



**Corporate Social Responsibility Awareness and Advancement Initiative (aka CSR-in-Action)**

Communication on Progress: October 2017 – December 2019

24 April, 2020

His Excellency  
António Guterres  
Secretary-General  
United Nations

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

**Re: Communication on Engagement**

Corporate Social Responsibility Awareness and Advancement Initiative (more popularly known as CSR-in-Action Advocacy) signed on to the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) in 2010 and since then, we have utilised our expertise in advocacy to create awareness for the United Nations in general and UNGC Principles in particular, through our Chief Executive's election to the Board of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) in Amsterdam, and other bespoke programmes, such as training.

We have close and impactful engagements with businesses through a number of key initiatives not limited to our weekly sustainability-focused newsletter, our web portal through which we disseminate the key messages of sustainable development and collective action, [the SITEI Initiative](#), our [Corporate Sustainable Investor Report \(CSIR\)](#) and [The Good Citizen programme](#); an initiative through which companies can showcase exemplary corporate citizenship, and which includes a radio show which is the number one show on a prominent family radio station. As a member of the UNGC Nigerian local network, we have a full understanding of the vision and mission of the UNGC and work assiduously with the network to effect positive change in business practice in the nation.

We use this medium to restate our commitment to the UNGC and that we would continue to adhere to its Principles through advocacy and awareness generation, and corporate sustainability advancement through continued research and capacity building initiatives to ensure that this new phase of global sustainable development is actively pursued not only by organisations within our constituency but also members of the public.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bekeme'.

**Bekeme Masade-Olowola**  
Chief Executive



## **1 Background of CSR-in-Action**

Corporate Social Responsibility Awareness and Advancement Initiative, also known as CSR-in-Action Advocacy, was established in 2010. It is the foremost company in Nigeria driving sustainability strategy development and sustainability communications. CSR-in-Action Advocacy aims to influence decisions that will advance sustainability and collective social consciousness in Nigeria, hinged on the recommendations of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and our work spans institutions in both the private and public spheres. Our focus areas include good governance, collective action, corporate sustainability and citizenship; and we work more closely with businesses and governments in oil and gas, mining, telecommunications and financial services.

CSR-in-Action Advocacy aims to drive collective social action in Africa towards creating sustainable shared value. These are pursued using our flagship programs – Sustainability in the Extractive Industries (SITEI) Initiative, The Good Citizen Initiative, and the Corporate Sustainable Investor Report (CSIR). We currently operate across Nigeria and we look towards expanding our activities across other parts of the African region in the next 10 years. Our brand is highly reputable in the corporate and public sector arena and we leverage this strong reputation to advance sustainability and positive social consciousness in Nigeria and Africa at large.

CSR-in-Action has special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), is the first private sector member of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Nigeria, is a Global Reporting Initiative Certified Training Partner and is the first wholly Nigerian company to become an Assurance Partner of the Accountability AA1000AS.

## **2 Our Partner Organisations**

### **2.1 College of Sustainable Citizenship (CSC)**

To further the achievement of our mission, the College of Sustainable Citizenship was established in 2015 to further the training drive and achievement of the CSR-in-Action Group's mission through capacity building activities. The College of Sustainable Citizenship's mission is to provide world-class executive education to African professionals in the area of sustainable governance; a veritable catalyst for national development.

We are the premier organisers in West Africa, of the internationally certified training from the world renowned Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), amongst other workshops aimed at empowering diverse sectors. In 2017, we gained accreditation from the Centre for Management Development (CMD), the apex accreditation body in Nigeria. We followed through on our annual partnership with Access Bank to train a minimum of 100 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) per year.

We offer training services and in-house customised trainings to organisations. Our bespoke training programmes are tailored to meet identified needs and are appropriate to issues faced by organisations.



Our courses are delivered by certified professionals and internationally recognised bodies, all of whom are experts in their fields.

Other training initiatives delivered by CSR-in-Action to build the capacity of our clients to further their adherence to sustainability principles consist of a wide variety of CSR-focused courses such as Making CSR Work, Stakeholder Engagement, Security and Social Responsibility and Effective Community Engagement.

### **2.1.1 Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and Sustainability Reporting**

CSR-in-Action is a Gold Member of GRI's global community, as well as the only certified training partner in Nigeria dedicated to empowering decision-makers everywhere to take action towards a more sustainable economy and world. We continue to raise awareness for key sustainability issues while also developing the capacity of companies to report on their advancements and achievements in their sustainability drive.

As a GRI Certified Training Partner, we train our clients on the GRI Standards framework which offers an integrated approach to reporting on other sustainability reporting frameworks, including the UNGC Communication on Engagement. Over the reporting period, we trained a large number of persons from different sectors, including oil and gas, media, manufacturing and other consulting firms.

**OUTCOME:** In the reporting period, having trained over 100 professionals in companies such as Dangote Cement, International Breweries Plc, Flour Mills, Zenith Bank, Total E&P, Heritage Bank, amongst others, our consulting arm, CSR-in-Action Consulting, wrote the sustainability reports of companies such as the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE), Axxela Limited and Diageo (Guinness Nigeria) and provided Assurance for Access Bank.

In October 2018, our Chief Executive, Bekeme Masade-Olowola, was appointed as a Board Member of the Global Reporting Initiative in Amsterdam. In her role as Board Member, she is committed to the growth and development of sustainability in Nigeria and worldwide.

### **2.2 CSR-in-Action Consulting**

CSR-in-Action Consulting is an African focused consultancy delivering long-term value to corporate entities through pioneering bespoke sustainability strategies, networking, performance management, ethics infusion and corporate character development.

CSR-in-Action Consulting assists organisations to clearly define their areas of focus, map out measurable metrics prior to implementation, provide them with clear data collation processes, and then hand-hold them through the culminating documentation, analysis and reporting process; providing individualised services that result in the adoption of world class standards by each business engaged.



We have worked extensively in sustainability strategy development and implementation, sustainability reporting, social impact assessments, needs assessments, third party assurance services, host community interventions and non-financial audit with multinational and local businesses to deliver on their sustainability mandates. In the period under review, we provided technical support to Access Bank, Diageo, Nigeria Stock Exchange, Axxela, Dangote Cement, Total E&P, British American Tobacco Nigeria (BATN) and Eroton E&P, among others.

### 3 Aligning Our Impact with the UNGC Principles

#### 3.1 Human Rights

##### 3.1.1 The Community Engagement Standards

Resolutions to the causes of conflict and security breaches in the extractive sector and the effects on our collective and individual lives were the talking points at our 2018 Sustainability in the Extractive Industries (SITEI) Conference. To solve the problems identified, Facility for Oil Sector Transformation (FOSTER II) engaged CSR-in-Action to research on the causes of and solutions to conflict in host communities with oil and gas resources, with the ultimate aim of developing a community engagement framework, which can be a tool for reducing **loss from refinery operations and oil theft**.

We started off with us conducting desktop research titled a [Comparative Analysis of Methods Adopted to Address Conflict Issues in Other Countries Where Refineries are Domiciled Within Indigenous Communities](#), which had the objective of logically exploring the methods adopted to address conflict issues amongst all stakeholders in the oil and gas sector and looked at two developing and two developed countries – Ghana and Peru and Russia and Canada. Having given the Nigerian approach a thorough look over, we ended up with recommendations for best practice in conflict prevention and management strategies for Nigeria.

Next, we mapped the key stakeholders to be had in the nine oil and gas producing states – Akwa Ibom, Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa, Ondo, Lagos, Edo, Imo, Abia – and developed a database of contacts, and then scheduled meetings with them.

Then, we commenced engagement amongst the stakeholders from the nine oil-producing states. During these consultations, the data collection team met and interacted with 212 people from different stakeholder groups including government, civil society, oil company operators, traditional leaders and community members. These 212 respondents included men, women and youth of both genders.

First, the team administered survey questionnaires to them, then we had conversations around the issues. Of course, there was desk-top review of materials with a view to enriching the framework and learning lessons from other stakeholder engagement tools that are in the public domain.

The surveys and interactions were analysed and the issues that were raised informed the development of this framework. Finally, the themes and scope of the framework were drawn from the survey and key



informant interviews. Validation meetings with community leaders from all nine oil-producing states, government representatives from all the states and relevant agencies in Abuja and across the country, and oil and gas companies, were held on 9, 11 and 16 October, 2018, respectively. The culmination of this research was the the nation's premiere [Community Engagement Standards \(CES\)](#).

We officially launched the [CES](#) during the SITEI 2019 Conference. ***The CES is a tool of 44 well-researched indicators, via which businesses, communities and government can engage equitably, particularly through inclusive engagement by licensed owners of mines and oil-producing facilities, with their host communities.*** We are currently working on the dissemination of awareness around the Standards to key stakeholders, including mineral-rich communities and civil society organisations, to facilitate the adoption and operationalisation of the CES for the benefit and empowerment of the communities, who have endorsed it, along with some government agencies.

Through the CES, we are addressing the issue of accountability from all parties for the benefit of community persons. Our CES work covers equitable community development, women representation, infrastructure development, through training, benefit-sharing including socio-economic opportunities with extractive businesses and proper environmental management through advocacy or provision of guidance tool.

In April 2019, the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources (MPR) adopted the CES with its agencies, including the Department for Petroleum Resources (DPR), Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and the Federal Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA), and a committee was proposed to be overseen by the Office of the Vice President.

### **3.1.2 The Community and Human Rights (CAHR) Awards**

In November 2019, in partnership with Global Rights and Growing Businesses Foundation, we hosted the inaugural Community and Human Rights (CAHR) Awards – pronounced “Car Awards” – which seeks to provide a platform for encouraging businesses to take extraneous steps to correct the anomalies of engagement within communities, primarily extractive communities, by acknowledging and appreciating best performing companies.

We gave out 7 awards – named by heroes past who dedicated their lives towards the development and growth of the nation – in the following categories:

***The MKO Abiola Community Engagement Award:*** *The company with the most amenable relationship with its community and which has a clear process for inclusive engagement and grievance management.*

***The Hajiya Gambo Sawaba Community Impact Award:*** *The company with the most visible impact of community development, including infrastructure, training, growth of women entrepreneurs, youth graduates and other positive impacts.*

***The Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti Human Rights Award:*** *This award funded by Global Rights with support from the Open Society Foundation (OSF) was given to the company and individual which had shown the*



most compliance to mainstreaming human rights norms in its operations and with the most significant impact on safeguarding livelihoods.

**The Apostle Hayford Alile Humanitarian Award:** This award was given to an individual who had contributed significantly to alleviating human suffering and improving the quality of life of individuals both in Nigeria and abroad.

The winner would have demonstrated compelling leadership, a collaborative working style, a profound sense of social responsibility and outstanding humanitarian volunteer accomplishments that bring honour to Africa.

**The Josephine Nkemdilim-Bertram Ekenanye Equal Rights Award:** This award was given to an individual who had exhibited strong commitment to gender equality.

**The Sir Ahmadu Bello Award for Leadership:** The award was given to an individual – male or female - who has exhibited exemplary leadership that has a significant and positive impact on advancing and scaling responsible behavior.

We did not find a business which matched the criteria for the Ken Saro-Wiwa Environmental Award, so we did not give that category out. However, we did give out two human rights awards – one to an individual and one to a company. All awards were presented by the direct descendants of the national heroes as a way of recognising their efforts towards national development.

### 3.1.3 CSR-in-Action and Access Bank C-PET Workshops

In 2015, Access Bank and CSR-in-Action had entered an agreement to develop capacity for CSOs in Nigeria. CSOs have been widely recognised as the essential 'third' sector due to the positive influence their operations have on the state and the market. They are, therefore, seen as an increasingly important agent for promoting good governance, transparency, effectiveness, openness, responsiveness and accountability.

In the reporting period, we held four workshops where we trained 194 CSO representatives on **Collaboration: Organising a Successful Community Outreach** – facilitated by Olusesan Samuel Kayode, Head of Advocacy and Training Freedom Foundation and Michael Sunbola, Founder/President, Lagos Food Bank Initiative; **Digital Media: Organising a Successful Digital Fundraising and Social Media** – facilitated by Adejuwon Saheed, COO, BuzzDigital; **Governance and Decision-Making** – facilitated by Soji Apampa, Founder/Consultant Executive Director, Convention on Business Integrity and Oluseyi Oyebisi, Executive Director, Nigeria Networks of NGOs; and **Mobilising Women for Social Change** – facilitated by Dr Josephine Odumakin, President, Women Arise Nigeria.

#### Testimonials

- “I can’t over emphasise the impact of this training. I have gained knowledge from different areas of governance and decision-making.” – **Aderonke Adeoye, HACEY Health Initiative**



- “I was quite impressed with the investment your Bank is making in CSR through training the NGOs, it’s quite commendable. Thanks for taking care of us (refreshment). MORE SUCCESS.” – **Mbanisi Sophy Nwanneka, Healing Heart Foundation**
- “Strategic planning is essential for CSOs and it is beneficial and impacting for you to organise such training for us.” - **Obasanjo Fajemirokun, Brace-Up the Young**
- “I am impressed with the workshop curriculum. Corporate governance remains a critical part of NGO development and I am excited with the professionals that CSR-in-Action has brought to take the workshop.” – **Jeph Ighodaro, Purple Admiral Foundation for Community Development**
- “The training was very educative. You are really doing a good work imparting knowledge to people to help them move their organisation higher.” – **Gbateman Susan Awase, Mission to Save Sight African Foundation**

## 3.2 Labour

### 3.2.1 Gender Equity

At CSR-in-Action Advocacy, we consider workplace gender equality vital to our operations and the wellbeing of all our employees. We work towards a work environment where people are able to access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender. Our total work force is comprised of 65% males and 35% females, and we keep working to increase female representation.

Also, we give equal health benefits, leave opportunities, talent development and other work-life benefits, to both male and female employees. We also ensure that all barriers that would negate full and equal participation of women in our workforce and in leadership positions are removed.

### 3.2.2 Empowering our People

As a responsible corporate citizen, we believe that it is our responsibility to support our people, and to make the right investments in them. This informs our decision to lay importance on providing an environment that enables employees to build and develop competence in their area of speciality.

We provide opportunities to our employees to attend trainings and conferences, and to lead at those conferences through speaking opportunities.

We also provide weekly in-house training sessions for all employees every Wednesday. These sessions are facilitated both by external and internal resource persons. The sessions address a wide range of issues such as interpersonal skill development, safety training and sustainability, among others.





### 3.3 Environment

#### 3.3.1 Sustainability in the Extractive Industries Conference:

The Sustainability in the Extractive Industries (Conference is an annual flagship conference that brings together key stakeholders to discuss critical issues in the industries and stimulate meaningful exchange of ideas and best practices among key stakeholder groups and industry experts. The objectives of the conference are to identify effective strategies for improved development within the industries and local communities.

Discussions at SITEI encompass all 4 pillars of the UNGC as it addresses human rights, corruption, environmental and labour considerations within the extractive sector, particularly as business activities impact on their host communities, whether positively or negatively.

The SITEI 2018 Conference themed '*Managing Conflict and Security in the Extractive Industries*' was packed with a number of insightful technical sessions, led by heads of government, business, CSOs and communities, international policy making institutions and other private sector stakeholders, who discussed topical, strategic, technical and social issues in the sector.

The aim of SITEI 2018 was for the industries to achieve an integrated package of services that support resource governance (management, participation, transparency and accountability), resource development, and environmental and social sustainability in extractive communities in Nigeria especially as these issues relate to the underserved - children, women and youth. Some recommendations brought up in the SITEI 2018 Conference include: improved stakeholder engagement; transparency & accountability; strong governance structures; inter-generational capacity; effective channels of communication and reduced inequalities.

The SITEI 2019 Conference themed '*Community Engagement: A Panacea for Peace in Extractive Operations*', hosted an array of energy experts, government representatives, host community members, and other critical stakeholders, including celebrities from oil-producing communities, in Lagos, to deliberate on pathways for more sustainable community engagement processes within Nigeria's extractive industries.

Nigeria's extractive industries, which includes the oil and gas and mining sectors, have been plagued by challenges such as insecurity, resource theft and conflict primarily between two key stakeholders - host communities and extractive companies. It is believed that poor and inadequate community engagement practices lie at the foundation of these challenges that have led to the loss of human lives, unprecedented degradation of the environment in the Niger Delta and massive loss of revenue to the Nigerian State.





After serious deliberation of the issues that affect the extractive industries in Nigeria, participants came up with the following recommendations:

1. Government and extractive companies are to show genuine concern for the areas where most of the nation's wealth come from by ensuring that they meet the demands and reasonable expectations of the people. It was agreed that this could be achieved by having a standardised process for periodic engagement with the communities.

On this note, the newly developed Community Engagement Standards was recommended by participants as being the right framework that can guide sincere engagement as well as evaluate engagement processes. It was also concluded that companies use the CES in their planning and engagement with communities.

2. To promote inclusion, government and companies need to involve communities in the extractive dialogue and promote community ownership of projects.

3. To create jobs for the people, stakeholders need to get the people in the community involved in the development process so that they can take up roles in the project. Emphasis was also on the role of communities in protecting the facilities within their environment.

4. Conflict entrepreneurs are to desist from inhuman acts and participants also advised communities to beware of such selfish individuals, adding that they are self-seeking and would only compound existing problems. All stakeholders, especially government were asked to fish out such individuals and deal with them accordingly.

5. The government should provide training and technical assistance to ensure that local players in the industry succeed and take ownership of their activities without compromising standards.

In order to increase transparency in the entire value chain within the extractive industries, stakeholders were encouraged to openly and objectively communicate issues and challenges, with the view to resolving them in way that enhances trust and fosters peace.

The communiqués for each conference can be found [here](#).



## 4 ANTI-CORRUPTION

### 4.1 Good Citizen Initiative

Our flagship advocacy project for patriotism, anti-corruption, unity, accountability and unity was launched in 2015. Through the Good Citizenship Initiative, with a vision of being 'One Nigeria', we are making the necessary effort to promote positive values and good neighbourliness amongst Nigerians through various education and awareness creation.

In December 2017, we partnered with Fairlife Africa Foundation to create awareness and empower children located in the Jakande Community in Lagos, Nigeria seeing as they are the leaders of tomorrow.

In February 2018, we partnered Meadow Hall Foundation to launch the Good Citizen Reading Club at Ilasan Primary School, Jakande, Lagos, Nigeria. This Reading Club is an extramural Club established in primary and secondary schools to promote certain values (such as Honesty, Responsibility, Good Ethics, etc) in our younger generation.

In December 2018, we hosted our annual Christmas party tagged '*My First True Christmas*' for children in the Aro Local Community, Jakande, Lagos, Nigeria. During this event, we held a competition and awarded the winner – Abudllahi Abubarkar – with a one-year scholarship.

#### 4.1.1 The Good Citizen Radio Show

In the last quarter of 2017, CSR-in-Action entered into a partnership with Inspiration FM to launch the first of its kind radio show, The Good Citizen Radio Show, to inspire Nigerian citizens to adopt good ethics and values that would bring about transformation of our nation. Our host station, Inspiration 92.3 FM thrives in the re-orientation of youth, redirecting their vision and goals and giving hope for "sustainable self-development".

The Show – which started airing in May, 2018 and has aired 88 episodes so far – focuses on value-system reorientation and is driven through citizen participation and solid multi-institutions partnerships in the areas of transparency and accountability, entrepreneurship/innovation, political awareness, environmental management, and unity. The radio show is targeted at children, adolescents and youths.

The Good Citizen Radio Show is solidly sponsored by Aspire Coronation Trust (ACT) Foundation, a grant making organisation established in 2016 to support local, national and regional non-profit organisations working to address challenges and associated vulnerabilities across the African Continent.

The Show airs every Friday at 8pm on Inspiration 92.3FM with listenership of over 550,000 listeners per month and plays host to intensive studio discussions addressing leadership, democracy and other aspects of citizenship such as gender equity, payment of taxes, waste management and other issues.

**For more information about CSR-in-Action, please visit [www.csr-in-action.org](http://www.csr-in-action.org), [www.sitei.org](http://www.sitei.org), [www.goodcitizenng.com](http://www.goodcitizenng.com) or call +2349062634121, +2349062634110, or +2349062634111.**