

ABOUT V2P

Voice to the People (V2P) is a UK aid funded project designed to promote accountability and inclusive governance by empowering marginalised groups to participate in governance processes and demand for their rights. Beginning as a pilot in May 2013, V2P was first implemented in 36 communities across 12 LGAs in Anambra State, but with an extension has expanded into 159 communities across 36 LGAs in 6 states; all 5 States in the Southeast region and Kaduna State in Northern Nigeria.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017



Community Charter of Demand adopted by the Kaduna State Government as a tool to influence planning and budgeting. 255 wards have submitted their CCDs to the Commissioner of Budget and Planning



More inclusive and participatory VEC process in 427 communities in Enugu state, ensuring a more people-centered document to drive budgeting and government spending for development.



With V2P's efforts, the Anambra State Ministry of Budget and Planning has directed that all MDAs properly code their budgets. V2P has supported the Ministries of Health and Agriculture to do this, and this will ensure effective tracking of budget performance

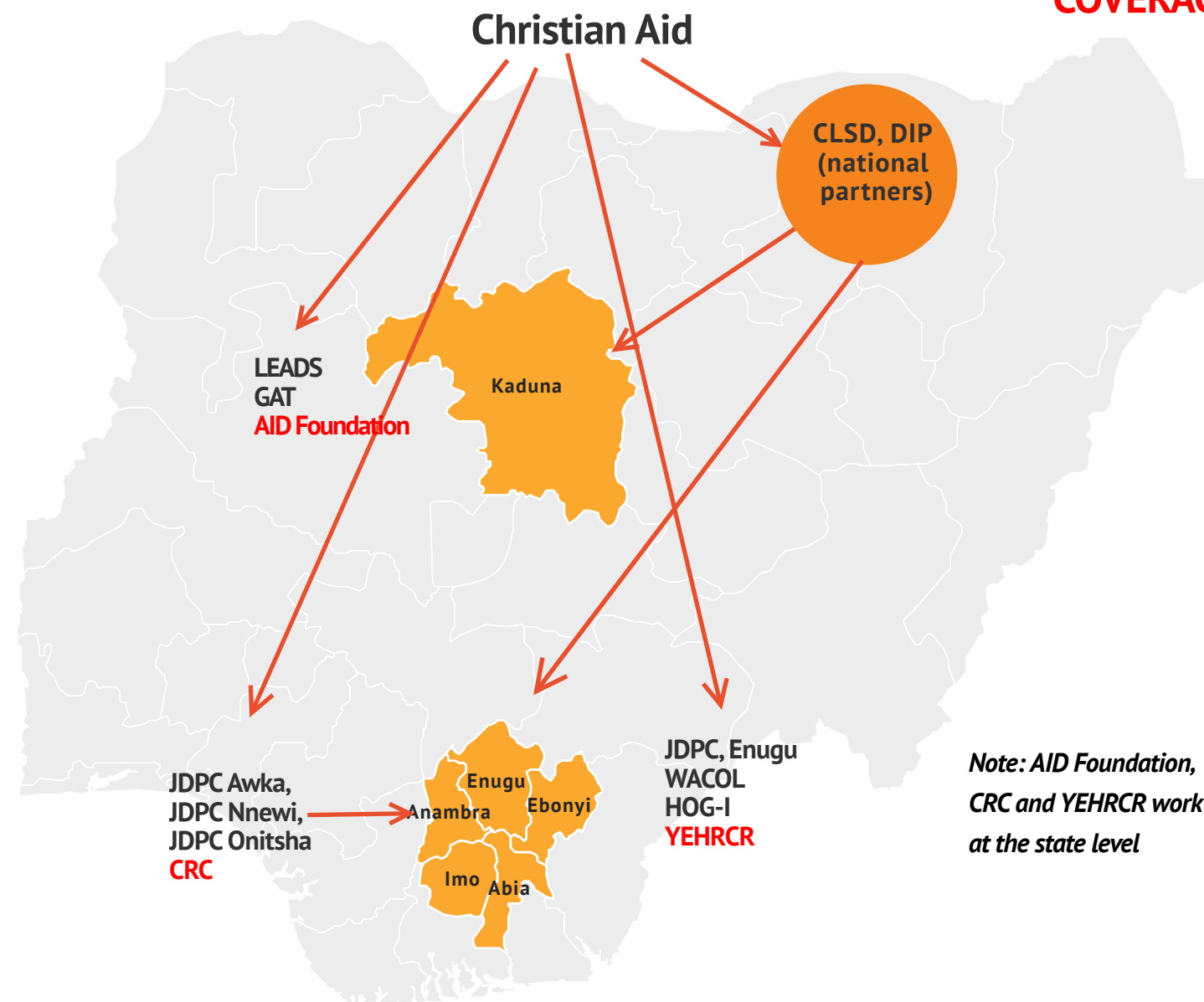


During the year under review, more than 12 women have been inaugurated into traditional ruling councils across Enugu and Kaduna States

20%–25%

In November 2017, all MDAs in Anambra were instructed to set aside at least 20 to 25% of the budget for issues listed in the Community Charters of Demand; stated specifically as contained in the Charter of Demands.

COVERAGE



Working in 159 communities across 36 Local Government Areas (LGA) in 6 states, V2P directly reached 16,345 community members with awareness creation, capacity building and confidence to mobilise and achieve continuous and sustainable community-driven development across all the areas of intervention.

Of the 16,345 people directly reached with increased capacity, 49% are vulnerable women and young girls living in poor and marginalised communities.

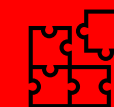
Another estimated 3 million people were reached via radio and social media platforms.

KEY CHANGES

88

Election observers

88 Community members were trained and deployed as election observers in the Anambra state Gubernatorial Elections and the LGA elections in Enugu state.



State Structure

V2P facilitated the establishment of the Ebonyi State Association of Town Union Presidents to enable more effective engagement at the State level



51 boreholes renovated

Due to the numerous community-led advocacies and monitoring activities, 51 non-functional community water bore holes have been renovated by the State Water Management Board.



15 general hospitals upgraded; 19 equipped

Following several V2P supported community-led engagements with the State Ministry of Health and the Commissioner for Health, against the non-implementation of the General Hospital Line of the Anambra State budget, 15 General Hospitals are currently being upgraded, while 19 others have benefited from the on-going hospital equipment distribution to improve the quality of service delivery.



Pioneer Secondary School built

First Secondary School in Echarra community, Ebonyi State built and fully functional as a result of community-driven engagements.



Election observers

The electrification of Downquarters and Kinkinau Communities has begun as a result of the communities' engagement with their representative using their charter of demand



Sustained interaction with service providers

Using the Whatsapp platform, V2P has formed a critical mass of citizens who are engaging with their electricity provider in Anambra State, holding discussions and holding them to account for better service provision.

789

Inclusion

Anambra State has a total of 789 female Community Based Monitors actively participating in driving community development

Voice to the People seeks to achieve its goal through four intervention areas: Building Active Citizens, Enhancing Voice and Representation of Women and Marginalised Groups, Institutionalising Citizen-State Interactions and Learning:

Building active citizens

The increased capacity, knowledge and confidence of citizens, including marginalised groups to drive meaningful social development within their communities has stemmed from V2P's approach to promoting accountability and improved service delivery in our areas of intervention. Using the lessons gained, community groups across all intervention areas have led several development advocacies, leading to varying levels of positive results across our project areas. Such results include the construction of boreholes in communities, renovation of hospital wards and supply of equipment as a result of strategic engagements to the relevant Ministries and State leaders. In building active citizens at all levels, V2P has also facilitated the formation of the Ebonyi State Association of Town Union Presidents (EBSATUP), providing training on their roles as Town Union Presidents in promoting good governance, given the credence of their positions. The V2P approach has not only built active citizens, but has supported the State to create an enabling environment for true citizenship in the form of participation in government planning around community development. This was demonstrated through the support a V2P-led coalition of CSOs in Enugu State provided to the State government to ensure that its Visit Every Community (VEC) [1] process was more inclusive and participatory of all groups within the community. In Anambra State, to ensure an easier and more effective process for the collection of community-identified needs through the Community Charter of Demands (CCD), V2P, working with COMEN and the TUs in the State developed and submitted a unified CCD template to the CCD desk office at the State Ministry of Economic and Budget Planning.

The drive to sustain the gains of active citizenship has led to innovative approaches by communities, facilitated by V2P partners. In Anambra State where the project has come to an end, citizens continue to engage with key officials of the Enugu Electricity Distribution Company (EEDC)[2] concerning issues of electricity provision and billing, a major issue for most Anambra residents. This continued interaction has spread beyond V2P's direct intervention areas as it takes place on a Whatsapp platform managed by a V2P partner and COMEN members.

[1] VEC is a participatory budgeting initiative of the Enugu State government.

[2] The Enugu Electricity Distribution Company (EEDC) is the Electricity Distribution Company (DISCO) responsible for delivering electricity services in the south east following the privatization of the electricity sector in Nigeria since 2015

With better understanding of their rights, communities have used their knowledge of power analysis to effectively engage duty bearers on their community development needs

Enhancing Voice and Representation of Women and Marginalised groups

Gender balanced approaches to decision making, not only in representation in numbers, but in active participation where the voice of both men, women, those with disabilities and the socially excluded are recognised is becoming one of the successes of V2P across its intervention areas. With as many as 789 women working as CBMs in Anambra State alone, female CBMs across all the 6 States of intervention are setting the agenda for women in leadership and participation in development. This has been demonstrated in Ankung, Juji and Kinkinau communities (across 3 LGAs) in Kaduna State where women are actively taking up advocacy issues as identified in their GEADOR circles. Such efforts and confidence gained from these activities have led to the inclusion of more women in traditional ruling councils as they have taken up advocacy issues to traditional rulers – with knowledge gained from power analysis – who have identified the value that women once regarded as second class citizens can bring to community development.

The focus on women and girls has also had an effect on livelihoods as through their GEADOR circle, the women in Mifi community, Kaura LGA of Kaduna State have empowered themselves with skills for local production of soap, balm, air freshener amongst others, and have used this skill to make more money for their households through the cooperative formed. In Ugwan Barau, women are now attending adult literacy classes, improving their reading and writing skills.

Case Study

The CBMs of Echara community in Ebonyi state demonstrated their power analysis skills in an engagement with an honourable member of the state house of Assembly. Following the delay in securing approval for the inspection of the empty classroom blocks they have proposed to be used to start-up the Echarra community secondary they conducted a power analysis and identified him as one who had the influence to address this challenge and engaged him. Following this engagement, the man has not only helped in getting the approval but has also started a 2 storey building to be used as a permanent site for the secondary school. The project has been completed and as reported earlier, the school started operations in September 2017.



It was the first time that women would come to me to discuss issues about the community, and I was surprised at their confidence. I also appreciated their contributions, and saw the need to include them in the traditional ruling council

HRH. Ishaku Barnabas, Village head, Ankung Community, Jaba LGA, Kaduna



Presentation of the Community Development Charter's report to @Dattijo covering 255 electoral wards of the State. The inputs will be used in the Local Government Development Plans been drafted at the moment.

@KDMobp (Kaduna State Ministry of Budget and Planning twitter handle)

Institutionalising Citizen-State Interactions

Efforts of V2P to address State capability gaps have largely contributed to improved interaction between the people and their leaders across all the intervention areas. For instance, the identification of budget coding as a key issue in tracking budget performance in Anambra State, and the attendant engagement with the government to resolve this will ensure that in subsequent years, both citizens and the State are properly able to track budget implementation and address gaps.

A key success in Anambra and Kaduna State is the institutionalisation of the CCD by both governments; the Anambra State government in November 2017 directed that all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) allocate between 20 – 25% of their budget to meeting demands from the CCDs, while the Kaduna State government received the compiled CCD from all 255 wards in the State with the commitment that it will influence planning.

Through radio programmes that air across the Southeast as well as those in Kaduna State – in the appropriate languages -, a low cost platform for dialogue has been created between citizens and the State as these issue based programmes give voice to citizens to engage on policy issues in a safe environment, as well as provide the opportunity to directly engage with the relevant authorities. This rings true with social media engagements with government officials and bodies that are active on social media platforms. Both platforms provide the opportunity for a large number of people who are not directly reached by V2P's activities.

Partnerships & Collaborations

V2P thrives on partnership and collaboration with local partners and other development actors to maximise available opportunities for enhancing people-centered governance. Working with PERL, her sister programme, V2P has supported activities like the South East Legislative Forum, the South East Grand Lesson sharing summit, the Kaduna-Anambra lesson sharing visits among others to facilitate activities that enhances the capacity of citizens to engage and the willingness and ability of the state to respond to the demands of these engagements. The project also enhanced its visibility and influence through media partnerships that have brought V2P into closer ties with key media outfits in Nigeria, including The Guardian, THIS DAY Newspaper among others.

Recommendations

Effective governance that attends to the needs of ordinary citizens for efficient service delivery can only occur when local governance is functional. The experience from V2P has shown that while there are constitutional and political issues that need to be addressed for effective local governance, strategies that help to galvanise citizens' engagement and identify blockages across vertical levels of governance can ensure sustainable changes. The recommendation is therefore that DFID supports a holistic intervention that brings about local governance reform from a citizens' perspective by scaling up learning from V2P and other similar local governance programmes.

See full report for more details