

TACKLING CORRUPTION ON AIR & ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS



**THE CHALLENGE OF CORRUPTION
AND INTEGRITY DEFICIT IN NIGERIA
2021 - 2024**



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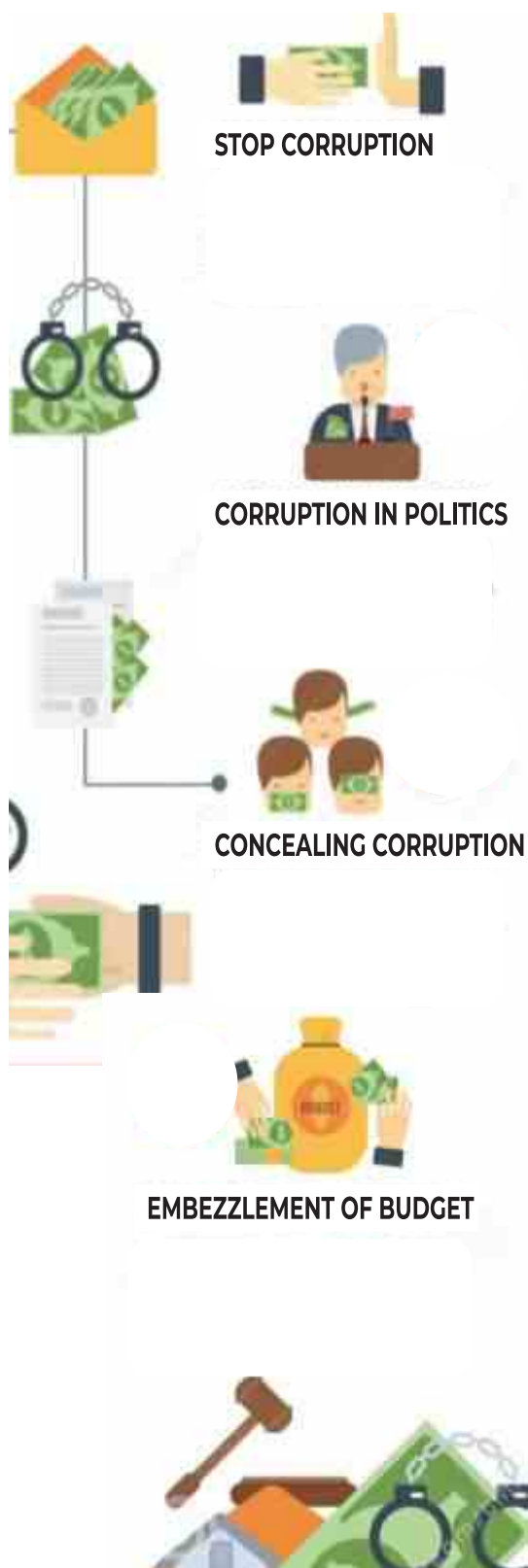


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Acronyms

- PCR - Public Conscience on Radio
- ICPC - Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission
- MAJ - Media and Journalism
- ICIR - International Centre for Investigative Reporting
- TCF - TheCable Foundation
- CJID - Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development
- AFRICMIL - African Centre for Media and Information Literacy
- CODE - Connected Development
- PPDC - Private and Public Development Centre
- ALN - Accountability Lab Nigeria
- SERAP - Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Projects
- NAFDAC - National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control
- UBEC - Universal Basic Education Commission
- SUBEB - State Universal Basic Education Board
- NPC - National Population Commission
- MDA - Ministries, Departments and Agencies
- NGO - Non Governmental Organization
- CSO - Civil Society Organization
- RTHM - Radio Town Hall Meeting
- AEDC - Abuja Electricity Distribution Company
- NERC - Nigerian Electricity Regulation Commission
- FCCPC - Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
- NEMSA - Nigerian Electricity Management Services Agency
- HEDA - Human and Environmental Development Agency Resource Center
- WSCIJ - Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism
- PWD - Persons with Disability
- JONAPWD - Joint Association of Persons with Disability
- CCD - Centre for Citizens with Disability
- PECDA - Pegi Estate Community Development Association

PRIMORG's Three years of Story Telling, Active Mobilization and Citizens Engagement against Corruption in Nigeria.

Our Vision

A participatory and inclusive society where good governance and development are entrenched

Our Mission

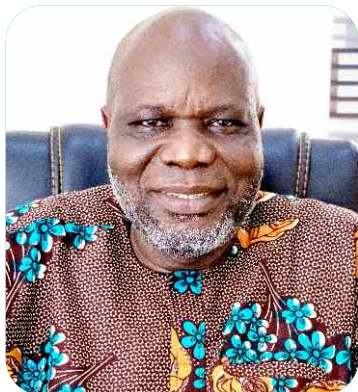
To galvanize and mobilize the population to a high level of awareness to enable citizens participate in the promotion of good governance and community development.



The Progressive Impact Organization for Community Development (PRIMORG) is a leading non-governmental organization based in Nigeria, dedicated to fostering positive change and empowerment within communities. At PRIMORG, we believe in the transformative power of citizen engagement, participation, and inclusion in governance processes.

One of our key focus areas is media advocacy. Recognizing the critical role that the media plays in shaping public discourse and holding power to account.

At PRIMORG, we are committed to driving positive change and building a more inclusive and democratic society. Through collaborative efforts and strategic partnerships, we continue to work towards our vision of a participatory and inclusive society where good governance and development are entrenched. Join us in our journey towards progress and impact.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AUGUSTINE OKHIRIA AGBONSUREMI

In the last three years, the PRIMORG Team continued executing its anti-corruption project, which focused on galvanizing the population and government to embrace accountability, transparency and participation to achieve good governance.

The project centred and implemented around Nigeria's North-Central Zone had a pull on the population, the media, CSOs and the government in various engagements to increase the participation of everyone.

The team produced 123 live radio programmes and syndicated 369 episodes and another 492 repeat broadcasts by five radio stations in Abuja, FCT; Keffi, Nasarawa State; Ilorin, Kwara State; and Jos, Plateau State.

In addition, PRIMORG tracked constituency Projects that carried out community meetings in the form of Radio Town Hall Meetings in Abuja, FCT, Lokoja, Kogi State, and Keffi in Nasarawa State.

Our experience over the years has become a vast resource, our strength and understanding of the media and anti-corruption ecosystem.

In implementing this project, PRIMORG builds bridges of collaborations and partnerships across the media, CSOs, anti-corruption agencies and government departments.

The impact is collective. PRIMORG benefited from the vast resources of several media houses and organizations made possible only by the enthusiastic spirits around the grantees of the MacArthur Foundation.

Our partner radio stations put everything into it to make our weekly radio production excellent.

Perhaps the most productive and impact-hungry staff in the development sector are assembled in PRIMORG, considering the energy, resilience and commitment they exerted on this project.

The stories of integrity brightened up the corruption space through our work in collaboration with several partners, including taxi drivers, civil servants, police officers, women, etc, who exceptionally stood firm in resisting corruption and denying it a place in their environment.

The MacArthur Foundation's support for this project was not only in direct funding but also in training, guidance and exposure to local and international opportunities for skills and resources.

We have enough stories for everyone in this report. We have enough experience we have shared here. As usual, we welcome your feedback.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the outcome and result of the three-year activities under the MacArthur funded project which started in July 2021 and ended in June 2024.

The project was initiated to address the ravaging menace of corruption which research has shown as the bane of development in Nigeria. Our initiative tackled important issues at the crux of accountability, transparency and anti-corruption at the national and sub-national levels.

Our effort towards a positive change included our anti-corruption radio programmes, Public Conscience on Radio (PCR) and Radio Town Hall Meeting (RTHM).

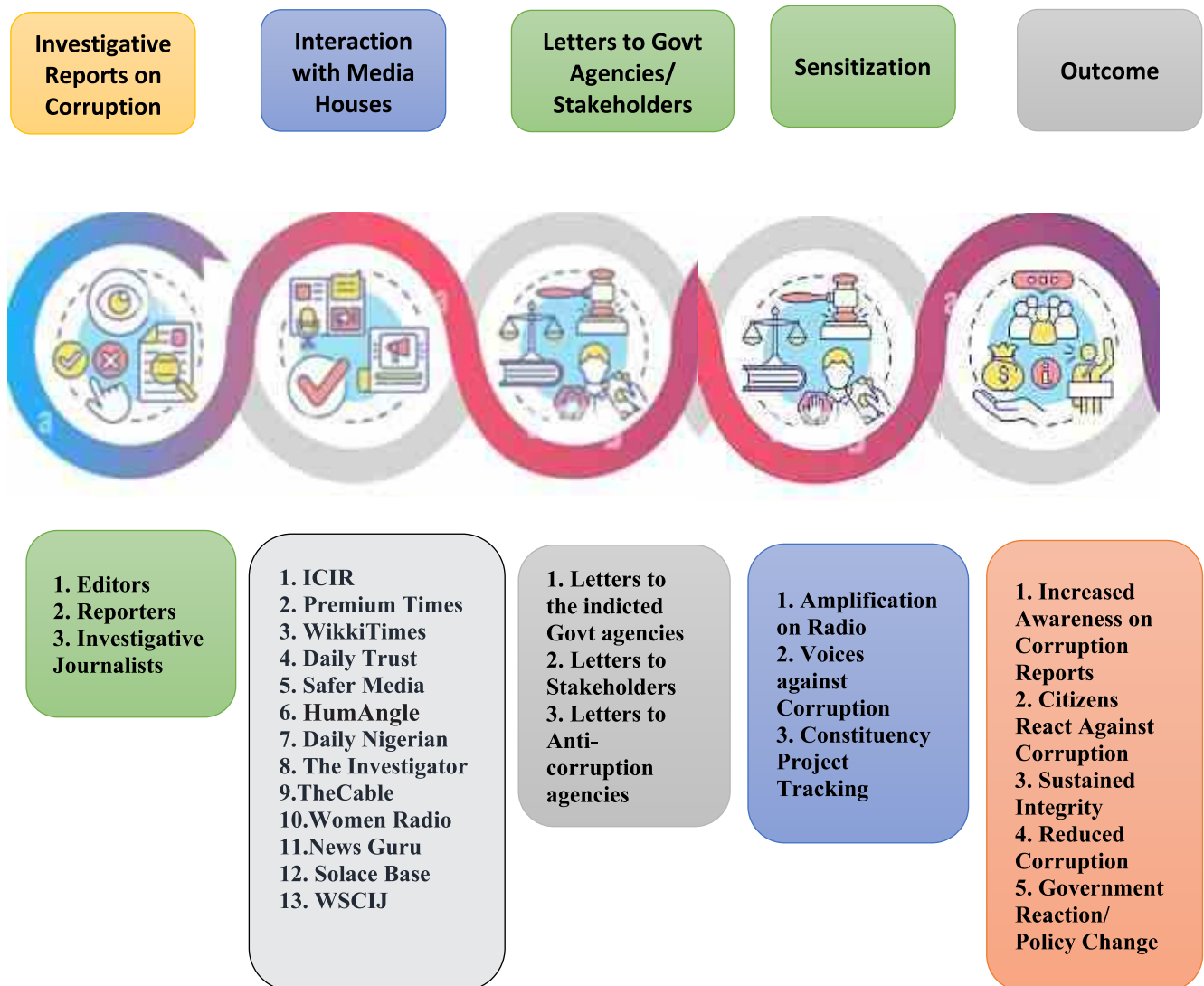
PUBLIC CONSCIENCE addressed issues of corruption as reported by the media houses while the RTHM focused on Whistleblowing, Integrity, Constituency projects, and Corruption. The live radio programme welcomed perspectives and insights from diverse spectrum of professionals and communities while educating citizens on the importance of transparency and accountability and urging the government through the anti-graft agencies to be alive to their mandate.

The programme's impact is evident in the widespread participation, exchange of insights, increased awareness among citizens and reactions from the government and anti-graft agencies. We provided insights and knowledge sharing through our constituency project tracking. This exercise not only provided the team the opportunity to track and evaluate the implementation of constituency projects in two states and the FCT, ensuring transparency in resource allocation but also, to sensitize beneficiaries on the need to get involved during the needs assessment and implementation of projects in their constituencies and also to jointly ensure that the projects are sustained and protected from vandalism.

In ensuring an all-inclusive approach, over sixty episodes of street engagement which entailed engaging with communities and individuals in the streets to gather perspectives and insights on the ground on topical development issues, ensuring a diverse range of voices were heard.

Despite the challenges in the polity, we successfully engaged and sensitized over 10 million Nigerians through our radio and social media engagements, constituency project tracking and on the street engagements.

THEORY OF CHANGE



Journalism, as amended in Section 22 of the 1999 constitution, has the unusual capacity to serve as a watchdog to hold the elected accountable to the people whom their position, power and activities affect. According to Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel in the book *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*, they opined that Journalism is watching over the powerful few in society on behalf of the many to guard against tyranny.

To reduce corruption through Nigerian-led efforts that strengthen Accountability, Transparency and Participation, the MacArthur Foundation approved the project *Strengthening anti-corruption and accountability by amplifying corruption-related investigative reports on radio and through social media*.

Objectives of the Project

1. Increase the visibility of major investigative reports on corruption as well as amplify integrity to promote positive models and stimulate public engagement in the anti-corruption crusade through radio programmes and social media.
2. Mobilize citizens to ownership of the various anti-corruption strategies at community levels and provide them with the opportunity to add their voices to the campaigns through interaction on radio, social media and the vox pop, the short video from citizens' feedback on Voices Against Corruption.
3. Increase advocacy to give more visibility to the efforts of stakeholders in charting the way towards the institutionalization of the Whistleblower Policy on interactive radio programmes and the social media.

We placed premium in achieving our set goals by not just thinking and acting but on our different competencies, experiences, building partnerships and collective action.

Planning Meeting

To secure the commitment of our media partners and relevant stakeholders, their specific areas of interest, and channels of communication, a one-day planning meeting was held before the commencement of project activities. At the end of the meeting, a stronger collaborative bond was established, new strategies for getting investigative reports were streamlined and signed collaborative nodes were harvested.



How We Intervened: Our Radio Engagements

Public Conscience on Radio: We used our messaging and videos to show that corruption is endemic and we contribute directly or indirectly to the acts. We must raise the public consciousness that collectively, we can put an end to acts of corruption while drawing the anti-corruption agencies to their mandates to act on corruption reports. For decades, corruption has been viewed as a menace to the overall development of Nigeria, and the situation has not changed. Reports from the state-owned National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and several other locally based and foreign independent bodies have given credence to the gory state of corruption in Africa's most populous country through data-led research.



From all indications, corruption in government-run institutions continues to smoulder,

public officials are getting more brazen with acts that undermine standards, as bribery, contract scam, job racketeering, ghost workers' syndrome, certificate forgery, extortion and other unwholesome acts seemingly institutionalized in public processes. Exasperated by the countless corruption scenarios in Nigeria's public sector and the nearly total lack of action against culprits despite indicting reports, PRIMORG, in the last three years, has played a prominent role in placing corruption, good governance and public accountability issues on the front burner of national discourse.

In its commitment to achieving a corrupt-free society and to give visibility to investigative corruption reports, PRIMORG rolled out a radio engagement, PUBLIC CONSCIENCE ON RADIO. This programme involved research, scripting, presentation and airing of the 60-minute programme, which was done consistently for 123 weeks within three years (123 episodes), 41 episodes per project year.

PRIMORG hosted the live radio programme 'Public Conscience' every Wednesday on 99.9 KISS FM Abuja studios. On Public Conscience on Radio (PCR), topical corruption reports were amplified and discussed, mostly investigative reports on corruption as carried out by MacArthur Foundation's media grantees and other credible media organizations.

Relevant stakeholders were invited as guests either on-site or on-line (via telephone call) to contribute to the robust discussions and also make recommendations on the burning issues. The interactive radio programme was designed to involve citizens in conversations about corruption related topics as exposed by the media.

The live radio programme provided an opportunity for listeners to phone in and air their opinions and contributions, as well as send their contributions via text and WhatsApp messages. The programmes were also streamed live on Facebook via our Facebook handle (officialprimorg), and they were also published on our YouTube Channel (PRIMORG TV) while snippets/nuggets were published on all our social media handles (@officialprimorg).

PRIMORG amplified 102 corruption investigative reports and produced 123 episodes (41 episodes per annum) of the live weekly radio programme. The audio of each of the radio programmes were edited to a 30-minute programme and syndicated to 95.9 Maloney FM Keffi, Nasarawa State on Thursdays from 8:00 to 8:30 am, 98.3 Hot FM Abuja on Fridays from 11:30 am to 12:00 noon, and 89.9 Albarka FM on Fridays from 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm in the first two years. In the third year, the 30-minute programme was syndicated to JayFM, Jos, Plateau State, on Thursdays from 9:00 to 9:30 am, 98.3 Hot FM Abuja, on Fridays from 11:30 am to 12:00 noon and Albarka FM, Ilorin, Kwara State on Fridays from 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm. Each syndication was played twice in a week. In all, a total of 861 episodes of the radio programme were syndicated to four radio stations in the North Central.

RADIO PROGRAMMES

Episodes of Public Conscience on Radio



PUBLIC CONSCIENCE also, through its wide reach on radio, internet and social media, drew government and citizens' attention to corruption reports and issues for prompt democratic actions, as well as promoted acts of integrity by amplifying cases of honesty by public and private individuals.

Notably, in these past years, the anti-corruption programme leveraged on collaboration with grantees of the MacArthur Foundation under the Media and Journalism cohort as well as other reputable media organizations to amplify corruption reports, including reports on extortion of passport applicants at Immigration offices, National Identification Number (NIN) enrolment offices; extortion of road users in the country by security operatives at checkpoints; recruitment scam and wanton cases of ghost workers on federal and state government payroll. The programme also raised alarm on the falsification of medical fitness reports by Corps members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), PRIMORG advocated vigorously for a law to protect whistleblowers, among other issues.

Some heart-warming and positive outcomes ensued from the amplification of corruption reports in the years under review, with some government institutions taking actionable steps to address corruption issues raised. However, many reports are left unattended.

Today, some impacts of PUBLIC CONSCIENCE are visible in the ordering of investigations into the unprofessional attitudes of Immigration officials and the efforts by the current Minister for Interior, Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo to sanitize and make the passport application process seamless.

Following extortion allegations, Army, Police and National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) authorities used different forums to reiterate their zero-tolerance against extortion and assured citizens of their efforts to



curb the menace. NDLEA Director of Media and Advocacy, Femi Babafemi, said the agency has put measures in place to fight corruption internally and will not hesitate to wield the big stick on any staff found culpable of fraud. The agency's spokesperson said NDLEA Chairman Buba Marwa set up monitoring units that report to him directly and a taskforce team that investigates activities of personnel and handout disciplinary measures. Adding that the agency's staff understand the enormity of engaging in corrupt acts, which attracts both sack and prosecution according to the law.

Upon escalating stories of payroll fraud at the federal and state institutions, there has been a lot more efforts by government agencies to check the alarming rate of ghost workers in government payrolls. The Federal Government in April 2022 discovered 1,500 workers on its payroll and directed the disengagement of 23 ghost workers from federal civil service in August 2022, while another 268 illegitimate workers were discovered on the payroll of a High Court in Kogi state.

PUBLIC CONSCIENCE brought to the fore the alleged maltreatment of Nigerians in a Chinese Quarry in Ondo State and got the commitment of the National Human Rights Commission Headquarters to address the human rights issues raised. To address the falsification of fitness certificates by Corps members, NYSC authorities rolled out a new medical fitness policy.

PUBLIC CONSCIENCE also celebrated persons of integrity who, during the radio programme, shared their inspirational stories with millions of our audiences.

Radio Town Hall Meetings

This is another critical aspect of PRIMORG's engagement utilized to shine the spotlight on corruption and good governance issues in Nigeria, as well as celebrate individuals who displayed uncommon integrity in their walk of life.

In three years, PRIMORG convened a total of 16 Radio Town Hall Meetings, bringing together government officials, civil society groups, experts from diverse fields, private citizens, affected communities and the general public on the same platform to have potent conversations and proffer solutions to issues of corruption, bad governance and dying integrity in the public sector and society at large.

A total of 16 episodes of PRIMORG's Town Hall Meeting engagements were held at Ray Power 100.5 FM, Abuja, 99.9 KISS FM, Abuja, 95.1 Grace FM, Lokoja, 106.3 WE FM Abuja, and 95.9 Maloney FM Keffi at different times in three years.

Burning issues of national importance were thrown up for public awareness and government's intervention. Some of the topics discussed that elicited reactions from the authorities include:

Debilitating effects of corruption in Nigeria's education system; Honesty in public service and challenges of



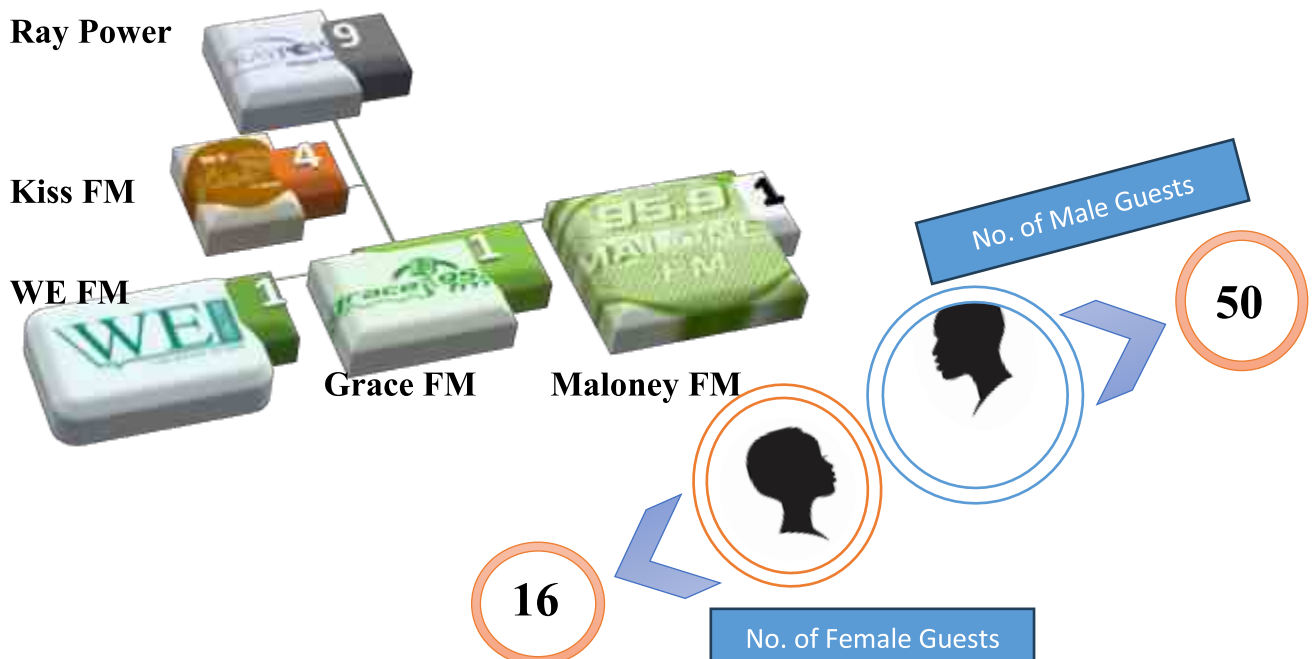
government agencies in service delivery; Role of stakeholders and citizens towards ensuring corrupt-free and credible 2023 polls; Tackling the upsurge of certificate forgery in Nigeria; Imperative of strengthening public sector integrity in Nigeria, amongst others.

Special attention was paid to fighting corruption in Nigeria through the strengthening of whistleblowing in the country with legislation. Recall, the act of whistleblowing, which is an internationally proven anti-corruption tool was launched in Nigeria in 2016 and continues to run as a government policy.

However, through PRIMORG's town hall meeting engagements, Federal legislators and their representatives as well as the executive arm of the government were engaged and tasked to ensure that the frailties of the existing whistleblowing policy are strengthened with a law.

Radio town hall meetings were also held at the end of Constituency Projects monitoring exercises by PRIMORG's Tracking Team. It is noteworthy that PRIMORG tracked Zonal Intervention Projects popularly called Constituency Projects in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Kabba-Bunu/Ijumu Federal Constituency, Kogi state and Karu/Keffi/Kokona Federal Constituency, Nasarawa state.

Ray Power



Our town hall meeting conferences featured no fewer than 66 guests, averaging about four persons per episode.



Beneficiaries of the radio programmes and syndications include:

1. The General Public
2. Media Houses
3. CSOs and NGOs
4. Private Organizations and Associations
5. Government Agencies.

The general public benefited from the various episodes of Public Conscience. The public depended on regular information and enlightenment on corruption issues as indicated by the feedback from listeners during the radio programme and by a short survey sent out by PRIMORG to listeners of Public Conscience on Radio who have reached out to PRIMORG as a result of the radio programmes.

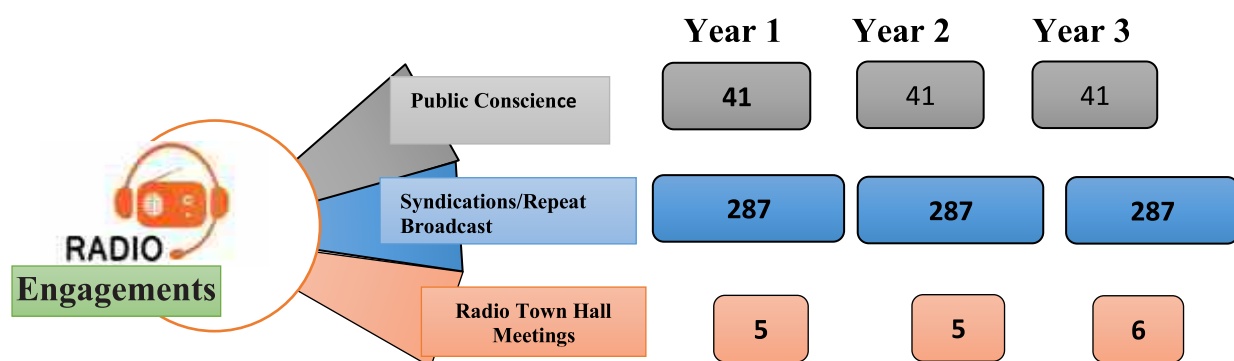
The Media Houses also benefited from the radio programmes. Investigative stories and reports on corruption published by the following media houses: Daily Trust Foundation, Premium Times (CJID), International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR), The Cable, Safer Media, Human Angle, WikkiTimes were amplified on Public Conscience on Radio, thereby giving more visibility to their reports.

CSOs and NGOs: Organizations like Connected Development (CODE), African Center for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL), Dataphyte, Accountability Lab, Center for Social Justice (CSJ), Human and Environmental Development Agency (HEDA) Resource Center, BudgIT, Step-Up Nigeria, Yar'Adua Foundation, Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA), Gender Dynamix Consult, Wole Soyinka Center for Investigative Journalism (WSCIJ), CLEEN Foundation, Integrity Organization, Policy and Legal Advocacy Center (PLAC), Partners West Africa Nigeria (PWAN), Social Development Integrated Center (Social Action), Kimpact, NESSAction, Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NWTF), One Campaign, International Budget Partnership, Media Advocacy West Africa (MAWA) Foundation, Campaign for Transformative Governance, Wash Matter Initiative, Yiaga Africa, Emma Ezeazu Center for Leadership, Center for Transparency Advocacy (CTA), Tubali Initiative, Small Scale Women Farmers Organization in Nigeria (SWOFON), Anticorruption Network, Make A Difference (MAD), Center LSD, Civil Society and Legislative Advocacy Center (CISLAC), Civil Liberties Organization (CLO), Socio - Economic Rights And Accountability Project (SERAP), Care for Legal Assistance and Human Rights Protection (CLAHRP), Heinrich Böll Stiftung/Foundation (HBS), Inside the Niger Delta, (The Shun Corruption Project) Priests Peace and Justice Initiative, Akin Fadeyi Foundation and others were all part of Public Conscience on Radio programmes. These organizations had their stories or corruption reports amplified on the PCR platform at least once or featured as guests in the programme.

Also, Public Conscience on Radio amplified corruption stories in which persons with disability were advocated for, hence organizations like Center for Citizens with Disability (CCD) and Joint National Association of Persons with Disability (JONAPWD) were beneficiaries of the radio programme as well. On our programme, they were able to voice their views on various issues that concern the PWD community ranging from elections, to infrastructure and perception.

Private Organizations: Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) – AEDC, Association of Nigeria Electricity Distributors (ANED), Miners Association of Nigeria, Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigeria Electricity Consumers Advocacy Network (NECAN), Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) had the opportunity to communicate their programmes, activities and processes to Nigerians through our Public Conscience on Radio platform, as well as inform on how their organizations contribute in the fight against corruption.

On the Radio Town Hall Meetings, the following agencies and organizations featured as guests: Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Servicom, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), Accountability Lab Nigeria (ALN), Africa Center for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL), Daily Trust, Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), Nigeria Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and other private organizations and individual analysts.



In three years, we successfully hosted 123 live episodes of Public Conscience on Radio, syndicated 369 episodes and another 492 repeat broadcasts by five radio stations in Abuja, FCT; Keffi, Nassarawa State; Ilorin, Kwara State; and Jos, Plateau State, as well as 16 episodes of our live Radio Town Hall Meetings on 5 radio stations.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM LISTENERS ON OUR PCR AND RTHM PROGRAMMES

During the implementation of the radio discussions, engagements and contributions from listeners during the live programme via calls, messages via text, WhatsApp and feedback from our community of followers via social media like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube were over 100,000. Below are some of the feedback received.

When we discussed ‘Rivers Residents in Severe Health Risks Over Illegal Oil Refining, Corruption and Worsening Soot Pollution’ on Public Conscience on the 18th of August 2021, a caller who didn’t give his name, said the following, ***“The security agencies have a lot to do. If the trailer can carry the crude from the Niger Delta to Abuja, then the security agencies are not doing their jobs.”***

On the 6th of October 2021, Christy from Mpape called into the programme with the following, ***“The last time I went for the NIN registration they were asking me for my BVN, so, I asked what they want to do with my BVN number, I got angry and dropped the form, then after about two to three months I went back again to register then they are asking me for N300, I know that the N300 is nothing but I believe that Nigerians they put the NIN for people to register for free but they were asking me for N300 even though I know that it is nothing before me, another of my sister went to Gwarimpa I saw with the NIN card and I asked her where did you do this since it was neat, she said that she did it in Gwarimpa and she paid N1500 , I said N1500 for NIN for what, she asked if I have done mine I said no, because they asked me for N300. Please Nigerians should do something about it because it really too obvious, thank you”***. The topic for discussion on that episode of Public Conscience was ‘NIMC Staff Colluding with Immigrations Officials to Extort Passport Applicants - Pt 2 - Nigerians raise alarm over extortion of NIN applicants by NIMC officials.’

On the 16th of February 2022, a caller by name Ayuba Yusuf from Abuja called into our PCR programme to ask the ICPC representative the following question, ***“Have you guys gone as far as Cross-River State to inspect projects? I don’t think there is anything tangible on ground yet we have representatives”***, while the topic for conversation in the studio was ‘2021 Constituency Project Tracking and the Abounding Corruption’.

On the 6th of July 2022, during an episode on integrity where PRIMORG hosted a person of integrity and a patriotic Nigerian on the programme, a listener by name Amaechi, from airport road, called in and said, ***“I just want to appreciate our brother and the one the tanker driver. I myself have a challenge of eye problem such that when I’m driving along the road, in that condition, I drove someone to a location and she forgot N350,000 in my car. I had to drive back to where I dropped her and stayed there for more than 6 hours waiting for the man. Eventually, the man came back and he rewarded me with N20,000. I’m telling this story for the sake of others. People don’t return things because they don’t get appreciated”***.

On the 17th of May 2023, PRIMORG hosted a conversation on Public Conscience on Radio with the topic ‘Limitations of Nigerian Media in Anti- Corruption Fight’, a listener who identified himself as Moses Mayor from Masaka, sent in the following message via text message, ***‘Good Morning. Whether the media are doing enough to allow press freedom, my take on that is NO! The media is not doing enough. For instance, you put out topic for discussion and seek opinions from listeners but when the listeners want to express their opinion as it is in their heart you cut them off because u fear the NBC, but you the media put the topic out for our opinions why then are you cutting those calling in to talk about YOUR topic. Please allow we the listeners to say it as it is in our heart. Thanks’.***

On the 16th of August 2023, Kris Muo (Esq) from Maitama sent a contribution via text message while the topic ‘SECURITY OPERATIVES INDICTED OF CHECKPOINT EXTORTION IN BORNO HIGHWAYS’ was discussed on Public Conscience on Radio. His text message read thus: ***‘It is unthinkable that whilst masses are finding it hard to feed, a lot of perfidy takes place in these agencies. Let the government allow the masses to live and breathe’.***

During the Radio Town Hall Meeting on Constituency Projects on the 22nd of April 2022, a caller from Pegi Community named Taiwo Aderibigbe made the following comment: ***“I thank you for remembering Kuje community especially Daka community. Fortunately, I have been there, all those areas they are very difficult terrain within the area council and the F.C.T. The needs assessment that the SA mentioned if you are carrying it out, I see two projects that have been initiated in two villages within Pegi community, the way they are sinking borehole in jikinkure community as if it is only borehole that is the only problem of the residents. The children cannot go to good schools, no desks, poor facilities there. What about the health centres that we said we needed. Come and check it, interface with the people, I don’t think Senator Aduda has had any public interface with any Pegi resident, his constituency in Kuje. I beg him to use his influence as a senator to fast-track the completion of this project”.***

On 17th February 2023, during the Radio Town Hall Meeting on corruption towards the upcoming Nigerian general elections, a listener by name Christopher Nkem from DeiDei, called to ask the following questions, ***“What’s the arrangement concerning the security? Which people are the security that are coming to the PUs? Will it still be only police and civil defense? Will the military men be deployed?”***, which were responded to by the guest from the Nigeria Police Force who was present in the studio.

Call from Comrade: *Nigerians are not taking their leaders to account. Everybody is afraid of dying so what I want explain to Nigerians today is that we should come out and challenge our leaders.*

Charles Ehiemere from Abuja called into the Radio Town Hall Meeting on integrity in the judicial system which held on 24th November 2023 to say the following: *“my perception about all this is that our accountability system is zero in as much as we know how to track these corrupt practices full stop no one is pressing charges no one is leaving or wanting to stick out his neck as it is so we keep going in circles I am not really trying to make those changes that we want to see and until we start holding our leaders accountable.... it is a systemic issue. In my opinion we need to understand what is on ground, what is due politicians, what is due public servants, because we can only fight for what we know and what we don’t know”.*.)

Via Facebook, during the discussion on 'INVESTIGATION INDICTS OSUN GOVERNMENT OF AWARDING N1.3BN PROJECTS TO NON-EXISTENT COMPANIES', GM Higher ground commented thus: *‘If the current opposition starts going after the last administration, some censored media will whip up sentiment that she is witch-hunted.’*



Our Street Engagements – VOX POPS

Elections are seen as weak mechanism for accountability. Citizens, after elections, should be interested in governance through constructive engagement for national development, also, without the citizens, there cannot be a government. To some extent the government does not involve its citizens in the decision process, formulation of policies, availability of information, this is done to constantly keep the citizens in check. Citizens may not be able to engage strategically and effectively with government if they lack the needed information to hold the elected representative to account. PRIMORG educated and engaged with citizens on topical development and corruption issues through its street and public feedback series, VOICES AGAINST CORRUPTION – let the people speak. This entailed framing of right questions on past and current governance issues bedeviling Nigerians by successive governments. It was used to elicit reactions and opinions from citizens in the streets of Abuja and neighbouring states. Snippet from some of the street engagements were aired on some of our live weekly radio programme (Public Conscience) and our Radio Town Hall Meeting as a means of engagement with government and anti-corruption agencies.



In the second phase (2021 to 2024) of the project, PRIMORG produced 66 episodes (1st year, 5 episodes, 2nd year, 31 episodes, and the 3rd year, 30 episodes) of its street engagement which was widely shared on social media by uploading the content on its YouTube (PRIMORG TV), Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and WhatsApp platforms. Issues affecting Persons with Disability, women in politics, and underserved communities, amongst others were all captured in the street engagement. An average of ten individuals were interviewed in each episode. This means that about 660 individuals were engaged and sensitized.

Some of the Vox Pop Questions

1. Do you think more women's participation in politics will reduce corruption in Nigeria?
2. Do you think the interest of persons with disability as contained in INEC guideline were adequately covered during the 2023 elections?
3. Why do you think fighting corruption in Nigeria is difficult?
4. Will our healthcare delivery system improve if public officials are prevented from seeking medical care abroad?

Everyone's voice deserves an opportunity to be heard. Below are some responses from the field.

1. On how much confidence citizens have in the judiciary to dispense justice in Nigeria? This is what Joseph said *'the judiciary in Nigeria has been dispensing justice but presently, I do not have confidence in them again.'*



2. In response to who is to blame for the prevalence of fraud at examination centers in Nigeria? Comfort Erugo opined *'You can see the inputs and outputs of students we have these days half baked, unfortunately, we parents are not left out. Parents go as far as bribing lecturers to pass their students, parents go as far as buying examination results, parents do all sorts of things to make sure the children are in the next level to make sure the children are in university at the age of 15 or 14. Many things have attributed to that and unfortunately it is causing the future of this country'*
3. Reacting to whether the current state of retirees in Nigeria serves as an incentive for those in active service to be corrupt, Emanuel submitted that *'those that are in-service when they see those in the streets unpaid, they see their future. So, they be like, hey before my future ends up like this, let me embezzle, it's a simple thing.'*
4. On how the Nigerian government can arrest rising drug abuse in the country, Abudul said *'if the government can be able to tackle every border and check everything before they enter Nigeria, they will eventually know everything on how to stop it.'*
5. When asked if he thinks the creation of a special court will reduce the length of time for corruption trial in Nigeria? Adedeji Aderele responded, *"even if we have special courts to try such cases that doesn't mean it will reduce the length because it can always be contested in a higher court of the country. I think if that court can stand alone where the judgement can take effect without any further redress in the higher court then I think that can suffice, but as long as there are higher courts, they can always impose their powers on the special court.'*

PHOTO GALLERY







Zonal Intervention Projects (ZIP) Tracked

The need to engage with citizens at the grassroots is an outcome of the street engagement during the first phase of the project which ended in 2021. Some of the citizens engaged decried the rate of corruption in the implementation of ZIPs, while some said they were not aware of what a constituency project is. One of the respondents said that,



‘Corruption is responsible for the execution of constituency project and I think that it is not just the problem in the government, I think it is more of the problem of the citizens. The citizens don’t ask questions, they don’t even want to know what is happening to their money, they don’t want to know where the problem is coming from, everybody just feel relaxed. So, long as you can eat a day, you just feel it is normal but it is our duty, it is our responsibility, our corporate duty to ask for what is happening’.

ZIPs which started in 1999 are projects executed on behalf of the Legislators in their constituents by the contractors through the implementing agencies, it is aimed at engendering social accountability. This presupposes the judicious use of public funds and dividends of democracy for citizens at the grassroots.

While we tracked the projects at the constituencies in collaboration with the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) and other CSOs, our emphasis was on the role of the citizens in ensuring a needs assessment is done before project nomination, ownership of projects by citizens to ensure value for money and also ensuring the existence of a sustainability plan.

In the first year (2021) of the project, PRIMORG tracked Constituency Projects in 5 Area Councils (Kuje, Bwari, Abuja Municipal, Abaji and Gwagwalada) in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).



Analysis of Findings

Federal Capital Territory: Out of 29 projects tracked, 22 projects are completed (13 are in use) 7 projects are incomplete (4 are ongoing and in use). Of the 17 constituents that were interviewed, 9 said they were aware of the existence of the projects and were grateful for the intervention by the government. In some constituencies, the community had a sustainability plan for the project. For instance, the motorized borehole at Ajina Community, constituents were made to pay a token to maintain the borehole and buy fuel for the generator to pump water for the

community. However, in Darka community in Kuje, the Primary health care center was completed but not in use. The community members are hopeful that once the project is handed over to the Area Council, it will be equipped and serve the needs of the constituents. Hon. Ibin Jafar, a Councilor at Paikon-Kore community in



Gwagwalada Area Council during follow-up calls after the project tracking, informed our team that the primary health centre in their community is currently in use as the community has moved the equipment from the old, dilapidated facility to the new facility.

In Darka Community, where a 2020 ZIP (construction of a primary health care centre) was tracked, two community members who were interviewed said the community has reached out to the Health Department of the Area Council to get the health care center running, but there is a delay which they believe may be due to the upcoming party primaries towards the Area Council election.

In January 2024, after the tracking of constituency projects in Bwari Area Council, PRIMORG staff visited one of the projects sites - 1km road and drainage in Ijayapin Byazhin, and confirmed that the upgrade of the road is completed.

In the second year of the project, the team tracked nine constituency projects in Kogi state nominated by Hon. T. J. Yusuf, the Kabba/Bunu/Ijumu Federal Constituency representative at the National Assembly.

Seven of the projects tracked were completed; 5 in use, 2 not in use, while 2 projects were on-going.

A 2021 project - Construction/Rehabilitation of Kabba-Olleh-Oke Offin Feeder Road, one of the constituents who was interviewed informed the team that citizens engage with their representative during a town hall meeting and the sustainability plan is enforced by the Monarch, who mobilizes citizens to clean the gutter during the raining season to allow for free flow of water. Also, Ahmed Saidu, a security man who was interviewed, informed the team that the Oba of Bukun hired him to secure and clean the Skill acquisition centre which is a 2018/2019 constituency project.



The team found out that the 2018 project - Construction of Motorized Borehole, is completed and in use. Chief Obafemi Paul, the Olusore of Owe land, confided in the team that the elders, some well-meaning Nigerians and himself contribute periodically to fix and maintain the borehole. On the other hand, the team tracked and found that the construction and furnishing of Kabba Community Town Hall in Kabba/Bunnu/Ijumu Constituency and the construction of the Palm Oil processing plant, both 2022 projects were ongoing.



In the third year, constituency projects were tracked in Nasarawa state. The team tracked 7 constituency projects nominated by the State Legislator, Hon. John Ovey under Karu/Keffi/Kokona Federal Constituency in Nasarawa State. 2 out of the projects are completed and 5 are not completed.

The ZIPs are plagued with lots of controversies arising from the nomination of projects; if they should be prioritized after needs assessment with the constituents or if the Legislators should use their prerogative to decide which project would be more appreciated by the constituents. The better option is for a needs assessment to be done before the nomination of projects.



The siting of streetlight projects inside the palaces of two traditional rulers in Gwargwada Community, Kuje (Esu Sa'Rubochiyi's Palace, Rubochi and Chief's Palace) was termed "POLITICAL PATRONAGE" by some residents who didn't want their names on print or faces on camera.

In the course of tracking constituency projects in the aforementioned community, PRIMORG team uncovered that solar street light projects were actually built in their compounds and environs.

Some projects didn't have signage showing the details of the project, for instance the Construction of the Kabba Library and the 3 blocks of classroom at Model Primary School, all in Kabba/Bunu/Ijumu federal constituency.

It behooves the Legislators with genuine intention to ensure that the projects are properly executed for the benefit of their constituents.

KOGI



9 Projects tracked

FCT



29 Projects tracked

NASSARAWA



7 Projects tracked

Radio town hall meetings were also held at the end of the Constituency Projects monitoring exercises by PRIMORG's Tracking Team.



OUR INTEGRITY STORY

Integrity could be seen as adhering to strong moral and ethical principles by persons working within the public or private sector, and to some, it is doing the right thing when nobody is there to supervise. Integrity is not a one-off act; it involves the consistent application of ethical standards in the conduct of public and private affairs. Celebrating persons of integrity in the public and private sector is not only a timely and relevant initiative but it also aligns with our commitment at PRIMORG to contributing to the reduction of corruption. Public trust in government and public institutions has eroded in recent times as a result of corruption, lack of transparency and unethical behavior. There is no doubt that corruption has been a cankerworm that



has affected every sector of our society. Some have accepted it as a cultural norm, while others expect it in their daily interaction. Successive governments have made concerted efforts to stem the tide by setting up anti-corruption agencies, as well as anti-corruption policies, yet the negative impact on corruption is felt as we navigate our daily

lives.

However, some citizens are living above board. Recognizing and celebrating these individuals in the public and private sectors who have demonstrated unwavering integrity can contribute to rebuilding the public trust, seeing integrity as a norm which ultimately helps to counteract negative perceptions and foster a culture of accountability.

In celebrating persons of integrity in the public sector in the last three years, PRIMORG partnered with Accountability Lab Nigeria to celebrate five Integrity Icons in the public sector while PRIMORG reached out and celebrated four individuals in the private sector. 11 episodes of our radio engagements, were dedicated to honouring and sharing the stories of impact of these individuals:

Prof. Muhammad Rabi, Head of Mass Communication Department, Nasarawa State University, Keffi

Mr. Philip Ezeegbulam, Public servant, 2020 integrity icon

Prof. Magdalene Igbolo, Head of Sociology Department, University of Abuja

Comrade Ibrahim Kirfi, Amalgamation Union Public Corporation, Civil Service Technical Recreational Employees (Chairman, Yola, Adamawa State)

In addition to the listed icons, individuals in the private sector and government institution were also celebrated.

Sunday Francis, a bolt driver in the Federal Capital Territory

Ejiro Otarigho, a tanker driver in Warri, Delta State

Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA)

Abubakar Hassan, a driver who shuttles between Abuja and Maiduguri, Borno State

During the radio engagement, we gave hope and inspired some Nigerians through the amplification of integrity stories while we encouraged citizens to change the corruption norms that have been engraved in their minds: **'who integrity help?', 'It is my time to chop'**.

During one of the episodes of the radio town hall meetings on integrity, one of the guests said this to the icon ***'I want to thank the other speaker who came up here, thank you for what you do Sir, your types are rare, in fact I am led to actually give you some cash today for being upright'***.



In July 2022, while amplifying the integrity of a bolt driver who returned a passenger's \$4,050 that was forgotten in his car and the patriotism of a tanker driver who averted a disaster by driving a burning tanker away from danger to safety. A listener called into the programme and gifted the bolt driver a piece of land in the F.C.T to motivate the driver and other listeners to stay on the path of integrity continuously. This is what the anonymous caller said ***'I want to commend the guy in the studio on that act of integrity. The Lord bless you more and more in Jesus Name. I will love to know if he's a landlord or a tenant. I'll reach out to you, I'm giving you a plot of land in Lugbe for that act of integrity'***.

Recognizing and celebrating individuals of integrity serves as an inspiration for others to uphold similar integrity values and for the icons, they were encouraged to replicate themselves among their circle of influence. You cannot fake or hide integrity.

Our Success Stories and How Government Shifted Grounds Positively

In the implementation of the project, hard copies of corruption investigative reports alongside letters of invitation were sent to government agencies indicted in the reports and relevant anti-corruption agencies were also invited as participants in the radio discussion.

PRIMORG amplified an investigative report by the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR) on how some NYSC members falsify medical documents to bypass NYSC protocols. A representative from the Commission was a part of the conversation and he assured Nigerians that the Commission would look into the issue. Some months later, the NYSC introduced a new medical fitness policy

for corps members. The link to this outcome:

<https://www.icirnigeria.org/nysc-introduces-new-medical-fitness-policy-for-corps-members-after-icir-investigation/>

Nigeria Malaria Eradication programme (NMEP) – NMEP sent a representative to discuss the measures in place to prevent the sales of mosquito nets which are meant to be given out free.

PRIMORG held a Radio Town Hall Meeting in March 2022 on whistleblowing and whistleblower policy. In September 2022, the Federal Government sacked some illegally recruited staff in the Ministry of Information – an anomaly that a whistleblower had previously reported. Please find link to story below:

<https://ikengaonline.com/2022/09/fg-sacks-209-illegally-recruited-staff-of-ministry-of-information/#.YzWEbLcLy6x.facebook>

National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) – NAFDAC featured on an episode where we discussed the influx of pesticides into Nigeria that are banned in Europe. The official who joined in via phone was able to spell out the NAFDAC processes for approval of pesticides into the country.

In July 2021, PRIMORG was contacted by Oyinade Adekunle, a doctoral student from McMaster University Ontario, Canada, as one of the non-governmental organizations to be interviewed for her research thesis on creating awareness of non-governmental organizations promoting public participation and democratic innovations in Nigeria. The research work was partly sparked by our works and their visibility on social media. <https://participedia.net/case/7691>

During the radio amplification of one of the reports by the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR) on ‘The Illegal and Arbitrary Taxes Demanded by Officials of Abuja Municipal Area Council’ on the 28th of July and the 4th of August 2022, the public and guests on the programme (Public Conscience on Radio – PCR) were provided with the requisite information to help them resist extortion by some agents of the Council. One of the guests on the programme (Chef Nneka), was approached by some agents of the Council as usual but she was able to resist them with the information she got during the programme, so she was not exploited. <https://thewhistler.ng/are-you-not-ashamed-of-yourself-abuja-restaurant-owner-walks-out-amac-officials-after-demanding-n300000-generator-emission-levy/>

During the radio programme (PCR) on the amplification of an investigative report by the NewsGuru on ‘NIMC Staff Colluding with Immigrations Officials to Extort Passport Applicants’, PRIMORG received some complaints via text and WhatsApp messages. These complaints were compiled and shared with the National Identity

Management Commission. The NIMC gave a corresponding response to each complaint on the list sent by PRIMORG, albeit one complainant reached PRIMORG back to report that his NIN issue had been resolved. Also, the amplification brought about a policy change by the NIMC where fund exchange was banned at registration centers as reported on the 6th of November 2022 by TheCable. Below is the link to the outcome:

<https://www.thecable.ng/nimc-prohibits-cash-transactions-at-nin-enrolment-centres>

During the radio amplification (PCR) of the reports by the ICIR and Daily Trust on 'DisCos Ripping off Electricity Consumers in Nigeria Through Estimated Billing', PRIMORG received some electricity supply complaints, which were compiled and sent to the Abuja Electricity Distribution Company on the 8th of November 2021. By 25th November 2021, one complainant reported back to PRIMORG that his community (Karu Extension 2 by City College) electricity issue had been resolved. Also, some citizens were given professional advice on the next steps to take to get their issues resolved.

On the 23rd of March 2022, PRIMORG amplified the report by the Cable on 'Nigerian Workers Inhumanely Treated at Ogun Chinese-Run Quarries' on PCR. Among the guests of the programme was a representative from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) who pledged the Commission would conduct an independent investigation on the two Chinese companies indicted of exploitation and flagrant abuse of human rights of the workers. Also, citizens were educated on how to write petitions to the Commission on issues that concerns human right abuse. PRIMORG followed up with a petition to the Commission on 25th March 2022, calling for an urgent investigation. Afterwards, a representative from the NHRC, Ogun state called requesting more details which we obliged. Below is the link to the outcome <https://www.thecable.ng/after-thecables-report-nhrc-to-probe-chinese-firms-over-maltreatment-of-workers/amp>

National Broadcasting Commission (NBC): The NBC through the Director of Public Affairs of the Commission, featured on our programme to explain their procedures in slamming fines on media houses and revealed the reasons media houses may be fined.

National Electricity Regulation Commission (NERC) – NERC came on the programme to explain to Nigerians the role of the NERC in the pegging of estimated billings for electricity consumers.

During an integrity episode on Public Conscience on Radio in July 2022, the person of integrity who was the guest in the studio received a piece of land from a listener who was inspired by his story of integrity and then offered him a piece of land in the FCT.

See link below:

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/07/honest-cab-driver-gets-free-land-during-radio-programme/>

After PRIMORG's amplification of an investigative story on the extortion of passport applicants at Nigeria Immigration Offices despite launch of digital portal, a year later, the new NIS boss ordered the investigation of unprofessional conduct of NIS personnel. Furthermore, the NIS cleared 200,000 passport backlogs and announced that new passport applications should be processed in 2 weeks, thereby reducing the gaps that permitted for corruption in the passport application process. The links are below: <https://thenewsguru.com/national/passport-nis-boss-orders-investigations-of-unprofessional-conduct-of-personnel/>
<http://nationwidereports.ng/immigration-clears-200000-passport-backlogs-new-applications-to-be-processed-in-two-weeks-henceforth/>

Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) – Representatives of the ICPC were guests on our radio programmes on different episodes to discuss issues and concerns around constituency projects in communities. Also, the Commission was a part of our integrity episodes to discuss the National Ethics and Integrity Policy (NEIP).

Following the report by HumAngle that indicted security officials who extort travelers on the highway in Borno State, letters were sent on 9th August 2023 with the links to the report to the Nigeria Army and Police Force for them to act on it. On 16th the Inspector General Police issued a statement through the Force Public Relations Officer, that an improved Monitoring Unit and X-squad operative had been deployed to ensure that checkpoints are strategically placed and effectively managed, devoid of extortion. Also, the Nigerian Army has moved to counter extortion practices in Borno. Below is the link to the outcome:

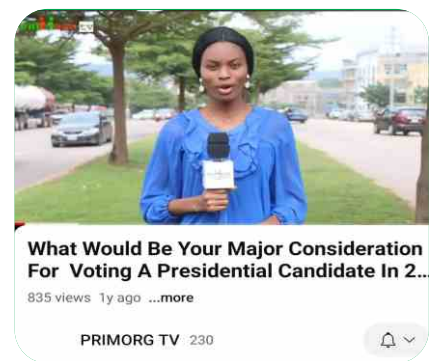
<https://humanglemedia.com/nigeria-army-moves-to-counter-extortion-practices-among-officers-in-borno/>

On the 1st of February 2023, PRIMORG hosted an episode on the odds against the implementation of National Gender Policy and few months afterwards the gender equality bill passed the second reading at the Senate. In the same vein, on the 3rd of May 2023, PRIMORG hosted an episode on Mitigating Electoral Corruption Through Gender Main-streaming and Affirmation Action and soon after, Adamawa State Governor swore in the first female chief judge in Adamawa State. The links to both outcomes are seen below: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/601771-gender-equality-bill-passes-second-reading-at-senate.html>

FCT-UBEB – A representative from FCT-UBEB was present in the studio to inform

on the processes the Board put in place to ensure corruption in the system can be reported. He indicated that they have monitoring teams from different departments who go for monitoring once schools resume to make sure that the schools under the administration of the Board, take off in good shape. He indicated that reports of illegalities are to be channelled through the Office of the Acting Chairman, Department of Primary Schools or Department of Junior Secondary Schools; both departments are in the FCT-UBEB. He revealed that bad eggs are usually sanctioned.

Social Media Engagements: The digital space is evolving and there is a need to connect with the rest of the world, in order not to leave anyone behind. For us at PRIMORG, we leveraged technology, which is a game changer, using the social media space to reach and engage with our community of followers @officialprimorg and our YouTube channel, @ PRIMORGTV



How We Collaborated

Collaboration with Media and Journalism (MAJ) Cohort members for reports on accountability and transparency. Investigative reports by the MAJ cohort members were amplified and the reporters and Editors were part of the radio discussion to give an in-depth perspective on the investigative reports. Also, cohort members exchanged contacts of affected persons or community members with PRIMORG.

PRIMORG partnered with AFRICMIL to draw the attention of the President Bola Tinubu's administration and the 10th National Assembly on the need to have a whistleblowing law. This was done on some episodes of the radio town hall meeting on whistleblowing, as well as the live TV appearance on Focus Nigeria on Africa Independent Television (AIT) on 20th October and a round-table discussion with relevant stakeholder on 7th November, 2023.

The collaboration with Accountability Lab Nigeria was centered around our integrity episodes. Episodes were dedicated to share with the listeners and the general public extraordinary stories of the integrity of Nigerians living above board.



In March 2022, the Federal Executive Council (FEC), approved the revised National Gender Policy (NGP) to promote gender equality, good governance and accountability across the three tiers of government in Nigeria. According to the former Minister of Women Affairs, Mrs. Pauline Tallen, the Policy represents a set of minimum standards which the Nigerian government is expected to meet in order to achieve its mandate of good governance, accountability and being socially responsive to its vulnerable group. PRIMORG collaborated with the Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) to popularize the revised National Gender Policy (NGP) for adoption in all sectors of governance in Nigeria. Two episodes of Public Conscience on Radio and six episodes of Politics Extra were dedicated to this effect.

We worked with other mainstream credible media houses in order to keep the issues on the front burner. They further amplified the statements issued after each episode of the weekly radio programme and the radio town hall meeting. Some of the media houses are Vanguard Newspaper, The News Guru, Breezy News, News Turf, News Dot Africa, Super News NG, Team Reporters, Forefront Newspaper, Nigerian Pilot Newspaper, National Trail Online, Nation's Pride, Day Break, News Diary Online, The Gleamer, African Leadership Scorecard, Independent.ng, News Lodge, Novell.com, Swift Reporters, Nigeria News 24, Business Africa Digest, The Fact, Nationwide News, Front Page, Nationwide Reports, The Sentinel, Nigeria Times, and Aljazirah News.

Mainstreaming GESI In Our Project

In the implementation of our project, we were deliberate in our inclusion of the underserved segment of the society. We took into consideration the different identities and characteristics to ensure that no group was left behind. Stories on how corruption affects marginalized and underserved communities were amplified and affected individuals and community members were guests on the programme. We ensured that both genders were invited as guests on the programme. Generally, though, some women are radio shy, so we took their contribution via phone. We transcribed the videos to audio-visual to accommodate the PWD audience.

The Political Outlook And Its Impact On Corruption

The evident failure of governance in Nigeria over the years is characterized by the diminishing ability of political leaders to address threats such as the mismanagement of public funds, abuse of power, election fraud, nepotism, cronyism, and the shrinking civic space. In contrast to a system where leadership is often achieved through bribery, intimidation, and violence, Nigeria urgently requires a governance system built on integrity and accountability, led by individuals committed to responsible leadership. The leadership recruitment processes through elections and appointments are largely affected by political patronage and undue influence.

Despite experiencing over two decades of uninterrupted democratic rule, the realization of good governance remains a distant goal for the over 200 million people in Nigeria. As the most populous black nation grapples with a myriad of challenges, pervasive corruption in both high and low places stand out as a significant obstacle to democracy at all levels of government. It is crucial to recognize that the future of democracy and the prospect of good governance will remain uncertain unless government policies genuinely cater to the needs of the masses.

Good governance requires the development and strengthening of independent state institutions like the security agencies, a functional legislature (allowed to express itself), and a viable and independent judiciary cannot be overemphasized. Every effort must be made to ensure that these institutions function properly and optimally without interference of any form.

Anti-corruption laws in Nigeria play a crucial role in the country's efforts to combat widespread corruption and promote good governance. These enactments, with their various agencies that are responsible for the enforcement of anti-corruption laws in Nigeria should be allowed to function independently without interference and coercion from political elites to investigate and prosecute individuals and organizations involved in corrupt practices and improve transparency.

The Nigerian government should make effort in strengthening anti-corruption initiatives while collaborating with Civil Society Organisations to promote accountability and uphold the rule of law.

Combating corruption is an ongoing process that requires committed and sustained efforts from all sectors. The Federal Government should be seen to be intentional and bold with the implementation of all anti-corruption initiatives. It should urgently push through a legal framework for its existing whistleblowing policy and an Audit law to strengthen the Office of the Auditor General for the Federation. These steps if taken, will no doubt protect the media, informants and boost the confidence of more Nigerians to report wrongdoings in the society as well as ensuring transparency and accountability in the administration and management of public finance.

Challenges and Gaps That Still Need to be Filled

The more corrupt we are as a nation the more cases of the violations of human rights. For transparency in the execution of the Zonal Intervention Projects, the implementing agencies need to be empowered to ensure that they are not cajoled to cede project execution to the contractors nominated by the legislators.

The active participation of individuals and groups outside the public sector is premised on Article 13 of the United Nations Coalition Against Corruption (UNCAC) that speaks to the participation of Society. It is therefore on this note that we request

that Civil Society participation and the anti-corruption efforts needs to be sustained in the prevention and fight against corruption.

We collectively have an onerous task of building the next generation of leaders by modelling change and begin now to teach them about the negative impacts of corruption.

Recommendations For Sustainability

The pervasive nature of corruption in Nigeria requires that the fight against it must be collective and sustained. The federal government must lead by strengthening all existing anti-corruption mechanisms, organs and institutions through proper funding and appropriate legislation. The anti-corruption agencies, the media and civil society groups working in the good governance space also need certain levels of support and cooperation from the government to be maximally effective in carrying out their constitutional and legal mandates. These needed supports range from increased transparency in governance through respect for laws and roles to the complete removal and avoidance of undue influence in the works of officials and agencies in the anti-corruption space. There is an urgent need to enact a law to strengthen the whistleblowing policy of the federal government. The continued absence of a law to protect whistleblowers impedes galvanizing public support against corruption. The media and civil society space keep shrinking through the actions and inaction of the government.

Recently, the attacks on journalists and other individuals using cyberspace through some disingenuous interpretation of Cybercrime (Prohibition Prevention, etc) 2015 have given cause for concern.

The government needs to prevent the law from being used to give the impression that it is intolerant of opinions or facts about the activities of the government and its officials.

The relevant portions of that law, which are open to abuse by officials and agencies of government, should immediately be expunged through an appropriate amendment.