

## Complaints Response Unit Delivering Results



The Nigeria Police Force with the support of the J4A programme launched its Complaints Response Unit (CRU) on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

The unit is utilizing a multi-platform complaint reporting mechanism to solicit complaints from citizens who are dissatisfied with services provided by the police. Citizens who have made complaints to the unit have given positive feedback on the performance of the staff. An example was the statement made by Catherine Kyenret after her experience with the unit, she said, “... ***I could not believe that the police could be so responsive. The manner my case was handled made me so proud of the NPF for the very first time***”.

The J4A programme is providing ongoing technical advice to the unit as well as the NPF.

### Features of the Complaints Response Unit

- The unit operates 24 hours a day
- All complaints recorded automatically generate a ticket number which enables easy reference for future purposes
- All State Intelligence Bureau (SIB) offices in the 37 States have nominated investigators with mobile phones to communicate directly with the CRU who investigate each complaint and report back for further action
- The information technology platform being used by the CRU is a multi-platform complaints reporting system
- Meetings have already begun between the CRU and the Inspector General of Police, Amnesty International and other oversight bodies on how its benefits can be maximized

Complaints Handled by the CRU in its First 30 Days of Operation (13 November to 13 December, 2015)	
Total No of Complaints Received	1267
No of Complaints Resolved/Closed	947
No of Complaints Pending	254
No of Unrelated Complaints	66

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## Sharia Court of Appeal Jigawa State Holds First Town Hall Meeting for Court Users

The Sharia Court of Appeal, Jigawa State with the support of the J4A programme held its first court users' forum. The forum brought together participants from the police, Ministry of Justice, CSOs, Media, the NSCDC including women and men who have used the court in the past. Others in attendance were the Miyetti Allah Cattle Rearers Association, vigilante groups and the hisbah association.



The town hall meeting provided the platform for users to interact with court judges, staff and other government officials who might normally be unavailable to attend to users.

At the event there were discussions on how the court can meet the expectations of users and the limitations they experience.

Participants praised the initiative and revealed that the interactions between court officials and users have helped to improve their understanding of the

justice system. Some of the issues raised include the problem of touting, locally known as dila da laya, the issue of bail charges, the need for raising awareness on the different types of complaints mechanisms available to users and the need to employ women as information desk officers.

At the end of the engagement, users expressed confidence that such forums will help to foster positive collaboration within the justice institutions in the state and help to improve user confidence in the Sharia courts.

## Improving Awareness on the New Administration of Criminal Justice Act for ACA Investigators and Prosecutors

As a result of the passage of the Administration of Criminal Justice (ACJ) Act 2015, the J4A programme provided support for the training of investigators and prosecutors from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) and the Department of Public Prosecution F (DPPF). The training was aimed at improving awareness and strengthening the capacity of both old and new prosecutors and investigators on using the new provisions of the ACJ Act.

The new ACJ Act now prohibits non-lawyers from prosecuting cases and has recalled cases handled by those who have no criminal law or prosecution experience. This has led to an increase in the number of new prosecutors being hired by the Federal Ministry of Justice (FMOJ) to deal with the return of thousands of prosecution files. According to the DPP, as of 4th December 2015, there were 155 prosecutors in the Department of Public Prosecutions compared to about 60 in 2013.

The post training observation revealed that the participants are now equipped with the skills and knowledge to analyse and prosecute criminal cases effectively.

In order to ensure sustainability of the ACJ Act awareness training, four "in-house" EFCC trainers jointly facilitated the workshop with assistance from the J4A programme.

***A total of 80 investigators and prosecutors have benefited from the training so far***

## Citizens Mediation Centre Organises End of Year Award for Outstanding Staff Members



The Citizens Mediation Centre Lagos State organized an end of year award programme to recognise outstanding staff contributions and to motivate performance. In attendance was the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Justice, Mrs Odulami who presented the awards to the deserving staff.

At the event, staff were encouraged to continue providing outstanding services to clients in order to ensure access to justice for citizens who utilize the centres. The J4A programme also congratulated the awardees and staff members of the CMC for their outstanding performance in 2015, which is helping to increase the utilization of the centre.

The support from the programme to the CMCs in Lagos State has contributed to increasing the number of people using the centres as well as speeding up the rate of settlement for all disputes.

## Local Government Boss Commends J4A's Crime Fighting Initiatives

The replication of the J4A supported Model Police Station initiative in Amuwo Odofin community in Lagos State is contributing to reducing crime and improving safety for its residents. This was made known by the executive secretary of the Local Government Area (LGA), Mrs. Modupe Ajibola-Ojodu at the inaugural Community Safety Partnership meeting held in Festac.

She revealed that the introduction of community policing in the area by the new Divisional Police Officer (DPO) Monday Agbonika with the support of the J4A programme is helping to identify local solutions for solving local problems. She praised the DPO and the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Chris Owolabi for introducing the innovative policing practice in Festac. She said, ***“Since the arrival of both officers in the LGA, the once incessant vandalism of vehicles in the local government has been abated. The DPO has also been able to carry residents along in his quest for effective crime prevention and control”***.



Divisional Police Officer Monday Agbonika

DPO Monday Agbonika, is an example of many Nigeria Police Officers that have benefited from J4A training and have continued to use the skills and knowledge acquired to demonstrate professionalism, dedication and outstanding performance in their daily duties.

## Increasing Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act



One of the main challenges affecting the fight against corruption in Nigeria is the lack of access to information. As a result of this, the J4A programme in collaboration with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Unit of the Federal Ministry of Justice and the FOI Coalition Nigeria (FOICN) is helping to increase the awareness of selected information desk officers in 20 MDAs in Abuja, legal practitioners, media and CSOs.

The capacity building workshop was used as a platform to expand the knowledge of participants on the provisions of the Act and how to improve compliance and use. There were also discussions about the challenges of its implementation and use.

At the end of the event in each zonal training session, a series of communiqués were released in order to convey recommendations on how the FOI ACT can be successfully implemented and used. Some communiqués were sent to MDAs demanding improvement in their compliance to the FOI ACT while others requested the Attorney General of the Federation should issue an instruction demanding strict compliance with the FOI Act by MDAs.

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