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**Report on the  
Campaign Against Electoral Violence in Nigeria (CAEVIN)  
A Centre for the Study of African Economies (CSAE), UK / ActionAid  
International Nigeria Project**

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AAIN	-	ActionAid International Nigeria
CAEVIN	-	Campaign against Electoral Violence in Nigeria
CBO	-	Community Based Organization
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
LGA	-	Local Government Area
PSI	-	Practical Sampling International.
UO	-	University of Oxford

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Most, if not all observers of the Nigerian political terrain are in agreement that acts of political violence pose a very potent threat to the credibility of the 2007 Nigerian General Elections. Of course, the issue of political violence is not new in Nigeria. Indeed it is an issue that is as old as democratic practice in the country. Indeed, various observers of past elections in Nigeria, especially the 2003 round of elections, have used the trend as a basis for raising well-founded fears regarding the possible negative effects of political violence on the 2007 elections. These observers have also pointed out that the incidence of political violence varies in intensity from one part of the country to the other.

It is in the light of this situation that the University of Oxford, the United Kingdom and ActionAid International Nigeria resolved to carry out a campaign against electoral violence as part of a larger CSAE research project in randomly chosen locations around Nigerian. The campaign was also designed to bring about attitude and behaviour change among its audience towards electoral violence through the use of anti-violence messages. To carry out this randomized campaign, ActionAid put together a group of 6 NGOs/CBOs to conduct the campaigns in twelve (12) given locations in 6 States across the country, while also maintaining 6 control mirror sites all of which are known to have some history of political violence.

The idea was to use the campaigns to bring about attitude and behaviour change in a previously randomly surveyed audience in such a way that it will diminish or even completely cancel out the ability of local politicians to be able galvanize their supporters to engage in violent actions. It was also expected that the campaigns would make prospective voters counteract the effect of political violence on them by refusing to be intimidated and go out to vote or to deliberately vote against politicians whose stock in trade is to employ violence as a means of achieving their objectives.

The campaign was therefore designed to take the form of community-based, person-to-person, activities that took the key anti-violence messages to the people. The messages were homogenous across the chosen locations spread over six (6) states namely, **Kaduna, Plateau, Lagos, Oyo, Delta and Rivers**. The message used was: **“NO TO ELECTORAL VIOLENCE ... VOTE AGAINST VIOLENT POLITICIANS”**

The survey was carried out by the Lagos-based sampling organization, Practical Sample International (*PSI*) between 19th January and 9th February. To ensure that the campaign team would be able to identify the households surveyed and ensure that the same surveyed individuals would be targeted and exposed to the campaign messages, the implementing NGOs accompanied the *PSI* survey team in the pre-campaign survey. Campaign team representatives joined each research team out to identify the surveyed persons and ensure that they were also reached with the campaign message. This strategy was adopted because it was surmised that merely getting the names and addresses of those sampled

from the *PSI* survey teams would not suffice for a competent match of surveyed people with those to be targeted with the campaign messages.

### **Target Audience**

This campaign was targeted at communities and focused on parents, community leaders, male youth and community associations and groups who can implement community policies. The project did not focus on political party candidates or electoral aspirants.

### **Objectives**

1. To influence public attitude and behaviour against electoral violence through the use of anti-violence message.
2. To encourage and empower men, women and youth to organise and avoid electoral violence in their communities

### **Project Partnership**

This Project was implemented with AAIN partners based in the six states where the campaigns were carried. These partners, were chosen on the basis of their distinctive competence in understanding the locations, understanding campaigns and understanding the issues. The partners are:

- Lagos – Human Support Services (HSS)
- Oyo – Centre for Rural Reproductive Health & Development (CRRHD)
- Delta – Environmental and Rural Medication Centre (ENVIRONMEC)
- Rivers – Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group (NDBMG)
- Kaduna – Interfaith Mediation Centre
- Plateau - Youth Adolescent Reflection & Action Centre (YARAC),

A planning and methodology meeting was held in Abuja on 16 and 17th January 2007, at which all the partners were represented. It was at this meeting that all the details of the campaign design including specific homogenous message, drama outline, what materials for the wide range audience and other key decisions on the implementation of the project were jointly taken.

### **Project Location**

The Campaigns were grounded in communities at the locations, encouraging voters in such communities to reject violence in the Nigerian electoral processes and to distance themselves from politicians who have made violence their stock-in-trade. Using a sampling frame by Afrobarometer, 24 sites were chosen for the campaign against electoral violence. Half of these sites (12) were the Campaign sites and the other half the control sites.

The Project was cascaded in 6 states with focus on two Local Government Areas per state and one locality per Local Government Area. There were therefore a total of 12 sites for the campaign. An equal number and equivalent of sites were

used as the control sites for the benefit of the larger project survey. The selected sites for the campaign and the control sites are listed in the table on page 12.

### **Project Duration**

The campaigns were carried out over a period of approximately two months (January to February 2007).

### **Project Accountability Team**

The Campaign was managed by a **Project Accountability Team** comprising the following:

Team Leader - The Country Director, AAIN: Dr. Otive Igbuzor

National Coordinator & Consultant to the Project: – Austin Emeanua

AAIN Election Team – Ojobo Atuluku (Programme Coordinator), Hilary Ogbonna (Programme Advisor), Obo Effanga (Parliamentary Liaison & Policy Advocacy Advisor), Augusta Akparanta-Emenogu (Project/Media Officer), Amenze Igbinedion/Ifeanyi Enuenwosu (Administrative Assistants)

State Coordinators: Imam Ashafa (Kaduna), Dr. Iorapuu Tor (Plateau), Mark Nwakudu (Lagos), Gbolahan Olubowale (Oyo), Monday Itoghor (Delta), George-Hill Anthony (Rivers).

### **Campaign Format**

The Campaign was a simple campaign that was implemented in a uniform fashion across the various locations. It used the following media:

- T-Shirts, Hijabs (veils for Muslim women), visor caps.
- Town Hall meetings at which focused group discussions based on the campaign messages were held.
- Popular Theatre for Development (with Local Drama presentations).
- Road shows
- Sensitization and advocacy visits to local associations and groups within the locations
- Leaflets & Posters
- Music

### **PRE-CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES**

#### **Meeting Between the National Coordinator and PSI**

The National Coordinator met with PSI in Lagos to discuss and agree the modalities for the joint campaign and survey teams' pre-campaign survey. This was to ensure that the campaign team took note of the survey respondents and be able to identify them for the purpose of ensuring that they are exposed to the campaign messages.

## **Methodology/Strategy Meeting**

A Methodology/Strategy Meeting was held on 16th and 17th January 2007 in Abuja. The outcome of the Meeting included the following:

- Implementing partners and technical resources such as the dramatists and the jingle composer, had a full knowledge of the project and its plan of action.
- Campaign materials and messages were considered and approved as being relevant to all locations.
- The work plan was reviewed and harmonized.

At the Methodology/Strategy meeting, the project concept was presented and inputs received from relevant stakeholders, Site Coordinators. Campaign Materials and messages were discussed and agreed at the meeting. The Methodology/Strategy Meeting as stated above was attended by all the State Coordinators and the Project Accountability Team (see above). Specific outputs of the meeting included the following:

- **Message: “NO TO ELECTION VIOLENCE!**

**VOTE AGAINST VIOLENT POLITICIANS”.**

- **Jingle** to be used was considered and agreed

- The **Drama** synopsis was considered and agreed

- Campaign implementation **logistics** were considered and agreed

## **Pre Campaign Survey Exercise**

Coordinators of the campaign in the six states joined the survey team put together by PSI. The rationale behind the campaign teams in the states joining the PSI survey team with was so they would have first hand knowledge of the various households involved. This activity as stated earlier ran from 19th January to 9th February, 2007.

## **Key Campaign Activities Implemented Towards Achieving Objectives**

The campaign, which was flagged off at the various locations on February 13 2007 was a homogenous one designed to make meaning in the face of the huge diversity that is Nigeria. What this means is that the same activities were carried out in all the campaign locations nationwide. The campaign ran through to February 27, 2007. The following key activities were implemented in all the locations with minor variations to take care of local nuances.

- As a prelude to the commencement of campaign activities, the campaigners in all the states and locations embarked on the sensitization of the people in the communities/locations selected for the campaigns. The objective of such sensitization was to prepare the target audience for the impending campaign and to gain their support and cooperation. The sensitization process also included making efforts to locate and interview the target individuals, distribution of IEC materials while taking photos and video recording of the interactions. This approach paid off handsomely in virtually all the locations as

it elicited positive responses from members of the communities and helped the campaigners achieve a high level of success. For example in Rivers State, the remote and difficult to access community provided the campaigners with free accommodation, food and security. They also went to the extent of sending word to some of their sons and daughters residing outside the communities to return home and be part of the campaigns. In some cases, such sensitization visits enabled the campaigners have a feel of the community and determine whether they needed to take any safety measures. This was the case in Delta State where the campaigners discovered that they needed to apply for police permit and to apply for the use of a primary school ground from the Local Education Authority.

- Posters and stickers were pasted and handbills distributed to the people in the various communities as part of the sensitization efforts. These helped to prepare the people for the impending campaign.
- Road shows were mounted on open-bodied vehicles with public address system and musical equipment. The campaigners played the pre-recorded jingle which was produced in English as well as in the common local languages spoken in the various locations (Hausa, Yoruba and Pidgin English). The campaigners also announced the reason for their visit to the locations and the dates on which each activity will be carried out including the venues.
- Actors and actresses who enacted the drama presentation were recruited from the locations. The drama presentation used for the campaign was one which depicted an election time scenario in which one of the politicians seeking elective office employed violence to achieve his objectives. The people within his constituency made it clear to him that they would not vote for him in view of his well-known violent antecedents. In the drama presentation, there were a few members of the community who were ready to lend themselves to be used by the politician to perpetrate violence. Notwithstanding the perpetration of violence and the maiming and killings resulting from it, the people still went ahead to vote and actually voted against the violent politician.
- Town Hall Meetings were held in the various locations during which issues concerning political violence as they affect the people and the nation were discussed in a free and uninhibited environment. Participants were encouraged to express their views on the subject matter. Views expressed by participants on political violence can be gleaned from the various reports turned in by the Coordinators of the states campaigns.
- The campaigners recruited youths from the communities to keep journals of violent incidents in both the treatment and control locations. Their role was primarily to keep a journal of any form of violence that may have occurred within their locations in the last six months and those that may occur before during and after the 2007 elections.

## **Project Documentation**

In realization of the fact that carrying out a campaign of this nature without keeping adequate records of the activities implemented will rob it of the very important issue of having hard evidence of implementation, all stakeholders in the campaigns agreed that a deliberate and well-coordinated documentation of all activities and processes should be carried out. The campaign's documentation strategy consisted of the following:

- Liberal photographs of all aspects of the activities undertaken during the campaigns
- Video coverage of campaign activities
- Narrative reports of the activities and events

## **Journals of Incidents of Violence**

Four (4) young persons were recruited to keep a journal of all local incidents of violence in both the treatment and control locations in each state. The period covered in the journal keeping went back six months before the commencement of the campaigns (June 2006) through to the end of the 2007 elections (April end). The idea behind this is to assess the level to which each area is prone to violence. It should be noted that the incidents of violence to be recorded are not restricted to only political violence but also those of a religious and social nature.

A review of national newspapers was carried out with a view to tracking all incidents of political violence all over Nigeria from June 2006 through to when the general elections would be conclude in April 2007. This was done by detailing a young person to go to the National Library in Abuja and go through all the national newspapers and keep a record of all incidents of political violence that occurred nationwide during the period under review.

## **Significant Achievements**

1. Target audience has become conscious of the fact that electoral violence should not be a hindrance to them in exercising their franchise. They are also willing to disseminate the message imparted to them during the campaigns to others who were not opportune to be part of the campaign.
2. Target audience has become aware of the negative effects of engaging in electoral violence.
3. Target audience is empowered and ready to say NO to electoral violence and to vote against violent politicians.

## **Challenges**

1. Budgetary restrictions was a determinant factor in the depth of the campaign. This led to a reduction in the actual number of days of the actual campaign outreach thereby reducing the period of exposure of the communities to the message. Another allied factor in this regard was the issue of fuel scarcity

that hit the country at this time which resulted in the astronomical rise in costs.

2. Logistical challenges resulting in changed arrangements in the field such as rescheduling of timelines
3. In some of the locations, such as Kaura (Kaduna) and Agana (Rivers) some members of the audience who were positively disposed to political violence tried to disrupt proceedings at the campaigns. But because they were outnumbered by those who were against political violence, the threat they posed was diffused.
4. In some cases, as in (Kaura) it was discovered that, one of the days scheduled for the campaign (Friday 16th February) was the official market day of the community. As a result of this, majority of the target audience were away to attend the market. Consequently, the campaigners had to come back for the campaign on another day. Also, it was difficult catching most of the people who were surveyed in their homes, they being working class and business people. In some cases some of them were no longer residing in the areas where they were surveyed as they had relocated to some other area or even another State (as in the case of Mai Angwan in Plateau State).
5. Non English literate members of the audience complained that they had difficulty understanding the messages and inscriptions on the IEC materials. They requested that in future, the messages should be written in their local languages.
6. Some of the locations such as Agana (Rivers) were difficult to access. Agana could only be accessed by River Transport - Ferries, Speed boats or local canoes. It was difficult identifying the leadership of a community like Agana that is almost perpetually embroiled in Chieftaincy disputes.
7. Participants especially campaigners felt unsafe and under high risk in many of the locations..
8. The wide diversity was a huge challenge in creating a homogenous message and media.

#### **The future...**

- In all the locations, the people expressed the desire to see the campaign carried out nation-wide. There is therefore the scope to scale up the campaign with an eye to the 2011 elections in Nigeria. If this is to be successful it should be started early as behaviour change is a long-term slow process..
- It is important that any future campaign must endeavour to involve partner Organizations from the very beginning. They are the ones who know the peculiarities of their locations, so their insights would help to put everything in proper and realistic perspectives.
- For future campaigns, a proper assessment of the locations should be carried out to determine areas where the campaign would have maximum effect.

- It is important that adequate funds should be made available for any future campaign. It is only by so doing that the campaign will be adequately effective.
- IEC materials should be designed using slang's and languages that the communities will identify with.
- Most of the people commended the implementers of the project, and called for more NGOs to do the same. For them, politicians who use violence usually send their children out of the country and offer some token amount of money to jobless and uneducated people to cause violence during elections. Many of them advocated the use of churches, mosques and other such faith-based organizations to propagate the anti-political violence message.

### **Conclusion**

In virtually all the locations where the campaigns were carried out, the audiences and even people from adjoining locations sought to know if the scope would be expanded welcomed the initiative, indicating that they abhorred the use of violence by politicians to achieve their objectives. Also, the people willingly volunteered themselves to be used for the campaigns.