

Increasing Awareness of the Services of Model Police Station

The J4A programme in collaboration with the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) organized Model Police Station (MPS) Open Days in 10 of its MPS locations across J4A supported states. The event, which was widely attended by community members, the media, members of the Voluntary Policing Sector (VPS) and other key stakeholders was aimed at showcasing improvements in the systems, processes and structures of J4A supported MPS. It also provided the platform for the general public to interact with the police and see firsthand changes that have been made by the NPF.

At each location the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) for each station welcomed guests and made brief presentations on the reform changes that had taken place in their stations while also thanking J4A for its support. Guests were divided into groups and taken on a tour around the police station. They were introduced to different offices (juvenile welfare centre, divisional intelligence unit (DIU), charge room etc) and were given the opportunity to ask questions about the police.

One major highlight was when the Vice Chancellor of the University of Science and Technology Kano State, Professor Musa Alhaji Shehu donated a computer and capacity building sessions to the DIU in his state to support and encourage their work.

In Enugu a guest from the Nigerian Prison Service, ACP Innocent Odezulu, stated that the reform changes taking place within the police is also having a positive impact on the Nigerian Prison Service.



Community members, VPS, and Village heads visiting a Model Police Station in Minna, Niger State

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Artisan Groups Lauds the Establishment of Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism

As part of J4A's goal to ensure access to justice for all especially poor and vulnerable members of the society, the programme established an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) facility for members of various artisan groups. Beneficiaries included hairdressers/cosmetologists, motor spare parts dealers, building materials dealers, automobile technicians, chambers of commerce, drivers, welders and fabricators, etc.

In order to achieve this the J4A programme organized mediation skills courses for artisans in Anambra, Enugu, FCT, Kano and Lagos States in April and May 2014 respectively. Five different artisan groups from each of the states were trained. Mentoring visits were also provided through ADR experts over a one year period.



Beneficiaries of the mediation course in Enugu

The leader of the Enugu State Branch of the Nigerian Automobile Technicians and Allied Workers Association, Comrade Sunday Nnaji, praised the initiative for equipping his members with mediation skills. He said, **"It has created a peaceful environment within our association. Before now, our association believed that taxing or placing fines on offenders and leaving the other party or person was the best option but they have now discovered that mediation is the best because it results in a win win for all and not the former all give and all take where the winner takes all"**. He stated that the mediation skills acquired from the J4A training have been used in settling disputes in Taraba and Ebonyi States and between members of the association. The association has also made a conscious effort to mentor other members who did not participate in the training.

Due to its success in Enugu State members of the association in other states have visited the team in order to understudy and replicate its ADR system. Plans are also underway at the national level to establish a Department of Mediation using the Enugu Team as the pioneer.

".... so in the past, we run to the police, engage touts to handle opponents, use some organizations/pressure groups to wage war and eventually populate and congest the prisons. It was a situation of survival of the fittest; but now, putting the J4A-acquired mediation skills to use, the situation has become "winning the war and winning the peace" as issues are amicably settled".

Mrs Amaka Ekwo
President of the Enugu Branch of Hair dressers/Cosmetologists

FCT Chief Judge Signs Family Court Rules

The Chief Judge of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Justice Ishaq Bello, has signed the family court rules, which will regulate the enforcement of the Child Rights Act within the FCT. This follows the drafting of the rules and advocacy for its implementation, which was undertaken by the Federal Justice Sector Reform Coordinating Committee (FJSRCC) with support from the J4A programme. The rules will be applied by family courts in Abuja during the hearing and determination of cases arising from the provisions of the Childs Rights Act.



Justice Ishaq Bello signing the family court rules for FCT

The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs has also appointed assessors who will sit alongside judicial officers in the family courts to provide advice on the best interests of the child in the determination of issues before the courts.

The FJSRCC with J4A support also organised sensitization workshops for stakeholders involved in the implementation of the law. These include judges, magistrates, lawyers, CSOs, Nigerian Prisons officials, staff of NAPTIP and other agencies, including the Social Services Secretariat of the FCT.

Mirabel Centre Marks Its Second Year Anniversary

The Mirabel Centre, a J4A supported initiative, celebrated its second year anniversary on the 21st of July 2015 with a conference on Rape and Sexual Violence. The event was aimed at creating awareness about rape and its negative impact on survivors. In attendance were over 200 representatives from justice institutions, the police, the health sector, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, social welfare organizations, civil society organizations, private organizations and the media.

The Governor of Lagos State, who was represented by the Solicitor General, Mr Lawal Pedro said, "We are proud to say that the Mirabel is part of the Lagos State Domestic Violence Response Team and its work is commendable".

The keynote speaker Prof Chidi Odinkalu, National Human Rights Commission, in his address stressed the fact that the society is raping their children and the men who rape these girls are not held accountable. He said, "We owe the Mirabel Center a lot of thanks"

On the lessons learned in the last two years, Managing Partner of the Mirabel Centre, Itoro Eze-Anaba, said for every one person that comes out to report a rape case there is a hundred that have refused to come out. She made it known that persons with disabilities are also vulnerable to rape and are not left out of the centre's intervention. She added that men need to do more in the fight against rape.

At the end of the event the all men panel made commitments that they ARE MAN ENOUGH TO SAY NO TO RAPE.

The centre has dealt with over 740 cases including rape, defilement and sexual assault since its inception in July 2013 and 76% of the cases involve children under the age of 17 years.



Guests at the "Say No to Rape" conference organized by the Mirabel Centre to mark its 2nd anniversary

Nigerian Prisons Service Holds Strategic Planning Retreat

The Nigeria Prisons Service held a strategic planning retreat in Abuja to develop an integrated plan for implementation from 2015 to 2020. The retreat, which was facilitated by the Prisoners' Rights and Welfare Action (PRAWA), was supported by the Justice for All Programme.



The aim of the retreat was to develop an effective, sustainable and comprehensive strategy aimed at promoting service delivery and enhancing the capacity and skills of staff of the Nigeria Prison Service.

This will help transform the organisation and help to achieve best practice on prisons and correctional services management. Some of the issues discussed at the meeting included human rights and treatment of prisoners; management of pre-trial detainees; statistics and data management; reformation, rehabilitation and resettlement of prisoners, as well as HIV/AIDS, communicable diseases and mental health issues.

The retreat was attended by the management staff of the prisons including the Comptroller-General of Prisons Dr. Peter Ekpendu.

Sexual Assault Referral Centre Support Secures Conviction

The Enugu Sexual Assault Referral Centre (also known as the Tamar Centre) has reported the first case of a conviction following a victim being assisted by the SARC.

An 18-year-old boy sexually assaulted a 27-year-old female victim at her home in Udi LGA, Enugu State in April 2015. The victim of the assault reported to the police who brought her to the SARC where she received medical treatment and counseling. A forensic medical report was passed to the police who arrested the boy and charged him to court. Following the submission of the medical report as evidence, the boy pleaded guilty to the offence and was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment.

Whilst this is the first recorded occasion of SARC medical evidence being used to secure a conviction, there are more than twenty additional cases that are currently going through the courts and more convictions are anticipated.

Nigeria Police Force Centralizes its Complaint Handling Process

As part of J4A's support to improving accountability within the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) the Inspector General of Police (IGP) has formerly agreed to the establishment of a centralized complaint processing unit. The unit will be responsible for compiling all complaints made against the police and resolving the complaints in a timely manner.

This new process will enable the NPF to respond effectively to complaints made against the organization. It will also assist to improve the clearing rate of complaints. While reacting to the new change within the police the IGP appreciated the partnership between the NPF and J4A.

The IGP has appointed four Assistant Superintendents of Police (ASP) who will manage the complaint unit. The ASPs who have been trained on how to process the complaints coming in from the public have also been provided with a computer and a printer to facilitate and fast track the complaints handling process.



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