedom House, 2020).

While young Nigerians commonly regard the internet and social media as affording a more democratic and egalitarian space for voicing views and opinions, these newer media forms are not without their own challenges. The majority (60 per cent) of young Nigerians, for example, consider fake news and manipulation through the media and social media as a challenge affecting them today. Multiple reports, meanwhile, suggest how online platforms have been leveraged in Nigeria both to discredit political processes and rivals, and to stoke ethnic and religious tensions (see Aiena, 2015; Bukarti, 2018; Anderson, 2019; BBC, 2019). Compounding these challenges, government responses have themselves proved highly controversial. Based on interviews, two bills in particular are considered of serious concern to media freedoms: the National Commission for the Prohibition of Hate Speech Bill, which advocates fear will be used to severely punish critics of the government; and the Protection from Internet Falsehoods and Manipulations Bill, which seeks to ban (among other uses) the use of social media for communicating any statements which might influence the outcome of an election.

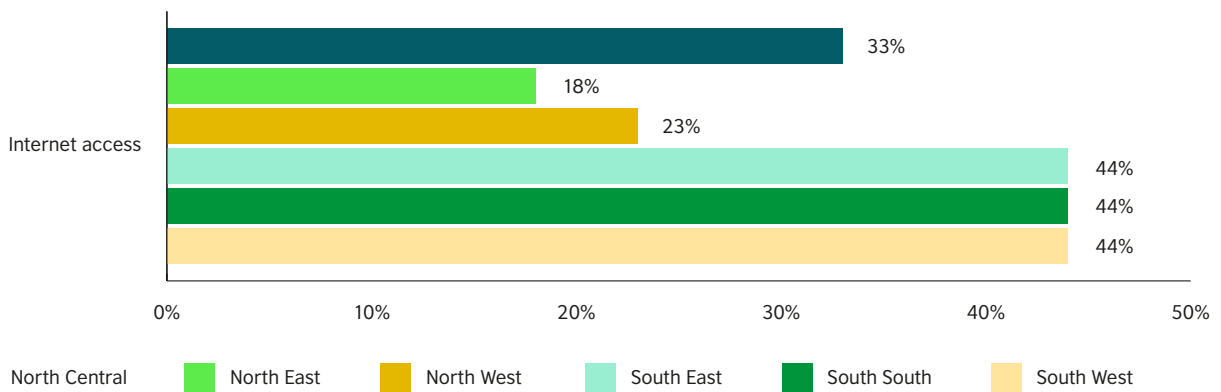
23 > Access to printed newspapers in the home was reported by only 13 per cent of young Nigerians, while access in the community was reported by 24 per cent – the lowest of any mass media included in the survey. These statistics may reflect a range of factors, including the low popularity of printed newspapers versus other mass media, as well as barriers due to illiteracy in cases of low educational attainment.

Figure 29: Percentage of young Nigerians who are daily users of television, radio and social media, by age



Base: General population (n=5,001)

Figure 30: Percentage of respondents who can access the internet on any device at home, by region



Base: General population (n=5,001)

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Promoting health and well-being

Young Nigerians promote the importance of achieving universal healthcare in Nigeria.

The majority of young Nigerians regard health-related issues – including limited education about sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR – 62 per cent), substance abuse (69 per cent) and poor access to healthcare (59 per cent) – as matters affecting young Nigerians today.

Currently, access to healthcare is distributed unequally across Nigeria. In respect of adolescents specifically, the World Health Organization's (WHO) Regional Office for Africa has identified five groups who are at particularly high risk of being left behind in terms of healthcare in Nigeria. These are:

1. adolescents from households in lower wealth quintiles
2. adolescents with low levels of education
3. adolescents that live in rural areas
4. adolescents that live in Northern Nigeria, in particular the North West and North East zones
5. younger adolescents aged ten to 14 years, married and unmarried (WHO, 2020).

In terms of poor education about SRHR, young women, young Nigerians living with disabilities, and young LGBTQI Nigerians should additionally be considered as high risk (see Olley, 2006; Ahanonu, 2013; Adeyanju et al., 2017; Birchall, 2019).

Barriers to ensuring universal health coverage in Nigeria are many and varied. In its report to the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health following its investigation of underserved adolescents, the WHO identifies five categories of healthcare barriers

operating in Nigeria. These include:

1. availability barriers relating to the resources available for delivering healthcare interventions
2. accessibility barriers relating to, for example, the physical proximity of services, financial costs, and indirect costs such as missing out on work and schooling opportunities while seeking healthcare
3. acceptability barriers including, for example, tensions between cultural beliefs and the services provided
4. barriers limiting actual contact and use of available services, for example poor awareness of services
5. barriers limiting the effectiveness of interventions, such as poor treatment adherence.

From the perspective of young Nigerians participating in workshops, meanwhile, underfunded, poorly equipped and understaffed healthcare institutions are the most visible symptom of these problems.

What I will like to change about Nigeria is the medical facilities. I will like to standardise them. It will make the country to function well and then help every individual including me enjoy life.

Male (PLWD), Bauchi, Bauchi State (urban)

If they can make some changes as regard the doctor, they should create this awareness that when they see a patient, they should forget about the money aspect and save the life without money.

Female, Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

What I don't like is that we are far from health facilities. The major government hospital is far from us and you will spend heavily to get down there, and if there is a casualty or something serious, before you get down there, it takes God's grace for the person to survive.

Female, Umuka-Mba, Rivers State (rural)

Conversations with members of the medical profession in Nigeria also highlighted substantial disparities in terms of healthcare provision between the North and South. These include the presence of more healthcare services, a greater density of medical personnel, and more educational opportunities for young people seeking to enter the medical profession in the South than the North, but also less expensive access to healthcare in the North. These disparities mean that there is greater pressure on healthcare services in the North. Interviewees attributed these disparities, moreover, to the historical attention paid by colonial interests in developing the South.

In the South, they have more healthcare facilities and more healthcare personnel than the North. But they also charge more. When the colonialists came, they entered through the South, so they built schools there. In the North, we are still coming up in that regard. I think that is the main problem that they have more schools than us here.

Female, KII

While Nigeria has taken positive steps in the direction of promoting mental health, further progress is needed.

In Nigeria, each level of government has its own commitment to healthcare and the local government is responsible for the implementation of primary healthcare (PHC) (Anyebe et al., 2019). Integrating mental health provisions into PHC is recommended by WHO, which led Nigeria to add a mental health component to PHC in 1989 (Omigbodun, 2001). This mental health provision was further bolstered in 2011 to require that mental health services be further provided at all levels of healthcare (Anyebe et al., 2019).

Despite these efforts, the mental health system in Nigeria is limited and not accessible to the entire population (WHO-AIMS, 2006). It is limited in the sense that existing PHC centres lack space specialised for mental health services, mental health specialists to

practice, and the medicine to treat common mental health disorders. These deficiencies are likely due to the fact that only 3.3 per cent of Nigeria's total health budget is dedicated to mental health services (Anyebe et al., 2019).

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported deep-rooted problems in Nigeria's mental health system in the facilities they visited in 2018 to 2019 and attribute the shortages in mental health provisions as part of the cause. This would suggest that rural areas where mental health provisions are most sparing are most at risk. HRW's account comprises widespread instances of long-term chaining, whipping, unlawful and forced detention (found in 27 of 28 facilities visited by HRW), unsanitary conditions, violence and forced treatment enacted on people with actual or perceived mental health problems, including children (Human Rights Watch, 2019).

Safeguarding against climate change

Environmental problems and climate change are an emerging issue for young Nigerians.

Responses to the Next Generation survey indicate that, compared to other issues, environmental issues are regarded as affecting young Nigerians by a smaller number of the young population. This finding is largely consistent with workshop conversations, during which environmental issues were discussed infrequently, with the vast majority of references limited to young Nigerians in Rivers State. It is possible that this view is connected to the belief, expressed by several workshop participants, that Nigeria is less prone to natural disasters than other countries.

Climate change; we have done so very bad job as human to take care of the earth and now we are having so bad time in climate change, so much heat and the rise in sea level is threatening our existence, I think now we are trying to see how we can correct it.

Female, Port Harcourt, Rivers State (urban)

I like the fact that we don't have natural disasters, it hardly happens here in Nigeria.

Male, Umuka-Mba, Rivers State (rural)

In spite of this view, however, climate change in Nigeria is evident in increases in temperature, variable rainfall, a rise in sea level and flooding, drought and desertification, land degradation, more frequent extreme weather events, affected fresh water resources and loss of biodiversity (Haider, 2019). These changes are having a significant effect on sectors including agriculture, fishing, food security and water, forestry and energy, all of which are intrinsically connected to the health of Nigeria's economy and population (Haider, 2019). While climate change will affect all groups, classes, occupations, ages and genders in different ways, evidence indicates that the North West and North East zones are the most vulnerable regions geographically, as increasingly rapid desertification threatens the agricultural livelihoods of the predominantly rural population (Haider, 2019).

A number of young activists have emerged in Nigeria, who are helping lead awareness-raising and advocacy efforts to mitigate the impact of and safeguard against further climate change in their country. Notable individuals include Oladosu Adenike, Faithwins Iwuh and Esther Agbarakwe. Conversations in workshops indicate that the messaging of these and other climate activists is resonating with young Nigerians within the general population.

Let me give an example: in Lagos when we finish stuff, we will throw it on the floor, which isn't right. We have to re-orientate ourselves so that when we finish eating, we do the right thing.

Male (PLWD), Lagos Metro, Lagos State (urban)

> Conclusions and recommendations

The Next Generation programme is not only dedicated to understanding the lived experiences, aspirations and prospects of young people, but is an initiative to amplify the voices of young people so that they can better influence the decisions and policies that affect their lives.

With this in mind, the first 40 recommendations presented in this concluding section are designed to optimise the inclusivity, diversity and efficacy of young Nigerians' current voice assets, i.e. those contexts which are already a regular feature of their day-to-day lives, and within which many already feel like they have a voice. This approach is informed by the imperative of designing initiatives and policies that are tailored to and build on the lived experiences and lifestyles of young Nigerians today, rather than expecting them to adapt to new behaviours.

The second set of 17 recommendations, in turn, are targeted at addressing the segment-specific barriers to political participation and leadership by young Nigerians identified in Chapter 3 of this report. This is to ensure that all young Nigerians are supported to contribute to democratic decision-making and the governance of their country.

All of the recommendations presented below are based on the input of the Next Generation Task Force, as well as the views and perspectives of young Nigerians who participated in the research.

Optimising voice assets

Friends

- **Promote** the value of inclusive and diverse friendship groups to advance social cohesion, mutual understanding and respect.
- **Support and expand** youth-friendly spaces (e.g. gaming, viewing and recreation centres; youth hangouts; religious and student groups; and sporting venues) to be more inclusive and diverse in their membership.
- **Leverage** youth-friendly spaces as platforms to empower youth voices through education and opportunities for political and community participation.
- **Experiment** with live music and comedy performances and film and television screenings in youth-friendly spaces, to mainstream youth issues and marginalised identities.

Family

- **Promote** as role models male and female heads of households and how they advance progressive views of gender rights and equality.
- **Support and expand** organisations and institutions which currently provide rescue facilities for women and their families, Nigerians living with disabilities, and LGBTQI Nigerians who have suffered abandonment or abuse.
- **Leverage** the family institution as a resource and reference point to influence and encourage normalising positive youth behaviours, e.g. political participation, tolerance and respect for others.
- **Experiment** with approaches and methods for building the financial management capacity and skills of women and girls whose day-to-day activities are centred in the home.

Community

- **Promote** the value of a more holistic and participatory approach to community decision-making within which young people are actively included in community processes.
- **Support and expand** good practice initiatives across Nigeria that foster youth engagement in inter-community exchanges.
- **Leverage** the influence of local community leaders to actively include marginalised young people in community activities and decision-making.
- **Experiment** with user-centred design methods that put young people at the centre of community development programmes.

Education

- **Promote** educational institutions and educators who build soft skills training, practical and independent learning into their curricula.
- **Support and expand** initiatives that provide more flexible learning platforms, including remote access, home learning and peer-to-peer support.
- **Leverage** the footprint and influence of student union organisations to advocate for more inclusive and cutting-edge educational policies and practice.
- **Experiment** with problem-based community work placements that give young people direct experience of applying skills and knowledge to real-world and practical challenges.

Work

- **Promote** the benefits of the use of more holistic sets of criteria in recruitment and hiring practices, beyond qualifications, credentials and demographics.
- **Support and expand** the design and implementation of investment and ease-of-doing-businesses policies and initiatives.
- **Leverage** existing professional forums such as the Young African Leaders Initiative Network and the Nigerian Young Professionals Forum to provide more engagement and ensure unified and combined initiatives among those youth groups.
- **Experiment** with structures and representative bodies to provide youth entrepreneurs and informal and gig workers with a platform to shape more inclusive policy discussions around their legal rights and privileges.

Commerce

- **Promote** the record and performance of women in work and commerce across Nigeria.
- **Support and expand** programmes that advance female leadership and influence training for women in professional environments.
- **Leverage** the cultural function of marketplaces and commercial hubs as forums for young Nigerians to meet and discuss issues, to advance more formalised acts of political participation.
- **Experiment** with professionalising and formalising existing women's market-based networks to strengthen their capacity to mobilise around core issues.

Religious groups

- **Promote** the value of youth-led inter-faith and inter-sect co-operation around major issues including peacebuilding, community engagement and resilience.
- **Support and expand** more inclusive and diverse youth leadership of local religious groups and associations.
- **Leverage** the influence of more forward-thinking and progressive Christian and Muslim leaders and scholars to advocate for and mainstream positive youth attitudes and behaviours, such as voting and running for elected offices.
- **Experiment** with co-creation workshop formats to engage young members of different faiths and sects to collaborate on social and economic issues.

Sports

- **Promote** and incentivise organisations and institutions to advance female participation in a range of individual and team sports.
- **Support and expand** initiatives that leverage sport as the basis for inter-community exchange and for fostering dialogue around core issues.
- **Leverage** the influence of young sports celebrities to advocate for and amplify youth-centric agendas and policies.
- **Experiment** with the establishment of sports leagues, competitions and bodies which are inclusive of and celebrate marginalised groups.

Legacy media

- **Promote**, both domestically and internationally, radio, film and television, and printed media showcasing diverse, inclusive and positive narratives of what it is like to be young in Nigeria today.
- **Support and expand** educational and funding initiatives for young Nigerians to access and gain professional experience working in the legacy media industries.
- **Leverage** the influence of entertainment celebrities to champion the values of self-direction, creativity, independence and ambition among young Nigerians.
- **Experiment** with new format productions that showcase the talents and lived experiences of marginalised young Nigerians.

Online and social media

- **Promote** the inclusion of a diverse group of young Nigerians in policy discussions about the regulation of digital platforms.
- **Support and expand** education in digital literacy and use of online platforms, tools and technology for young people across Nigeria.
- **Leverage** the resonance of successful online campaigns like #NotTooYoungToRun to mobilise young Nigerians around issues relevant to their lives.
- **Experiment** with the limits of culturally sensitive parameters that will define the viability of safe online spaces for marginalised young Nigerians.

Supporting political participation and leadership

Politically apathetic

Improve voter registration and ownership of PVC cards by:

- **engaging** INEC to reduce the time and bureaucratic effort required for young people to register to vote and to obtain a PVC
- **advocating** for all-year-round promotion of voter registration targeting young Nigerians.

Build political self-efficacy and interest among young Nigerians by:

- **showcasing** examples of when young people's political engagement has made a positive difference to their communities
- **leveraging** family, religious leaders, and sports and entertainment celebrities to frame political participation in line with the values with which these groups are associated (see Figure 13, Chapter 2).

Ensure and communicate the accessibility of and safety at polling stations by:

- **mobilising** community groups to provide transportation and support to those experiencing accessibility barriers
- **fostering** co-operation between local community groups and leaders and security forces in the run up to, the day of, and the period after voting days and results announcements.

Unengaged voters

Highlight the purpose and impact of political participation by:

- **promoting** the benefits of and civic rights associated with transparency and accountability in governance across the full electoral cycle
- **supporting and expanding** public awareness campaigns using a range of platforms to reach the diversity of unengaged voters.

Politically engaged

Reduce the risk of political violence by:

- **advancing** a shared, Nigerian youth-centric voting and legislative agenda to serve as the reference point for political participation by young Nigerians
- **convening** influential voices that cut across political, ethnic and religious groups to communicate together the value of peaceful, free, fair and credible elections.

Politically ambitious

Increase youth leadership within political parties and structures by:

- **facilitating** co-operation between and organisation of political party youth wings, to create influence and broker deals to ensure parties prioritise young leadership aspirants
- **encouraging** youth registration with local parties, within which youth voices may carry greater influence and which can provide first-hand experience in securing nominations.

Cultivate aspirations to political leadership by:

- **role modelling** the young Nigerian political leaders of today, using voice assets such as sports, legacy and social media as platforms for them to engage with other young Nigerians
- **sensitising** young Nigerians to the range of platforms for youth participation in law-making (e.g. local government councils, the National Youth Parliament and state youth parliaments)
- **making** the nomination and appointment processes for these bodies more inclusive.

Ensure the safety and security of electoral candidates by:

- **guaranteeing** the backing of political officials and security forces in protecting female and marginalised candidates in their electoral activities
- **enshrining and implementing** the constitutional protections and equal rights of all eligible Nigerians to participate in the electoral process.

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> Appendix 1: Voice assets and marginalisation

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the groups most likely to be marginalised in different ways, across the voice assets identified.

Table 3: Groups most likely to be marginalised

Voice asset	Ways in which voices may be marginalised	Groups most likely to be marginalised in this way	Evidence		Source
			Quantitative	Qualitative	
Family	Not participating in family/ domestic decision-making	Younger Nigerians		Workshops and KIIs suggest a family and sibling hierarchy based on age	Next Generation
		Financial dependants		Workshops suggest financial independence as a prerequisite to credibility in family/ domestic decision-making	Next Generation
		Women living in the North West	The least likely of women in any zone to report participation in decision-making about their own healthcare, major household purchases, and visits to their family or relatives	Workshops indicate instances where young women in the North West have felt voiceless, for example in decisions about marriage	DHS, 2018
	Fear of threats to personal safety and security	LGBTQI	53% of respondents report discrimination in the home – the highest of any group surveyed	Several online interviewees expressed fear of speaking openly to family about their sexual identity and LGBTQI+ rights generally	Next Generation
		PLWD	More than 3 times as likely to report discrimination in the home as non-disabled people (13% vs 4%)	KIIs indicate potential for abuse (physical, sexual, etc.) and neglect of PLWD by family members	Next Generation
		Vulnerable women	Just under 3 times as likely to report discrimination in the home as other women (11% vs 4%)		Next Generation
		Women living in Southern zones	Significantly more likely to report domestic violence than women in Northern zones		DHS, 2018

Voice asset	Ways in which voices may be marginalised	Groups most likely to be marginalised in this way	Evidence		Source
			Quantitative	Qualitative	
Community	Not participating in community decision-making and engagement activities	Younger Nigerians	31- to 35-year-olds 2 times more likely to have participated in a community meeting in the last 12 months than 18- to 20-year-olds (45% vs 24%)		Next Generation
			31- to 35-year-olds almost twice as likely to have gotten together to raise awareness of an issue in the last 12 months, as 18- to 20-year-olds (36% vs 20%)		Next Generation
		Women	Significantly less likely to have participated in a community meeting (27%) or gotten together to raise awareness of an issue (21%) in the last 12 months than men (42% and 35%, respectively)		Next Generation
		Members of lower socio-economic classes	Members of the lowest wealth quintile (E) are significantly less likely to have participated in a community meeting (32%) or gotten together to raise awareness of an issue (26%) in the last 12 months than members of the highest quintile (AB) (43% and 34%, respectively)	Workshops indicate the equation of personal wealth and socio-economic status with legitimacy, credibility and opportunities to use your voice in community affairs	Next Generation
		Residents of mega-urban cities	Rural residents in the North are significantly more likely to have participated in a community meeting in the last 12 months than residents of Kano City (38% vs 30%)	Workshops and KIIs suggest the continued influence of traditional community governance systems in rural Northern communities especially	Next Generation
			Rural residents in the South are almost twice as likely to have participated in a community meeting in the last 12 months as residents of Lagos City (40% vs 23%)		Next Generation

Voice asset	Ways in which voices may be marginalised	Groups most likely to be marginalised in this way	Evidence		Source
			Quantitative	Qualitative	
Community	Fear of threats to personal safety and security	LGBTQI	67% of respondents report discrimination in the community – the highest of any group surveyed		Next Generation
		PLWD	25% of respondents report discrimination in the community – more than 3 times the number of non-disabled people (8%)		Next Generation
		Vulnerable women	More than twice as likely to report discrimination in the community as other women (18% vs 8%)	Workshops indicate the dismissal of and even hostility towards vulnerable female voices within community affairs, based on negative socio-cultural attitudes	Next Generation
Educational environments	Not going to school/ university (i.e. no access to educational environment)	Women	Significantly more likely to have received no education. The majority of women living in rural areas (51%), living in the North East (59%) and North West (64%), and classified in the second lowest (58%) and lowest (80%) wealth quintiles have received no education		DHS, 2018
		Members of the lowest socio-economic class	The majority of men (65%) and women (80%) classified in the lowest wealth quintile have received no education		Next Generation
	Limited opportunities to use your voice within educational environments	Students in rural and less-developed towns and cities		Kills suggest that innovations in promoting independent thought, action and creativity by students are centred in cosmopolitan, mega-urban hubs such as Lagos City and Kano City	Next Generation
	Not participating in student governance and leadership	Secondary and tertiary students in the South West	Secondary- and tertiary-educated young Nigerians in the South West are the least likely to report current (11%) or previous (21%) membership of a student union, compared to other zones. The largest proportions who do so live in the South East (68% report current or previous membership)		Next Generation

Voice asset	Ways in which voices may be marginalised	Groups most likely to be marginalised in this way	Evidence		Source
			Quantitative	Qualitative	
Workplace environments	Being unemployed (i.e. no access to a workplace)	Women (especially in the North West)	Women are almost twice as likely as men to report unemployment (33% vs 18%)		Next Generation
			Women living in the North West are almost twice as likely as other women to report unemployment (49% vs 26%)		Next Generation
		Members of the lowest socio-economic class	Members of the lowest wealth quintile (E) are almost 3 times as likely as members of the highest quintile (AB) to report unemployment (23% vs 9%)		Next Generation
		PLWD	Significantly more likely than non-disabled people to report unemployment (33% vs 19%)		Next Generation
	Having limited opportunities to use your voice within the workplace	Workers in occupations other than professional (e.g. doctors and teachers) roles – e.g. clerical, sales and services, skilled and unskilled manual workers	Significantly less likely to report voice-related soft skills (e.g. teamwork, leadership, mentoring, public speaking) as important for their work		Next Generation
		Agricultural workers	The least likely of all occupation types to report voice-related soft skills (e.g. teamwork, leadership, mentoring, public speaking) as important for their work		Next Generation
		Women	Significantly more likely than other groups to report mistreatment and/or harassment in the workplace		Next Generation
		Internal migrants			Next Generation
		PLWD			Next Generation

Voice asset	Ways in which voices may be marginalised	Groups most likely to be marginalised in this way	Evidence		Source
			Quantitative	Qualitative	
Workplace environments	Poor or limited representation of your occupation, sector or group in decision-making processes	Women	Significantly less likely to report membership of groups based on a common profession or type of employment (10% of women vs 15% of men)	KIIs indicate the poor credibility of female workers, and the inadequate opportunities afforded to them to participate in policy discussions and decision-making that affects them	Next Generation
		Workers in sales and services, skilled manual, and unskilled manual occupations	Workers in these occupations are the least likely to report any form of membership (past or current) of groups based on a common profession or type of employment		Next Generation
		Workers in the informal and gig economy sectors	Probable that many workers in the above occupations are part of the informal/gig economy	KIIs indicate the inadequate opportunities afforded to workers in these roles to participate in policy discussions and decision-making that affects them	Next Generation

Voice asset	Ways in which voices may be marginalised	Groups most likely to be marginalised in this way	Evidence		Source
			Quantitative	Qualitative	
Commercial environments	Working in a commercial role but not being a member of a formalised market group or network	Women	Significantly more likely than men to work in sales and services roles (25% vs 16%), but less likely to report membership of a group or network (9% vs 13%).	KIs indicate the prevalence of informal but highly organised networks of women working in commercial environments such as marketplaces	Next Generation
		Residents of urban and mega-urban areas	Significantly less likely than rural residents to report membership of a group or network, despite only small differences in the proportion of populations occupying sales and services roles For example, 23% of rural residents in the South are members of a group or network, compared to 10% of residents in Lagos City and 15% of residents of other urban areas		Next Generation
	Not participating in the governance and leadership of formalised market groups or networks	All groups	Small minorities of all groups (<5%) report leadership of market groups or networks		Next Generation

Voice asset	Ways in which voices may be marginalised	Groups most likely to be marginalised in this way	Evidence		Source
			Quantitative	Qualitative	
Religious groups	Not being a member of faith-based groups/ associations	Muslims	Christians are almost twice as likely as Muslims to report membership of a religious group/ association (44% vs 23%)		Next Generation
		Residents of Lagos City	Significantly less likely than rural Southern residents to report membership of a religious group/ association (47% vs 30%)		Next Generation
		PLWD	Significantly less likely than non-disabled people to report membership of a religious group/ association (25% vs 36%)		
		LGBTQI		Many online interviewees indicated the extreme hostility and prejudice LGBTQI people face in religious contexts in Nigeria	Next Generation
	Not participating in the governance and leadership of faith-based groups/ associations	All groups	Small minorities of all groups (<5%) report leadership of religious groups or associations		Next Generation
Sports	Not participating in sports	Women	Men are 3 times as likely as women to report participation in sports groups/associations (26% vs 9%)	Kills indicate the role of social and religious norms of female modesty and dress in limiting female participation in sports in conservative Muslim communities especially	Next Generation





> Appendix 2: Participant characteristics

The Next Generation survey

Table 4: Full sample demographic characteristics

Demographic	Background characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	2,505	50.1%
	Female	2,496	49.9%
Age	18–20	994	19.9%
	21–25	1,616	32.3%
	26–30	1,350	27.0%
	31–35	1,041	20.8%
Religion	Catholic	700	14.0%
	Other Christian	2,242	44.8%
	Islam	2,007	40.1%
	Other	52	1.0%
Ethnic group	Hausa	1,514	30.3%
	Yoruba	1,180	23.6%
	Igbo	879	17.6%
	Edo	145	2.9%
	Ijaw	77	1.5%
	Fulbe	55	1.1%
	Kanuri	23	0.5%
	Urhobo-Isoko	106	2.1%
	Ibibio	156	3.1%
	Ebira	39	0.8%
	Nupe	45	0.9%
	Gbagyi	36	0.7%
	Jukun	21	0.4%
	Igala	32	0.6%
	Idoma	39	0.8%
	Tiv	115	2.3%
	Kalabari	45	0.9%

Demographic	Background characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
	Mixed ethnicity	62	1.2%
	Other	409	8.2%
	Don't Know	8	0.2%
	Refused	15	0.3%
Residence	Urban	2,628	52.5%
	Rural	2,373	47.5%
Education	No school/illiterate	387	7.7%
	Primary school	452	9.0%
	Secondary school	2,351	47.0%
	Post-secondary school diploma	681	13.6%
	University	1,112	22.2%
SEC	AB	258	5.2%
	C1	376	7.5%
	C2	865	17.3%
	D	1,572	31.4%
	E	1,930	38.6%
Special groups	PLWD	256	5.1%
	Vulnerable women	290	5.8%
	Internal migrant	547	10.9%
	Dependants	1,012	20.2%

Table 5: Full sample geographic characteristics

Geography	State/Zone	Frequency	Percentage
Zone	North Central	627	12.5%
	North East	499	10.0%
	North West	1,391	27.8%
	South East	607	12.1%
	South South	748	15.0%
	South West	1,129	22.6%
State North Central	Benue	122	2.4%
	Kogi	100	2.0%
	Kwara	80	1.6%
	Nasarawa	53	1.1%
	Niger	125	2.5%
	Plateau	90	1.8%
	FCT Abuja	57	1.1%
North East	Adamawa	99	2.0%
	Bauchi	150	3.0%
	Gombe	175	3.5%
	Taraba	75	1.5%
North West	Jigawa	136	2.7%
	Kaduna	198	4.0%
	Kano	595	11.9%
	Katsina	174	3.5%
	Kebbi	91	1.8%
	Sokoto	111	2.2%
	Zamfara	86	1.7%
South East	Abia	97	1.9%
	Anambra	147	2.9%
	Ebonyi	70	1.4%
	Enugu	117	2.3%
	Imo	176	3.5%

Geography	State/Zone	Frequency	Percentage
South South	Akwa Ibom	133	2.7%
	Bayelsa	58	1.2%
	Cross River	96	1.9%
	Delta	147	2.9%
	Edo	121	2.4%
	Rivers	193	3.9%
South West	Ekiti	89	1.8%
	Lagos	462	9.2%
	Ogun	131	2.6%
	Ondo	122	2.4%
	Osun	118	2.4%
	Oyo	207	4.1%

Youth workshops

Table 6: Distribution of youth engagement workshops and interviews, by location and group type

	Zone	North West	North Central	North East	South West	South South	South East
	State	Kano	FCT	Bauchi	Lagos	Rivers	Abia
	Urban/Rural	Kano City Ungogo	Abuja Bwari	Bauchi Tafabalewa	Lagos Metro Agbowa	Port Harcourt Umuka-Mba	Aba Main Town Okikabia
General population	Male	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop
	Female	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop
Young Nigerians living with disabilities	Male			1 x workshop	1 x workshop		
	Female			2 x IDIs	2 x IDIs		
Vulnerable women	Female only						
	1 x workshop	1 x workshop	1 x workshop			1 x workshop	1 x workshop

Online research with young LGBTQI Nigerians

Table 7: LGBTQI+ online sample demographic characteristics

Demographic	Background characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	178	75.1%
	Female	50	21.1%
	Other	9	3.8%
Age	18–20	25	10.5%
	21–25	103	43.5%
	26–30	83	35.0%
	31–35	26	11.0%
Religion	Catholic	52	21.9%
	Other Christian	138	58.2%
	Islam	27	11.4%
	Other	20	8.4%
Ethnic group	Hausa	19	8.0%
	Yoruba	61	25.7%
	Igbo	79	33.3%
	Edo	12	5.1%
	Ijaw	7	3.0%
	Urhobo-Isoko	12	5.1%
	Ibibio	14	5.9%
	Igala	4	1.7%
	Idoma	3	1.3%
	Tiv	6	2.5%
	Mixed ethnicity	3	1.3%
	Other	17	7.2%
Residence	Urban	160	67.5%
	Rural	77	32.5%
Education	No school/illiterate	2	0.8%
	Primary school	1	0.4%
	Secondary school	41	17.3%
	Post-secondary school diploma	34	14.3%
	University	159	67.1%
Sexual orientation	Gay	151	63.7%
	Bisexual	77	32%
	Gender non-binary	9	4%

Table 8: LGBTQI+ online sample geographic characteristics

Geography	State/Zone	Frequency	Percentage
Zone	North Central	25	10.5%
	North East	4	1.7%
	North West	21	8.9%
	South East	36	15.2%
	South South	47	19.8%
	South West	103	43.5%
	Refused	1	0.4%
State North Central	Benue	3	1.3%
	Kogi	1	0.4%
	Kwara	1	0.4%
	Nasarawa	7	3.0%
	Plateau	5	2.1%
	FCT Abuja	8	3.4%
North East	Adamawa	2	0.8%
	Bauchi	2	0.8%
North West	Kaduna	15	6.3%
	Kano	4	1.7%
	Sokoto	1	0.4%
	Zamfara	1	0.4%
South East	Abia	5	2.1%
	Anambra	6	2.5%
	Ebonyi	3	1.3%
	Enugu	13	5.5%
	Imo	9	3.8%

Geography	State/Zone	Frequency	Percentage
South South	Akwa Ibom	9	3.8%
	Bayelsa	2	0.8%
	Cross River	5	2.1%
	Delta	9	3.8%
	Edo	5	2.1%
	Rivers	17	7.2%
South West	Ekiti	2	0.8%
	Lagos	84	35.4%
	Ogun	7	3.0%
	Ondo	1	0.4%
	Osun	1	0.4%
	Oyo	8	3.4%

Table 9: LGBTQI+ participants in online interviews

Gender	Age	State	Geopolitical zone	Religion	Sexual identity	Ethnicity
Male	30	Benue State	North Central	Not provided	Bisexual	Tiv
Male	25	Ebonyi State	South East	Atheist	Pansexual	Igbo
Male	28	Lagos State	South West	Muslim	Gay	Yoruba
Male	26	Lagos State	South West	Muslim (non-practising)	Gay	Yoruba
Female	28	FCT	North Central	Christian	Lesbian	Igbo
Male	30	Lagos State	South West	Christian	Bisexual	Igbo
NB	21	Ebonyi State	South East	Non-religious	Gay	Igbo
Male	31	Rivers State	South South	Christian	Gay	Ibibio
Female	28	Lagos State	South West	Atheist	Bisexual	Isoko
Female	27	Kano State	North West	Muslim	Lesbian	Idoma/Fulani
Male	22	Rivers State	South South	Christian	Gay	Ijaw tribe
Male	26	Kaduna State	North West	Christian	Bisexual	Hausa
Male	Not provided	Rivers State	South South	Atheist	Gay/Gender fluid	Ibibio
Male	Not provided	Plateau State	North Central	Christian	Gay	Berom
Female	35	Kaduna State	North West	Christian	Lesbian	Not provided
Female	Not provided	Kaduna State	North West	Muslim	Lesbian	African

The Covid-19 video diaries

Table 10: Covid-19 video diaries

Gender	Age	Town	State	Geopolitical zone	Religion
Male	24	Abuja (city)	FCT	North Central	Christian
Female	24	Minna	Niger State	North Central	Muslim
Male	29	Bwari	FCT	North Central	Christian
Female	27	Kuje	FCT	North Central	Christian
Female	24	Yola	Adamawa State	North East	Muslim
Male	24	Damaturu	Yobe State	North East	Muslim
Male	27	Ngbalang	Adamawa State	North East	Muslim
Female	25	Kukar-Gadu	Yobe State	North East	Christian
Male	30	Kano (city)	Kano State	North West	Muslim
Female	25	Kaduna (city)	Kaduna State	North West	Muslim
Male	24	Wudil	Kano State	North West	Muslim
Female	24	Dawakin Tofa	Kano State	North West	Muslim
Male	18	Aba Main Town	Abia State	South East	Christian
Female	22	Owerri	Imo State	South East	Christian
Female	28	Oguta	Imo State	South East	Christian
Male	27	Amafor	Imo State	South East	Christian
Female	24	Owerri	Imo State	South East	Christian
Female	24	Port Harcourt	Rivers State	South South	Christian
Female	18	Calabar	Cross River State	South South	Christian
Male	27	Oduoha	Rivers State	South South	Christian
Female	27	Ogu/Bolo	Rivers State	South South	Christian
Male	25	Calabar	Cross River State	South South	Christian
Male	20	Ajah	Lagos State	South West	Christian
Female	20	Ibadan	Oyo State	South West	Christian
Female	35	Agbowa	Lagos State	South West	Christian
Male	29	Igbogbo/Bayeku	Lagos State	South West	Christian
Female	27	Agbowa	Lagos State	South West	Christian
Male	24	Lagos (city)	Lagos State	South West	Christian

Education level	Employment	SEC	Disability (if yes, please describe)
Completed university	Teacher	C2	No
Completed university	Owner of small business	C1	No
Completed university	Teacher	C2	No
Completed university	Teacher	C2	No
Completed HND	Unemployed	C1	No
Completed university	Owner of small business	C2	No
Completed university	Teacher	D	No
Completed post-secondary (certificate/diploma)	Unemployed	D	Yes, epilepsy
Completed university	Owner of small business	D	No
Completed university	Teacher	C1	No
Completed university	Trained professional	C1	No
Completed university	Owner of small business	C2	No
Completed university	Student	C2	No
Not completed university	Owner of small business	B	No
Completed university	Owner of small business	C2	No
Completed university	Owner of small business	C2	Yes, physical impairment
Completed university	Teacher	C2	No
Completed university	Owner of small business	C1	No
Not completed university	Student	A	No
Completed secondary school	Student	D	Yes, mental impairment and speech impediment
Completed university	Unemployed	C2	No
Completed university	Baker	C2	No
Not completed university	Student	A	No
Completed university	Owner of small business	B	No
Completed secondary school	Owner of small business	D	Yes, visual impairment
Completed university	Baker	D	No
Completed certificate	Teacher	C2	No
Completed HND	Owner of small business	C1	No





M&C Saatchi World Services is a leading research and social and behaviour change communication agency established in 2011 as a specialist division of M&C Saatchi. The Research, Insight and Evaluation (RIE) Team within M&C Saatchi World Services offers the international development sector cutting-edge primary research, monitoring and evaluation combined with digital and social media data gathering and analytics, research communications and local capacity building. The team work globally across a wide range of issues including youth engagement, narratives and counter-narratives, human rights, hunger and malnutrition, maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH), violence against women and girls, prejudice and discrimination, and digital influence. Their methods repertoire includes survey research, tracking studies, community consultations, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, human-centred design, semiotics, ethnographies, social media analytics and digital network analysis. They work on the ground in communities with their partners to gather robust data that is defensible and actionable.



The British Council builds connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language.

We help young people to gain the skills, confidence and connections they are looking for to realise their potential and to participate in strong and inclusive communities. We support them to learn English, to get a high-quality education and to gain internationally recognised qualifications. Our work in arts and culture stimulates creative expression and exchange and nurtures creative enterprise.

The Next Generation series is part of the British Council's commitment to exploring youth voice and choice. It aims to understand youth attitudes and aspirations, amplify youth voice and support better youth policymaking. The reports focus on young people in countries experiencing a period of significant change, to ensure that young people's voices are heard and their interests represented in decisions that will have lasting implications for their lives.

www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/research-series/next-generation

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