

## **ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION**

The National Human Rights Commission was established to create an environment for the extra-judicial recognition, promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights. It also provides avenues for public enlightenment and dialogue in order to raise awareness on human rights issues. To this end, the Commission established a Human Rights Education unit to carry out public enlightenment, target group trainings and other human rights education activities.

In furtherance of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, the Commission has taken the following steps:

- a. Interface with various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on the National Action Plan for promotion and protection of human rights in Nigeria (NAP) :

NAP is the response of the Government of Nigeria to the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna Austria in 1993. This was signed by the Federal Executive Council in 2006 and deposited in Geneva in 2009 Nigeria's commitment in the promotion and protection of human rights. The interface with MDAs and CSOs is aimed at sensitizing them on these commitments and their roles in implementing NAP. Between 2009 and 2011, the Commission has carried out several awareness raising programmes targeted at civil servants, law enforcement agents, and civil society groups. Presently there is plan to engage further with these groups to improve their knowledge of human rights as well as educate them on their roles to promote rights by adopting a human rights approach in their various assignments.

- b. Training workshops for the Police on Human Rights aimed at improving their level of compliance with human rights standards in the course of policing:

The Commission has carried out several of these trainings over the years. Some of the trainings were aimed at Human Rights Desk Officers in police and prison services. We have also, in collaboration with Women Aid Collective, an NGO based in Enugu and Abuja, developed a training manual for law enforcement agents on the rights of women and children.

The Commission has also worked on the integration of human rights into the training curriculum of law enforcement agents. This project was however stalled due to various reasons. There is plan to revive it and work towards developing human rights content

for the training curriculum of the police colleges and training schools of other law enforcement agencies.

- c. Engagement with pilot tertiary institutions on Establishment of Human Rights Club and Human Rights Training for lecturers and students:  
Attempts were made to establish human rights clubs in schools between 1999 and 2003. This was successful in some private schools in Abuja as well as some tertiary institutions across the country. Presently, there is plan to establish and monitor human rights clubs in secondary and tertiary schools nationwide, especially the government schools. The Commission has made contact with Ministries of Education in Niger and Nassarawa States and also the Federal Capital Territory for this purpose.
- d. Engagement with Ministry of Education on Integration of Human Rights into School Curriculum in pilot states to be thereafter replicated nationwide:  
Discussion on this has started with Ministries of Education in Nassarawa and Niger States. We have also established contact with Federal Ministry of Education and the National Education Research Development Council (NERDC) to discuss the measures that need to be put in place to integrate human rights into the school curriculum.
- e. Partnership with National Youth Service Corps (NYSC):  
The Commission plans to partner with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Headquarters to establish Human Rights Club in NYSC Orientation Camps in pilot states, to be subsequently replicated nationwide. Youth corpers will serve as change agents to advance Human Rights Education and increase awareness in the communities where they serve.

In addition to these activities, the Commission has approved the following activities to be implemented by the Human Rights Education Unit for 2012;

**Target:**

1. Staff of National Human Rights Commission
2. The general public
3. Target groups – Law Enforcement Agents, Military, civil servants, students and teachers at all levels, Legislators, Youth Corpers, Organised Private Sector, Oil and Extractive industries, Health care workers, markets and motor parks, Development Partners, etc.

## Strategy:

### A. Staff of National Human Rights Commission

- i. Human rights issues will be identified every month or every fortnight. IEC and BCC material will be developed in-house on identified issues for circulation amongst staff of the Commission at the head office and state/zonal offices. Fact sheets on the selected theme will be accessed online and also made available to staff. **A dedicated notice-board or stand**, located at a strategic place, will be used for this purpose. This could also serve as a source of information and education for visitors to the Commission.
- ii. Monthly in-house discussion groups will be organized across departments and zones. Resource persons will be identified on different issues and could include Council members, Heads of Department/Units, Programme Officers, or external partners.
- iii. International human rights observances will be marked using low-key events or full-blown activities depending on available resources. These include Human Rights Day, Women's Day, Day of the African Child, Day of Persons living with Disabilities, International Days Against Torture, etc. **T-shirts** will be printed for staff to wear on such days to raise awareness on the theme.

In-house lectures may be held, depending on the issue being commemorated. Information will be disseminated among staff on the issues and the theme for the year.

### B. The General Public

- i. Poster campaign- This will be done twice a year. Posters will be developed on different themes and disseminated effectively.
- ii. Use of Commission's website – Information will be posted and updated regularly on issues identified monthly as referred to above. The discussion link on the website will also be used to raise awareness on such issues.
- iii. Road Walk and other outreach activities – This will be organized periodically. The Commission's Youth Corpers will be actively engaged for outreach activities. Each batch will be encouraged to identify an area of focus and develop activities as part of their service programme, irrespective of their departments/units. This activity also could be used to commemorate human rights observances.
- iv. Public lectures during Council meetings – This will be organized in collaboration with Public Affairs and Communications Department. The focus will depend on the human rights issues in the state/zone hosting the Governing Council

statutory meetings, or depend on the identified issue of the month. The general public will be mobilized to attend this event while Council members or external partners will act as Resource Persons/Facilitators for the event. Flyers and other IEC material will be developed and disseminated during the event while adequate media coverage will be organized.

- v. Awareness creation/training for traditional and religious leaders, and community gatekeepers – These persons will be sensitized on human rights issues and will act as change agents within their constituencies.
- vi. Radio/TV jingle – To be done in collaboration with the Public Affairs and Communications Department.
- vii. Human Rights Bus-Stops – To be built in strategic locations across the nation. This will serve the dual purpose of bus-stop and a source of enlightenment on human rights.
- viii. Participation in radio and television programmes on different thematic areas – This can be arranged in collaboration with Public Affairs and Communication Department. They should be done at regular intervals and also a part of commemoration of international human rights observance.

Out of these proposed activities, action has started on the establishment of human rights clubs in schools in the Federal Capital Territory and pilot states of the country. Technical Committees have been set up, made up of officers from the Federal Ministry of Education, Secondary Education Board, Universal Basic Education Commission and National Planning Commission. It is hoped that this Committee will work with other relevant stakeholders in the development of curriculum for primary and secondary schools. In addition, advocacy visits have been undertaken to certain states in the zones to the State Commissioners for Education on the issue.

Monthly lecture series on topical issues are also being organized. Relevant stakeholders outside the Commission as well as staff of the Commission benefit from these lectures. So far topics covered include Human Rights and National Security, Business and Human Rights, and Access to Food as a Fundamental Human Right. These forums serve as avenues of enlightenment and education as well as advocacy.

We look forward to consolidating on these initiatives in 2012 and beyond.

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