

From Visioning to Actions: The Implication of the Nigeria We Want Report
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Picture Source: NYFF Southeast Visioning Exercise, 2022

A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step, such is the case of developmental actions. It starts from ideation, deep thinking and sort of imaginations which form the basis of visioning. The uncertainties in today's socio-economic activities threaten sustainability of different institutions' plans. In a bid to have irrepensible strategies, strategists need vigorous methods that address the intricacies and challenges of long-term planning. . From time immemorial, foresight approaches such as visioning and exploratory scenario methods have been suitable for dealing with the complexities in long-term planning. Visioning is the process of providing headway ideas that are capable of revolutionizing systems or institutions

In the past, we had a series of visions developed for Nigeria such as vision 2020, vision 2050, imagine Nigeria and a host of others. The visions were developed for the entire country not representing a particular demography. With the bulk of concerns in the country, it is imperative to delineate the needs and concerns of different entities for a more focused approach. Learning from the effect of youth bulge, series of social movements led by the youths and the myriad of youth concerns, which seems to be receiving less attention, makes visioning exercise for the Youth demography more important. All these culminated and inspired the Nigeria Youth Futures



Fund (NYFF) Project, an initiative implemented by LEAP Africa and supported by Ford Foundation and Macarthur Foundation, to dedicate a major pillar of the NYFF project for the national visioning exercise.

The first NYFF visioning exercise was held in 2022 with a group of resourceful youths called the imaginative futures working group. The members of the imaginative futures working group were selected across the 36 states and FCT, the composition was inclusive with special consideration for the Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), women, special interest and vulnerable groups. Through the process, six regional retreats were conducted in all the six geo-political zones of the country and two national retreats: one was for the consolidation of the visions, and second one was for the review and validation of the document. The exercise was led by the seasoned visioning experts and birthed "**The Nigeria We Want Report**".

Despite the fact that there are common visions identified across the regions such as a fully secured nation, abundant opportunities for young people, infrastructural development etc, Youths from different regions were also passionate about the usage of their inherent characteristics and regional pressing needs for the development of the country. To mention a few examples, youths from the North West were heavy on exploratory ideas, their South East counterparts presented more of egalitarian and economic spur visions, ideas from the south West focus more on innovation and creativity, while youths from the North East tends towards social welfare and humanitarian focuses, more of utility and adventurous ideas were extracted from the detailed youths of the south south, and liberal Northcentral youths.

The Nigeria we want report contains aggregated country alternative scenarios perceived by the youth, the Youth agenda and a series of calls to action. The alternative scenario contains the four possible slanged scenarios, painted in the mind of the Nigeria Youth: '**E don cast**' which connotes a possible breakdown of the country, '**SAPA**' expresses the lost chances and too little too late for the country recovery, '**OYO**' presents a scenario where the nation is divided between haves and have-not, while **BUGA** has a Nigeria that is embarking on national transformation. The four possible scenarios show a wide range of imaginations by the youth due to the happenings within the country. It is infallible of any conscious Nigerian to see the green light of all the four possible scenarios considering the myriad of speculations, resources and social challenges in the country. Likewise, it is worthy to acknowledge the patriotic nature of the



Nigeria youths, despite the worst scenarios being imagined, many youths are still hopeful for a working Nigeria.

For Nigeria to workwell, the bedrock of the themes that emerged from the report point towards two major fundamentals: facilitation of good governance and answering fundamental national questions. To ensure proper co-existence, cohesion and cooperation in a nation, there must be a proper nourishment of nation formation with unity, peace, empathy, equity and values. These are some fundamentals of nation building that must be well structured for a prosperous nation. The essence of good governance facilitation acknowledges the fact that government is the major determinant of the country's growth and development. Being the central point of the nation, the government must be upright for every other sector to function properly. With clarity in the fundamentals of Nigeria formation and good governance put in place, the journey of a prosperous Nigeria where all people in every generation are secure, free, happy and dignified would not be far fetched.

Technology innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem building emerged as another theme/pillar which speaks to the need for a proper technological development, promotion of innovations and support to entrepreneurs. This will aid local production, proper utilization of the abundant resources, emergence of more young entrepreneurs, global competitive advantage for the country and general economic spur. It is not strange that there is a demand for human capital development, it is obviously known that human capital is one of the major resources of Nigeria, a country with about 250 million population and more than 40% of the population are youths. Then, proper utilization and management of the human capital are the main issues, productive use of the human capital will definitely bring about the best in the country personnels and increase productivity, efficiency and general economic growth. From the lens of sustainable development and infrastructure, these are the enablers of sustaining the efforts put in place for the country's development, ensuring better life for present and future generations while assisting in realization of the long-term economic plan.

For the Youth agenda to be achieved, the report offers calls to action which encourages stakeholders to support Youth as leaders and policy makers, this is already manifesting with the recent numbers of youth elected and appointed into positions at both state and national levels at the 2023 General elections. This reflects the success of a series of efforts put in place by the



youth ecosystem, among which is the Nigeria We Want report pointing the youths towards such requests and the responsiveness of the youth to take up the advocacy by outpouring their stance to serve the nation. On the engagement of the youths as partners and volunteers, while this existed in real time, there is a need to have a better structure, while encouraging more youths to volunteer and partner with the government. The youth impact assessment aspect buttresses the need to conduct situation analysis and review of the past interventions/projects. This will enable us to learn and provide better strategic approaches to the activities and projects of the Youth in future. The best approach to view most of the call to action should be consensual, whereby all parties involved (Youths or Government or other stakeholders) should be able to initiate, push and present relevant initiatives on it. Likewise, the recipient should gladly respond and yield to the needful.

In closing, the development of the Nigeria We Want report, reflects one of the technical deliverables of the NYFF project. The NYFF approach stands to provide technical guidance and resources for the facilitation of the Youth ecosystem activities towards national development. The NYFF project itself has exemplified the domestication of the report by using it to define the focus of other programs in the project. The report has assisted in creating evidence-based themes for the NYFF debate program, grant making, policy development and online community engagement. While timely revision of the document is sacrosanct for updating and validation of the vision, the domestication and proper usage of the document is crucial as well. The duty of promoting and utilization of the document lies on us, the Nigeria Youths, and our stakeholders for a more focused approach to Youth issues. The true Youth vision representation “The Nigeria We Want Report” needs to be put forward in conversations, strategic planning, interventions and project implementation that concerns the Youths.