NIGERIA YOUTH FUTURES FUND

The Nigeria We Want 2.0



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The Nigeria We Want 2.0

A Report by Nigerian Youth on the Present Reality and the Nigeria They Are Building — Realities, Aspirations, and a Call to Action

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Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations 6

Executive Summary 7

Acknowledgements 16

A Note On Continuity With The 2023 Report 18

CHAPTER 1 About this Report 20

CHAPTER 2 Nigeria Since 2023: What Has Changed 23

CHAPTER 3 Regional Realities 28

CHAPTER 4 National Findings 36

CHAPTER 5 Governance Deep-Dive — Toward NAP IV 42

CHAPTER 6 The Aspirations — What Young People Want 46

CHAPTER 7 Call to Action 50

CHAPTER 8 Youth Voices from the Consultations 53

CHAPTER 9 Sector Deep-Dives 58

CHAPTER 10 Gender, Disability, and Inclusion 61

CHAPTER 11 2023 And Now : A Side-By-Side Reading 64

CHAPTER 12 The Youth Economy in Detail 68

CHAPTER 13 Stakeholder Analysis 70

CHAPTER 14 The Youth Population in Context 73

CHAPTER 15 Comparative Context 75

CHAPTER 16 The Business Case for Youth Investment 77

CHAPTER 17 How this Report Fits NYFF's Theory of Change 79

CHAPTER 18 Risks and Mitigations 81

CHAPTER 19 Sustainability 83

CHAPTER 20 A Note on Youth-Led Research Practice 85

Conclusion	86
A Closing Reflection	88
Annex A: Regional Priorities	90
Annex B: Methodology Notes	92
Annex C: Implementation and Monitoring Framework	93
Annex D: Glossary of Terms	94
Annex E: Consultation Locations	95
Annex F: Timeline — Nigeria's Reform Journey, 2023–2026	96
Annex G: Frequently Raised Questions	97
Annex H: Regional Variation Within The Six National Pillars	98
Annex I: Sequencing — What Should Happen First	99
Annex J: Key Indicators For Monitoring Progress	100
Annex K: A Guide For Regional Coordinators	101
Annex L: A Nap IV Readiness Checklist	102
Annex M: How This Report Was Quality-Assured	103
Annex N: How This Report Should Be Cited	104
Annex O: Bibliography and Sources	105

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List of Abbreviations

BVAS	Bimodal Voter Accreditation System
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FX	Foreign Exchange
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICPC	Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission
LEAP	Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability and Professionalism (LEAP Africa)
LG	Local Government
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MPR	Monetary Policy Rate
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NAP III/NAP IV	Third/Fourth National Action Plan (Open Government Partnership)
NELFUND	Nigerian Education Loan Fund
NLC	Nigeria Labour Congress
NYFF	Nigeria Youth Futures Fund
NYS	National Youth Summit
NYSC	National Youth Service Corps
OGP	Open Government Partnership
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TUC	Trade Union Congress
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Executive Summary

This report presents the Nigeria We Want Report, Version 2.0, an updated and expanded edition of the first report published in 2023. This update builds on the original and was made necessary by significant developments in Nigeria's social and political landscape since the first publication.

Nigeria in 2026 is significantly different from the Nigeria of 2023. A new administration took office promising fiscal discipline and structural reform, and within hours removed the petroleum subsidy and set in motion the unification of the exchange rate — two decisions that would define the economic experience of an entire generation of young Nigerians over the three years that followed. A new minimum wage was fought for and won. A new tax framework was signed into law. A new student loan scheme began disbursing funds. A Supreme Court ruling handed local governments direct access to federal allocations for the first time in a generation. And in August 2024, tens of thousands of predominantly young Nigerians took to the streets in the #EndBadGovernance protests — the most significant youth-led civic mobilization since #EndSARS — over the cumulative weight of what reform had cost them.

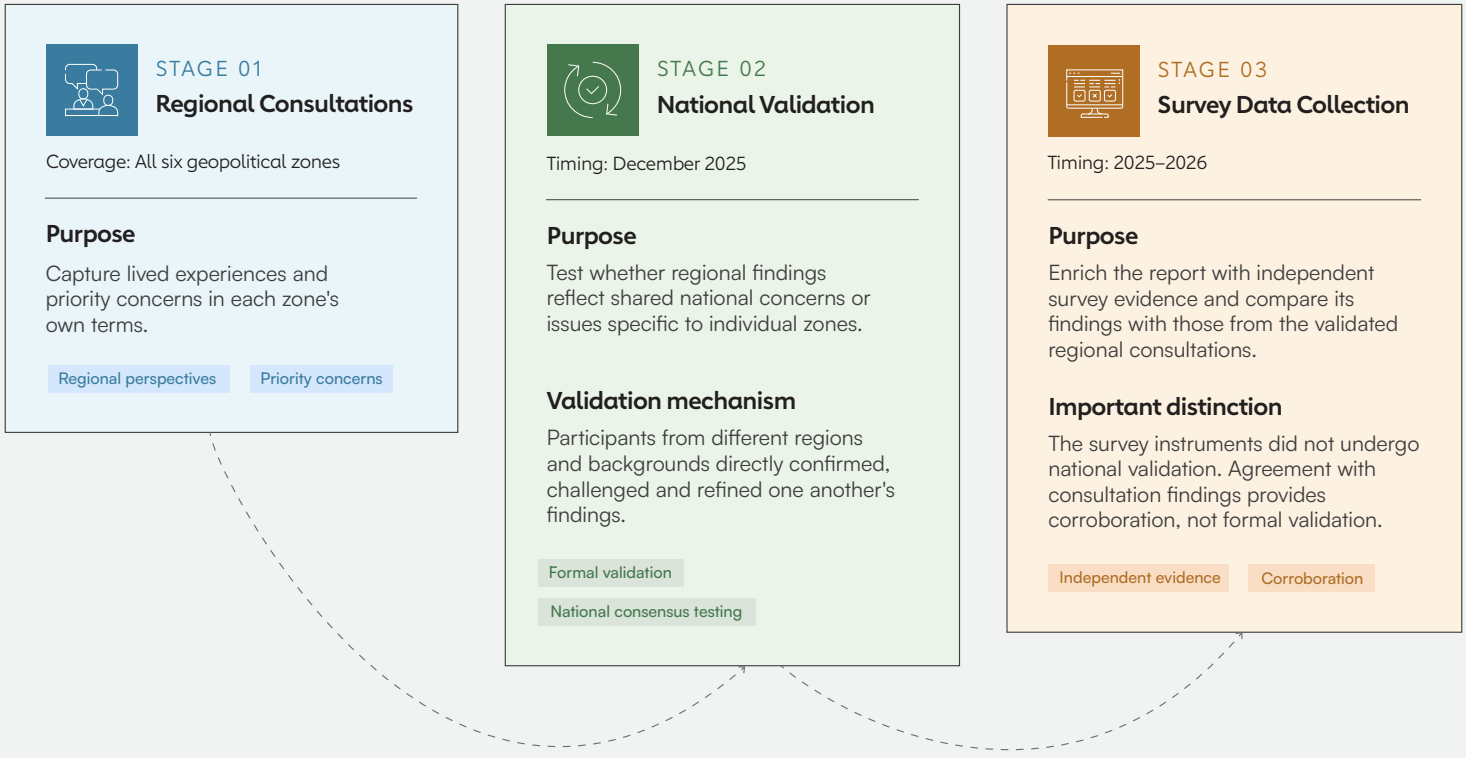
This report is not a verdict on whether that reform agenda was correct. Reasonable people, including economists, differ on that question, and this report does not attempt to adjudicate it. What this report does is something narrower and, we believe, more useful: it documents, in young people's own words and through structured consultation across all six geopolitical zones, what the last three years have actually felt like to live through as a young Nigerian, what young Nigerians now want from their country, and what they are asking government, the private sector, civil society, and their own generation to do about it.

This is a significant departure from the first edition of the Nigeria We Want report (2023), which used scenario planning to forge four alternative pathways for Nigeria ascendant towards the year 2050. That was the right instrument for a moment of high strategic uncertainty, before the direction of economic policy had been set. This instrument has become obsolete in the context of the present realities. Nigeria's direction has been set — by the reforms listed above, and by the daily reality of higher fuel prices, a depreciated currency, and a tax system still finding its footing. The task before this report is not to imagine alternative futures but to measure the distance between the Nigeria these reforms have produced and the Nigeria young people envisaged in 2023 and now again, that they want.

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Approach and Methodology Adopted

This report's approach proceeded in three stages. Regional consultations were convened across all six geopolitical zones to capture lived experience and priority concerns in each zone's own terms. A national validation exercise in December 2025 then brought representatives together to test whether the issues raised regionally were shared nationally or specific to a single zone. This validation step proved especially valuable given the diversity of perspectives in the room: participants from different regions, backgrounds, and lived experiences were able to confirm, challenge, and sharpen one another's findings directly, rather than leaving that reconciliation to the drafting process alone. Survey data collection followed afterward, in 2025 and 2026, as an independent enrichment step rather than a further validated stage; the survey instruments were not themselves taken through a national validation exercise. Their value lies in how closely their findings track the validated regional consultation findings, which this report treats as a form of corroboration in its own right, distinct from formal validation.



Challenges Encountered and Recommendations to overcome them in subsequent reviews

Two specific challenges emerged during this cycle's regional consultations and survey administration, and are named here directly so that subsequent review cycles can plan around them rather than encounter them fresh.



Regional outreach beyond the existing NYFF network.

In the Southeast, sustaining participation from young people outside the existing NYFF community proved more difficult than in other zones. Young people already active in NYFF programming engaged readily, but broader outreach met a degree of disinterest from young people who were not already connected to NYFF, particularly around framing the exercise as a nationwide civic undertaking. This was notable given that the same population is, by every other indicator gathered in this report, active and enthusiastic about technology and innovation. The gap appears to sit less with youth disengagement in general and more with the specific framing and entry point used to invite participation.

Survey response speed among first-time participants.

Survey response rates were noticeably slower to build in the South South and Southeast regions than elsewhere. The pattern that emerged was a degree of hesitation among young people who had not previously encountered or participated in an NYFF programme, suggesting that survey uptake is closely tied to prior familiarity with NYFF as an institution, rather than to the survey instrument or subject matter itself.





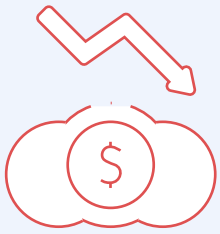
Recommendations for subsequent cycles.

For subsequent review cycles, this report recommends two adjustments in response. First, outreach in the Southeast and similar zones should lead with the tangible, technology- and innovation-linked opportunities the exercise offers, rather than with civic or nationwide framing alone, since this is the entry point the evidence suggests resonates most with young people not already connected to NYFF. Second, survey administration in the South South and Southeast should build in a longer lead time and a preliminary trust-building step, such as a short introductory session or referral through an existing local partner, before the survey instrument itself is circulated to young people encountering NYFF for the first time.

What This Report Found

Findings from regional consultations and the national validation exercise indicated the following as the present realities and aspirations of young people in Nigeria.

1

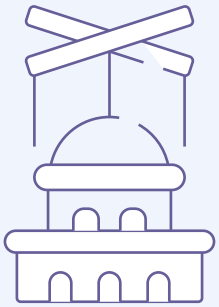


First, economic hardship has intensified and become the dominant lens through which young people evaluate governance.

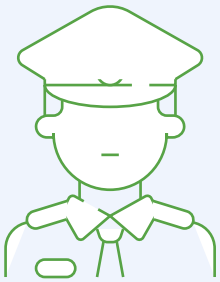
Every regional consultation, without exception, named the cost of living, unemployment, and inflation among the leading issues affecting youth. This is not new — the 2023 report identified the same pressures — but the character of the concern has shifted from structural critique of an underperforming economy to acute, lived hardship attributable to specific, dateable policy decisions.

2

Second, governance and accountability remain the most consistently cited structural failure, but the framing has sharpened.

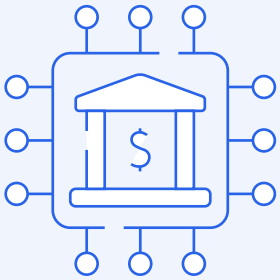


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3

Third, security remains a defining and regionally differentiated concern, most acute but not exclusive to the Northeast, where insecurity continues to shape daily decisions about mobility, livelihood, and education.



4

Fourth, technology, entrepreneurship, and the digital and creative economies are named, in every region without exception, as the clearest source of hope and the most credible pathway to economic dignity that young people can currently see for themselves

— a striking point of convergence given how little else unites the regional consultations in tone.

5



Fifth, young people do not believe they are meaningfully included in the decisions that shape their lives, and a significant share have seriously considered leaving Nigeria in the past two years.

This is the finding this report treats with the most seriousness, because it is the one most likely to compound: a generation that concludes its voice does not count, and that credibly can build a life elsewhere, is a generation Nigeria cannot afford to lose twice — once to disengagement, and once to emigration.

What This Report Recommends

The report's recommendations rest on one central principle, carried forward from the 2023 report and sharpened here: Nigeria's greatest challenge is not a lack of good ideas, but a failure to implement them. Young people across every region consulted for this report did not principally ask for new policies. They asked for the policies and commitments already made — including those made directly to them, such as the outgoing National Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership — to be delivered, tracked, and reported on in a way they can see and verify.

This report accordingly closes not with a strategic agenda to be adopted at some future date, but with a call to action that names specific commitments for government, the private sector, civil society and development partners, and young people themselves — each with an accountable owner and a basis on which progress can be measured. Nigeria's youth population is not waiting to be convinced that transformation is necessary. They are waiting to see it delivered.

Nigeria's greatest challenge is not a lack of good ideas, but a failure to implement them.

THE CALL TO ACTION

Government	Private sector	Civil society	Development partners	Young people

Nigeria's youth population is not waiting to be convinced that transformation is necessary. They are waiting to see it delivered.



How to Read This Report

This report is written for four distinct audiences, each of whom may reasonably want to engage with it differently, and this note is included so that each can locate what is most relevant to them without reading the document cover to cover.



Government readers

particularly those engaged in the NAP IV process — should prioritize Chapter Five in full, alongside the specific commitments addressed to government in Chapter Seven and the stakeholder analysis in Chapter Thirteen, which speaks directly to the incentive and coordination challenges federal, state, and local government face in implementing this report's recommendations.



Development partners and donor boards

should prioritize the executive summary, Chapter Two's account of the policy environment, and Annex C's implementation and monitoring framework, which sets out specifically what resourcing this report recommends for sustaining the consultation cycle and monitoring infrastructure going forward.



Civil society and youth organisation readers

should prioritize the executive summary, Chapter Two's account of the policy environment, and Annex C's implementation and monitoring framework, which sets out specifically what resourcing this report recommends for sustaining the consultation cycle and monitoring infrastructure going forward.



Young people reading this report directly

should begin with Chapters Six and Eight, which present their words and aspirations with minimal institutional framing. They should then turn to the final section of Chapter Seven, which sets out the commitments young people themselves are called to uphold.

What This Report Does Not Cover

In keeping with the transparency applied throughout this report, three matters fall outside its scope. They are identified here so that readers do not interpret their omission as a sign that they are unimportant.

This report does not provide a comprehensive macroeconomic assessment of Nigeria's reform program; it draws on macroeconomic context only to the extent necessary to explain the lived experience captured through its consultation and survey evidence documents, and readers seeking a full economic policy assessment should consult specialized economic analysis alongside this document.

This report does not adjudicate between competing political positions on the reforms described in Chapter Two; it documents their effect on young Nigerians as reported by young Nigerians, without taking a position on whether the reforms themselves were the correct policy choice.

This report presents its findings as the product of a triangulated process — regional consultation, national validation, and survey enrichment — and treats convergence across these sources, rather than any single instrument in isolation, as the basis for its claims.

Acknowledgements

The Nigeria We Want 2.0 was made possible through the sustained support of the **Ford Foundation**, the **MacArthur Foundation**, and **Luminate**, whose investment in the Nigeria Youth Futures Fund, implemented by LEAP Africa, has anchored this work from the original Nigeria We Want report through to this present edition.

This report is grounded in the young Nigerians who participated in regional consultations across all six geopolitical zones, and in the OGP NAP IV youth inclusion consultation undertaken alongside civil society stakeholders and the OGP Nigeria National Secretariat. Together, these processes allowed young people to engage from multiple vantage points, not only to state their aspirations, but to offer direct feedback and a clear call to action. This is what sets the review process behind this edition apart: it draws on a broader base of youth engagement than the original report had available.

The young Nigerians who gave their time to this process did so without any guarantee that their words would change anything. They spoke plainly about what has improved, what has not, and what continues to cost them the most, often on subjects that carry real personal and political weight. That candour is the foundation of everything that follows in this report, and it deserves to be treated with the same seriousness with which it was offered.

This report exists because the distance between policy intention and lived reality is where trust in government is either built or lost. The Nigeria We Want 2.0 is written for those with the power to close that distance: the ministries and agencies implementing the reforms described here, the development partners financing Nigeria's governance agenda, and the young people whose futures depend on the answer. It does not ask to be agreed with. It asks to be acted on.

The Nigeria We Want 2.0 was guided by the following Advisory Committee and Nigeria Youth Futures Fund Secretariat.

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Tesiri Oghenetega
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A Note On Continuity With The 2023 Report

Readers familiar with the original Nigeria We Want (2023) report will notice that this report does not include scenario chapters, a scenarios game board, or projections to the year 2050. This is intentional and is explained fully in Chapter One. In brief: the 2023 report was written to help Nigeria's youth movement navigate genuine uncertainty about the country's direction ahead of a change in national leadership. That uncertainty has since resolved into a specific, documented set of policy decisions. This report's task is accordingly different — not to map what could happen, but to document what has happened, how young people have experienced it, and what they are now asking to be done. The two reports should be read as companions addressing different moments in the same ongoing conversation between Nigeria's young people and the country's leadership, not as competing methodologies.



“Where the 2023 report asked ‘what futures are possible,’ this report asks, ‘what is true now, and what must change.’”



CHAPTER ONE

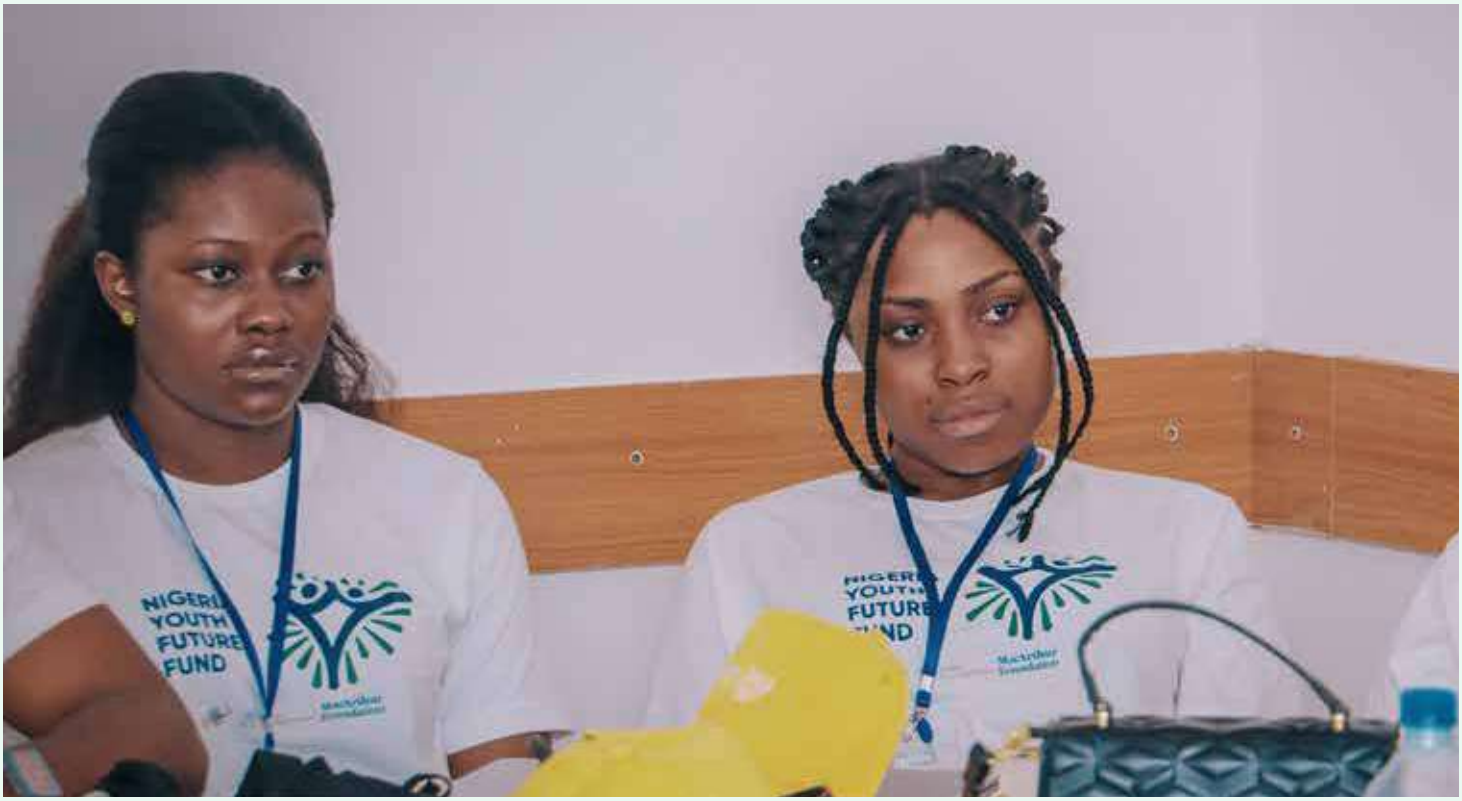
About this Report

Purpose and Mandate

The Nigeria We Want 2.0 is NYFF's second youth-led national report. It follows the original Nigeria We Want (2023), which used scenario planning to construct four alternative pathways for Nigeria to 2050 — E Don Cast, Sapa, O-Y-O, and Buga — built against the critical uncertainties of governance quality and economic diversification

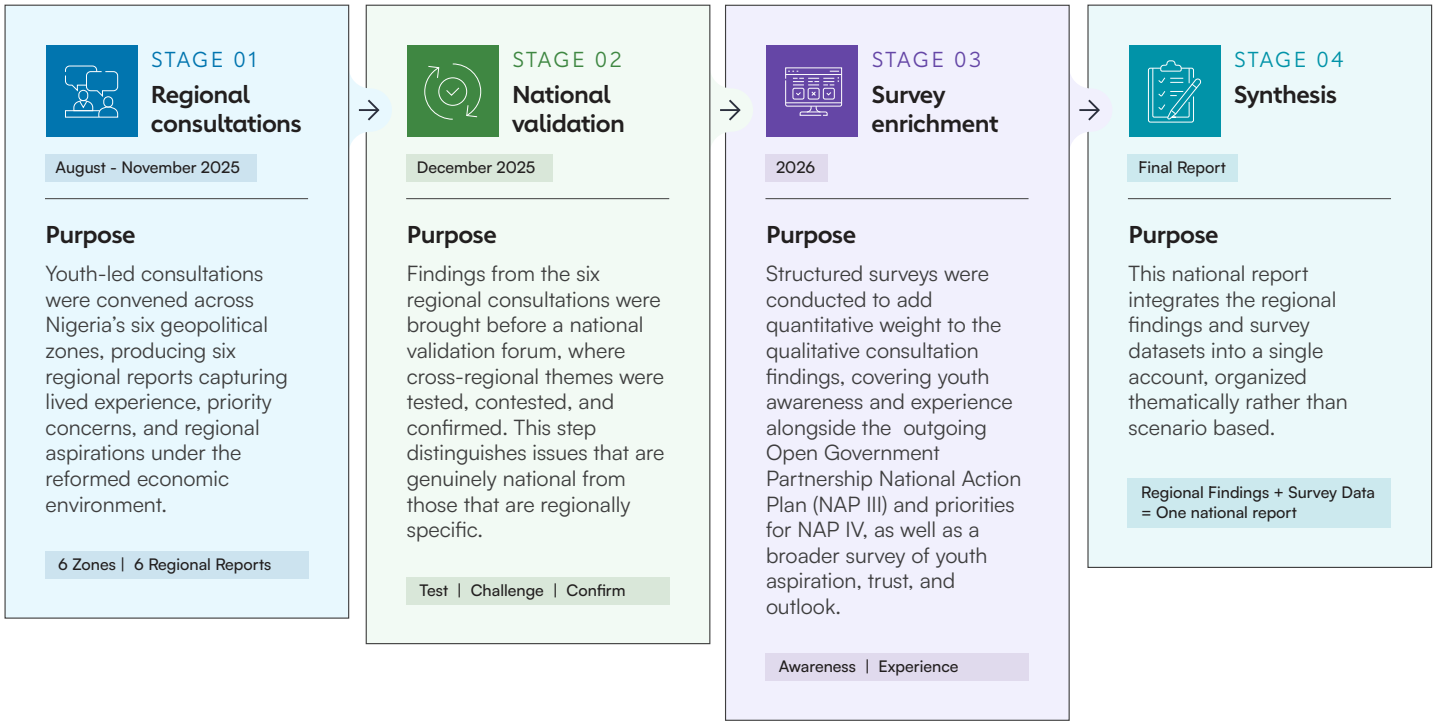
This report takes a different form. It is not a foresight exercise. It is a documented account of what young Nigerians are experiencing under a new administration and a changed economic environment, what they aspire to over the next decade, and what they are calling on government, the private sector, civil society, and their own generation to do about it. Where the 2023 report asked "what futures are possible," this report asks, "what is true now, and what must change."

This distinction is deliberate, not a narrowing of ambition. Scenario planning is most useful at moments of high strategic uncertainty, when the range of plausible futures needs mapping before a course can be set. Three years on, Nigeria's direction has been set by a specific set of reforms — the removal of the petroleum subsidy, the unification of the exchange rate, a new national minimum wage, a restructured tax system, and a new higher education financing model. The task now is not to imagine alternative futures for Nigeria but to measure the distance between the Nigeria these reforms have produced, and the Nigeria young people said, in 2023 and again now, that they want.



Approach and Methodology

This report follows a four-phase, sequential methodology that moves from lived experience to validated national findings and to quantitatively weighted, thematically organized conclusions. Each phase builds on the previous one, ensuring that no single source of evidence stands alone.



A Note on the Evidence Base

The findings in this report draw on structured consultation across all six geopolitical zones, a national validation process applied to those consultation findings, and survey data collected afterward as a separate enrichment step. This multi-stage design is deliberate: qualitative consultation captures the texture and specificity of regional experience, national validation tests which of those consultation findings are genuinely shared across regions rather than locally specific, and survey data, gathered independently once validation was complete, adds a further point of comparison rather than a second round of validation. Where a finding is corroborated independently across multiple regional consultations, confirmed through national validation, and echoed in the subsequent survey data, this report treats that convergence as strong evidence and states the finding accordingly.

Structure of the Report

The report begins by examining changes in Nigeria's policy and economic environment since 2023 and how young people have experienced them. It then synthesises regional realities, presents the national findings by theme, and uses survey data to explore governance in greater depth. The report concludes with a statement of young people's aspirations in their own words and a call to action that assigns clear responsibilities to each stakeholder.

“This report is written three years into the resulting reform period, and its findings cannot be detached from what that period has done to the material conditions of young Nigerians.”



CHAPTER TWO

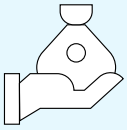
Nigeria Since 2023: What Has Changed

A New Administration, A New Economic Direction

The Nigeria We Want report (2023) was written against the backdrop of a general election and an economy still operating under a managed exchange rate and a subsidized petroleum price.Soon after assuming office in May 2023, the new administration moved to reverse both policies: the petroleum subsidy was removed at inauguration, followed by the unification of the exchange-rate system in June 2023.

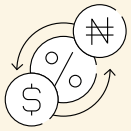
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1 Subsidy removal



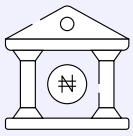
The petroleum subsidy — for decades one of the largest single line items in federal spending and a source of chronic fiscal distortion — was withdrawn at inauguration. Pump prices rose sharply and repeatedly over the following two years, with cascading effects on transport costs, food prices, and the cost of doing business for the small enterprises that employ most young Nigerians.

2 Exchange rate unification



In June 2023, the Central Bank collapsed the multiple exchange rate windows that had defined the previous administration's currency management into a single, market-determined rate. The naira depreciated sharply against major currencies in the period that followed, with direct consequences for import-dependent sectors, the price of essential goods, and the real value of wages and savings.

3 Monetary policy tightening



Faced with the inflationary consequences of both reforms, the Central Bank raised its benchmark interest rate to levels not seen in decades, tightening credit conditions precisely as young entrepreneurs and small business owners — a population central to this report— needed financing most.

4 A new minimum wage



Following sustained pressure from organised labour, including a national strike threat, the federal government signed a new national minimum wage of ₦70,000 into law in July 2024 — an increase from the previous ₦30,000 benchmark set in 2019, though one that labour unions and independent analysts noted had already been substantially eroded in real terms by the inflation the reforms had produced.

5 Tax reform



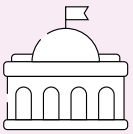
In June 2025, the administration signed four tax reform bills into law — the Nigeria Tax Act, the Nigeria Tax Administration Act, the Nigeria Revenue Service (Establishment) Act, and the Joint Revenue Board (Establishment) Act — consolidating and restructuring the country's tax framework, with implementation beginning in January 2026. The reforms include provisions intended to ease the burden on lower-income earners and small businesses while broadening the tax net, though their effect on young entrepreneurs operating in the informal economy will only become clear as implementation proceeds.

6 Higher education financing



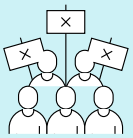
The Student Loan (Access to Higher Education) Act, signed in 2023 and operationalized through the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) from 2024, introduced interest-free loan financing for tertiary education — a direct response to the high cost of education that both the 2023 report and this report's regional consultations identify as a leading barrier to youth advancement.

7 Local government autonomy



A July 2024 Supreme Court ruling granted local governments direct access to federation account allocations, bypassing the state-level control that had historically constrained local government finance and, by extension, local service delivery — a governance change with direct relevance to the "government closer to the people" ambition articulated in the 2023 report's agenda.

8 Civic response



In August 2024, the #EndBadGovernance protests brought thousands of predominantly young Nigerians onto the streets across multiple states over the cumulative cost-of-living impact of these reforms, in the most significant national demonstration of youth-led civic mobilization since the #EndSARS protests of 2020 referenced in the 2023 report. The state's response to these protests — including arrests and, in some cases, detentions of minors — is itself a governance data point that respondents referenced when describing their trust in institutions.

What the Data Says About the Net Effect

Whatever the macroeconomic rationale behind these reforms—whether framed as correcting a fiscally unsustainable distortion or criticized for imposing hardship without adequate safeguards—the lived reality reported by young Nigerians in this cycle's consultations is strikingly consistent. Across surveys and discussions, young people overwhelmingly describe worsening conditions since 2023 and express deep dissatisfaction with the country's current trajectory. This near-unanimous verdict comes from the very demographic the reforms were ostensibly designed to benefit.

This is the baseline against which the remainder of this report should be read: not whether reform was necessary, but whether the version of reform Nigeria has undertaken since 2023 has moved the country closer to, or further from, the Nigeria young people said they wanted.

The Political Economy of the Reform Agenda

It is worth pausing on why these specific reforms were pursued together, in rapid succession, rather than sequenced more gradually — because the sequencing itself shapes how young people have experienced the reform period and matters for the recommendations later in this report.

The petroleum subsidy and the managed exchange rate were, by the account of the outgoing and incoming administrations alike, mutually reinforcing fiscal distortions: the subsidy was unsustainable in part because it was priced against an artificially cheap dollar, and the managed exchange rate was unsustainable in part because defending it consumed foreign reserves that subsidized fuel imports were simultaneously depleting. Addressing one without the other was, on this account, not a viable option — a case for simultaneous rather than sequential reform that has real technical merit.

The consequence of simultaneous reform, however, is that its costs also arrived simultaneously and compounded rather than arriving in a manageable, staggered sequence that households and small businesses could adjust to incrementally. Fuel price increases raised transport and production costs at precisely the moment currency depreciation was also raising the cost of imported inputs — a combination that hit small and informal enterprise, the sector in which this report's respondents are disproportionately engaged, from two directions at once. Monetary tightening, intended to contain the resulting inflation, then raised the cost of the credit that same enterprise sector needed to absorb the shock.

None of this is offered as a case against the reforms themselves — this report does not take a position on whether the sequencing chosen was preferable to any alternative, and reasonable economists disagree on this point. It is offered because understanding the compounding mechanism explains, more precisely than "the economy is hard right now," why the hardship documented throughout this report has been experienced as acute and sudden rather than gradual, and why the palliative and social protection measures announced alongside the reforms needed — and, in the account of respondents across every region, largely failed — to arrive with matching speed.

Stakeholder Incentives and the Implementation Gap

Chapter Four of this report identifies implementation, not policy design, as the recurring governance failure young people describe. It is worth being explicit about why this gap persists, because a recommendation that does not account for the underlying incentive structure is unlikely to close it.

Federal policy announcements carry strong incentives for visibility — a subsidy removal, a new minimum wage, a signed tax reform bill are each single, dateable events that generate immediate political attention. Implementation, by contrast, is diffuse, slow, multi-agency, and rarely produces a single moment of visibility comparable to the original announcement. A state or local government tasked with executing a federally announced policy has weaker incentive to prioritize that execution than the federal government had to announce it, particularly where — as the July 2024 Supreme Court ruling on local government financial autonomy makes newly relevant — the tiers of government responsible for delivery do not share identical political incentives or, previously, even reliable independent access to the resources implementation requires.

This is precisely the dynamic the recommendations in Chapters Five and Seven are designed to address: shifting the locus of accountability from the announcement event to the implementation record, through mechanisms — public dashboards, defined monitoring commitments, recurring reporting — that make delivery, and its absence, as visible as the original policy announcement was.

Risk Considerations for the Period Ahead

Three risks merit explicit naming for anyone using this report to inform planning or investment decisions in the coming reporting cycle.

1 **Reform fatigue risk**

Nigerians have absorbed subsidy removal, currency depreciation, monetary tightening, and a new tax regime in quick succession. Tolerance for further disruption is finite, however sound the technical case for any single additional reform. Further major economic reform should therefore be sequenced and communicated with this accumulated fatigue in view, not treated as a discrete event unrelated to what preceded it.

2 **Trust compounding risk**

This report's findings on institutional trust, set out in Chapters Four and Six, describe a population whose confidence in government delivery has been shaped by direct experience over the past three years rather than by abstract predisposition. Every further commitment — NAP IV among them, addressed in Chapter Five — will be judged against that record rather than on its own merits. The evidentiary bar for being believed is therefore higher, which is why this report argues throughout for visible, trackable delivery mechanisms.

3 **Emigration and disengagement risk**

The finding, discussed further in Chapter Six, that a meaningful share of respondents has seriously considered leaving Nigeria in the past two years should be read as a leading indicator rather than a lagging one. Emigration intent typically precedes emigration action by a period of years, during which the intended emigrant's economic and civic engagement with the country of origin often diminishes in anticipation of departure. A generation that disengages in advance of leaving, or that leaves outright, represents a compounding loss of exactly the entrepreneurial and civic capacity this report's other findings identify as Nigeria's clearest source of hope.

> "We have ideas and solutions, but we need systems that listen and respond."
>
> — Youth participant, Southwest regional consultation

“Certain themes recur despite this regional distinctiveness — validation that a flattened summary would have quietly discarded.”



CHAPTER THREE

Regional Realities

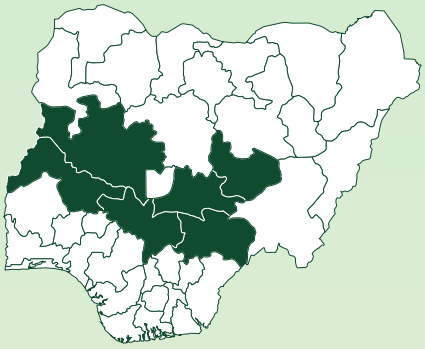
The six geopolitical zones in Nigeria did not experience the national reform agenda described in the previous chapter in the same way. A currency float lands differently on an oil-producing coastal economy than on a landlocked agrarian one, and subsidy removal is felt differently in a region contending with insurgency than in one whose defining challenge is political exclusion rather than physical insecurity. This chapter therefore presents each region on its own terms rather than compressing six independently conducted consultations into a single national voice. The synthesis in Chapter Four draws its strength from the fact that certain themes recur despite this regional distinctiveness — validation that a flattened summary would have quietly discarded.

Each regional account below follows the same structure — context, lived reality, what young people want changed, and the region's distinct strategic character — so that regions remain comparable without losing what makes each one specific.



North Central

Proximity to Power, Greater Potential



Context

The North Central zone — Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, and the Federal Capital Territory — occupies a structural position in Nigeria's federation that no other zone shares: it is simultaneously the seat of national government and one of the country's principal food-producing regions. This dual identity means that national policy failure and national policy success are both experienced here with unusual immediacy — the region is close enough to federal institutions to expect responsiveness, and dependent enough on agriculture to feel macroeconomic shocks directly in the cost and availability of food.

Lived Reality

Young people in the North Central consultation, convened in Lokoja, described a region under compounding pressure. Hyperinflation and unemployment dominate the economic narrative — not as an abstraction but as a lived constraint on the ability of even educated young people to build independent lives. This economic pressure is layered onto persistent insecurity: violent conflict and community tensions continue to disrupt agricultural production precisely in a region whose comparative advantage is agriculture, creating a corrosive cycle in which insecurity undermines the sector that should be the region's greatest economic asset.

Infrastructure deficits compound both pressures. Limited and unstable electricity supply, weak transportation networks, and inadequate social amenities constrain the ability of young people to build businesses or pursue education regardless of their ambition or effort. Climate variability and soil degradation are now cited alongside these more familiar constraints — food security concerns that were peripheral in the 2023 consultation cycle have moved toward the centre of how young people in this region describe their economic anxiety.

Governance frustration in the North Central zone has a distinct character: it centres less on the absence of policy than on its poor communication and inconsistent implementation. Participants described policies that are announced with fanfare and then implemented unevenly or not at all — a pattern that erodes trust in institutions that are, in this region more than any other, physically proximate to the young people describing the erosion.

What Young People Want to See Change

Participants prioritized the following.

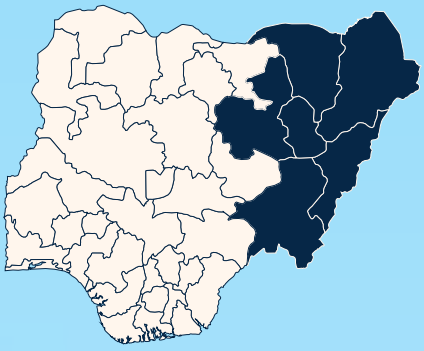
1. **Clearer and more consistent** communication of government policy
2. **Stronger, more genuine collaboration** between citizens and government institutions rather than consultation theatre
3. **Free and fair electoral processes** as a foundation for restoring public trust
4. **Long-term policy continuity** that survives changes in administration; stable electricity supply as a precondition for economic activity
5. **Effective macroeconomic management** to bring inflation and the cost of living under control.

Regional Strategic Character

The North Central zone's defining tension is between proximity to power and distance from its benefits. Young people here are not asking to be introduced to governance — they live alongside its institutions — but to see that proximity translate into responsiveness. The region's agricultural potential and its position as a bridge between Nigeria's northern and southern zones remain genuine strategic assets; what is missing is the security, infrastructure, and policy continuity required to convert that potential into outcomes.

North East

Resilience, Rebuilding and Real Opportunity



Context

Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe States have carried the weight of Nigeria's longest-running internal security crisis for over a decade and a half. No regional consultation in this report can be read without that context, and the Northeast consultation itself made clear that its participants do not want their region reduced to a security narrative — but equally that no honest account of the region's youth reality can proceed without naming insecurity as the foundational constraint from which most other constraints follow.

Lived Reality

For young people in the Northeast, insecurity is not one issue among several; it is the condition that determines whether other issues are even addressable. Participants described the direct disruption of education, livelihoods, and mobility that conflict and displacement have caused, alongside the less visible but equally corrosive effects: weakened infrastructure, reduced economic activity, and a public service delivery system operating far below the capacity the rest of the country takes for granted.

Layered onto this security context, participants identified governance failures that would be familiar in any region — weak policy implementation, corruption, and limited institutional accountability — but argued that these failures carry a higher cost in the Northeast precisely because the margin for error is thinner. A region already contending with humanitarian pressure has less capacity to absorb governance failure than one starting from a position of relative stability.

What distinguishes the Northeast consultation from every other region in this report is the tone of its participants' response to these conditions: not resignation, but a specific and repeated emphasis on rebuilding. Young people spoke consistently about wanting to be part of reconstructing their communities, not as passive beneficiaries of humanitarian intervention but as active participants in institutional and economic recovery.

What Young People Want to See Change

Participants prioritized the following.

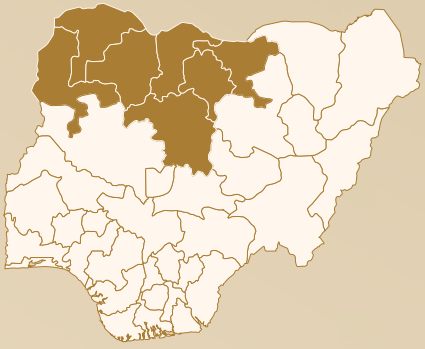
1. **Stronger accountability and transparency systems** as the precondition for everything else
2. **Improved and consistent policy implementation;** expanded and genuine youth participation in governance, not limited to consultation;
3. **Effective feedback and grievance mechanisms** that give citizens a channel to raise concerns and see them addressed
4. **The use of data and digital tools** to track how public resources are used and to hold leadership accountable for outcomes

Regional Strategic Character

The Northeast's strategic reality is that peace is not a precondition alongside economic and governance reform — it is the precondition for those reforms to have any effect at all. Investment in accountability systems, education, and economic opportunity in this region will only compound if pursued in tandem with, rather than as a substitute for, continued and credible investment in security. Young people here have made clear they do not want to be spoken for by a security narrative, but they have also made clear that no other narrative is realistic in the absence of continued progress on the security question itself.

North West

A Young Powerhouse With Untapped Potential



Context

Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara States constitute Nigeria's most populous zone, anchoring the country's largest concentration of young people to a regional economy built on agriculture, trade, and — in commercial centres like Kano — long-standing manufacturing and commercial networks. The scale of the region's youth population makes its consultation findings disproportionately consequential for any national youth strategy: interventions that work, or fail, at scale in the Northwest shape national outcomes more than in any other single zone.

Lived Reality

Participants in the Northwest consultation identified a distinctive cluster of constraints centred on the cost and quality of education. The high cost of tertiary education, in particular, was named as a primary barrier to advancement — a finding directly relevant to the introduction of the national student loan scheme discussed in Chapter Two, since it suggests the affordability barrier that scheme is designed to address is acutely felt in exactly this zone.

Unemployment and limited economic diversification compound the education barrier: young people described a regional economy that has not kept pace with the scale of its own youth population, pushing many toward informal economic activity by default rather than choice. Electricity and broader infrastructure deficits were cited as a direct constraint on business growth and productivity — a concern that recurs across every region in this report but was raised with specificity in the Northwest around its effect on small enterprise.

Notably, this region's consultation was alone among the six in explicitly naming cybercrime and the erosion of social values as concerns in their own right, linked directly by participants to the underlying conditions of unemployment and limited opportunity — a connection worth taking seriously rather than treating as a separate moral or security issue disconnected from the economic argument running through the rest of this report.

What Young People Want to See Change

Participants prioritized the following.

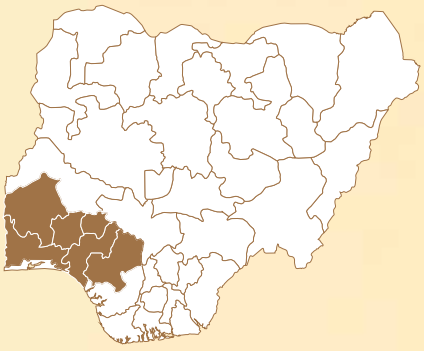
1. **Stronger education policy and expanded access,** particularly to tertiary education
2. **Job creation and genuine economic diversification** beyond the region's traditional sectors; improved electricity supply and infrastructure investment
3. **Greater youth participation in politics and governance,** moving beyond symbolic inclusion
4. **Wider adoption of technology and innovation** as tools for both economic opportunity and modernized public service delivery.

Regional Strategic Character

The Northwest's strategic character is defined by scale: it is the region where the success or failure of national youth policy will be most visible in aggregate terms, simply because more young Nigerians live here than in any other zone. The specific naming of cybercrime and social value erosion as consequences of economic exclusion — rather than as standalone social pathologies — is a finding this report treats as a warning rather than a footnote: unaddressed economic exclusion at this scale does not remain contained to economic indicators.

South West

Economic Dynamism with Higher Expectations



Context

Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti States constitute Nigeria's most economically dynamic and technologically advanced zone, anchored by Lagos's role as the country's commercial and innovation capital. The Southwest's youth consultation findings are notable less for the severity of the challenges named — which are real but comparatively less acute than in several other zones — than for the gap they reveal between regional economic advantage and the distribution of its benefits.

Lived Reality

Participants described a region whose growth has not been evenly shared. The high cost of education and limited access in rural areas persist even in a region with significant economic advantages, alongside declining quality of teaching and deteriorating education infrastructure — findings that should qualify any assumption that the Southwest's aggregate prosperity has resolved the education access concerns found elsewhere in the country.

Governance frustration in this region centres specifically on the gap between policy design and policy delivery. Participants described weak implementation, limited transparency, and — despite operating in a relatively developed digital ecosystem — persistent gaps in access to real-time public information. This is a pointed finding: the infrastructure for digital governance exists here more than anywhere else in the country, yet participants still experienced information gaps between citizens and institutions.

Notwithstanding these frustrations, Southwest participants expressed the most consistently optimistic tone of any regional consultation in this report, attributing that optimism directly to the region's digital culture, entrepreneurial ecosystem, and expanding civic engagement infrastructure.

What Young People Want to See Change

Participants prioritized the following.

1. **Improved teacher quality and remuneration,** expansion of schools into underserved rural communities within the region

2. **Digital access to public information as a specific,** actionable governance reform rather than an abstract aspiration

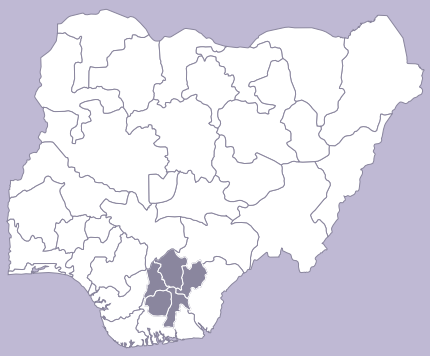
3. **Stronger and more structured youth participation in governance** and more effective implementation of policies already on the books.

Regional Strategic Character

The Southwest demonstrates that economic dynamism and technological advantage do not automatically resolve governance and education access gaps — they simply raise the baseline expectation against which those gaps are judged. The region's genuine advantage lies in the fact that the tools for closing these gaps — digital platforms, an entrepreneurial private sector, an engaged civic space — already exist locally in a way they do not elsewhere in the country. The strategic task here is deployment of existing capability, not the harder work of building capability from scratch.

South East

Entrepreneurial by Nature, Inclusive by Design



Context

Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo States carry Nigeria's strongest tradition of private-sector-driven, self-reliant economic activity — a culture of entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprise that long predates and operates largely independent of state support. This context matters directly for how the region's youth consultation findings should be read: a population accustomed to building economic life without relying on government is, this report finds, unusually pointed in its criticism of political exclusion specifically, precisely because economic self-reliance has not translated into political inclusion.

Lived Reality

Participants described persistent unemployment and limited formal job opportunities that push many young people toward small business and informal economic activity — not as an aspiration but, as elsewhere, a default. Insecurity affecting communities and business activity was named as a direct constraint on the region's core economic strength, echoing the North Central finding that insecurity and economic disruption compound rather than operate independently.

The most distinctive finding from this region concerns political participation. Participants described low youth political participation and weak policy implementation but framed this less as passive exclusion than as an active mismatch: a population that has proven its capacity to build and sustain economic enterprise without government support remains largely locked out of the political processes that shape the policy environment those enterprises operate within. Limited awareness of policies specifically designed to support young people compounds this — participants cannot engage with programs they do not know exist.

What Young People Want to See Change

Participants prioritized the following.

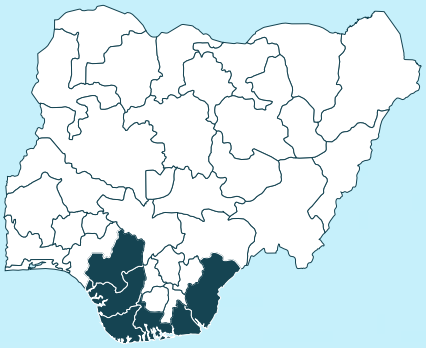
1. **Stronger youth inclusion in governance and politics,** framed explicitly as a matter of political participation rather than only economic support
2. **Improved accountability and transparency systems;** greater awareness of youth-focused policies and programs, addressing the visibility gap directly
3. **Expansion of digital governance and automation** to improve transparency; and increased access to technology and innovation infrastructure

Regional Strategic Character

The Southeast's defining strategic insight is that entrepreneurial self-reliance is not a substitute for political inclusion — it is, if anything, a reason political exclusion is felt more acutely, because this region's young people have already demonstrated the capability that inclusion would use. Participants were explicit that coalition-building among youth organizations and digital advocacy are strategies they are already deploying to close this gap themselves, a form of self-organized political capacity-building this report finds significant.

South South

Resource Wealth, Greater Opportunities for Our Youth



Context

Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States generate a disproportionate share of Nigeria's national revenue through oil, gas, and maritime economic activity — a fact that shapes every other finding from this region's consultation. No regional account in this report carries a sharper distinction between the wealth a region produces and the development outcomes its own population experiences.

Lived Reality

Participants described this distinction directly and without ambiguity: the region generates significant national revenue, yet many of its communities continue to experience underdevelopment, unemployment, and limited access to basic services. This is not a complaint about poverty in the abstract; it is a specific critique of the relationship between resource extraction and local benefit.

Governance findings from this region centre heavily on corruption and weak transparency, compounded by low youth inclusion in leadership and decision-making. Participants identified a further, more specific barrier that no other regional consultation named with the same emphasis: cultural and traditional systems that constrain youth — and particularly young women — from leadership and decision-making roles, operating alongside and sometimes reinforcing formal governance exclusion.

The explicit naming of women's exclusion as a distinct priority, rather than folding it into general youth exclusion, is a distinguishing feature of this region's findings and is treated as such in the national synthesis that follows.

What Young People Want to See Change

Participants prioritized the following.

1. **Stronger governance and anti-corruption measures as foundational;** increased youth inclusion in leadership positions specifically, not general consultation

2. **Greater inclusion of young women in governance,** named as a distinct priority requiring distinct action

3. **Improved education and health systems;** and expanded access to technology and innovation as an alternative economic pathway less dependent on the extractive sector

Regional Strategic Character

The South South's strategic reality is that resource wealth without local benefit and accountable governance produces a specific and corrosive form of youth grievance — not the grievance of scarcity, but the grievance of visible plenty diverted elsewhere. Combined with cultural barriers to youth and women's leadership operating in parallel to formal governance exclusion, this region's path forward requires addressing formal accountability and informal, cultural inclusion simultaneously; addressing only one will leave the other in place.

Reading the Regional Findings Together

Six regions, six distinct economic structures, six different relationships to the security and governance questions facing the country — and yet the same handful of themes recur throughout: economic hardship intensified by the reforms described in Chapter Two, governance frustration centred on implementation rather than policy design, and technology and youth-led entrepreneurship named consistently as the clearest source of hope available. That convergence, achieved without any attempt to engineer it across independently conducted consultations, is the strongest form of evidence this report can offer that the findings in the chapter that follows are genuinely national rather than an artifact of where and how young people happened to be consulted.

CHAPTER FOUR

National Findings

Where Chapter Three preserved what is distinct about each region, this chapter does the opposite work: it draws out what is common. Six thematic pillars recur across the regional consultations, the survey findings, and the national validation forum that tested these findings in December 2025. Each pillar is presented with what the evidence shows, what has changed since the 2023 report, and what remains unresolved.

Six Pillars

for a Nigeria Young People Want

Key themes and priorities from youth consultations across all six geopolitical zones.

1. Governance, Leadership and Accountability

Young people want governance that goes beyond consultation to delivery, with transparent, accountable and responsive institutions.

- Policy Implementation
- Meaningful youth inclusion
- Policy Implementation
- Transparency & accountability
- Trackable delivery mechanisms

2. Economic Dignity, Jobs & Human Capital

Young people seek decent work, support for entrepreneurship, and economic policies that cushion the human cost of reforms.

- Job Creation & decent work
- Support for entrepreneurship
- Access to finance and fair credit
- Targeted social protection
- Macroeconomic stability

3. Education Transformation

Young people want an education system that is affordable, accessible, and relevant to a changing economy.

- Affordable access to education
- Curricula aligned with future skills
- Effective use of student loans

4. Peace, Security and Social Cohesion

Young people want safer communities, with youth actively involved in peacebuilding and solutions to the root causes of insecurity across all regions.

- Stronger security & community safety
- Youth inclusion in peacebuilding
- Addressing root causes of insecurity
- Social cohesion & community dialogue

5. Technology and Digital Governance

Young people see technology as a major source of opportunity and a tool for more transparent, efficient and citizen-centred governance.

- Investment in digital infrastructure
- Digital skills and innovation support
- Real-time public information access
- Using technology for transparency and accountability (not just service delivery)

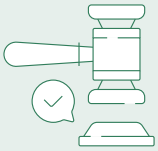
6. Youth Inclusion and Leadership Pathways

Young people want genuine representation in decision-making — in formal politics, policy design, resource allocation, and cultural leadership structures.

- Meaningful youth representation
- Leadership opportunities
- Young women in leadership
- Reforming cultural and traditional structures that limit youth participation

PILLAR ONE

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ACCOUNTABILITY



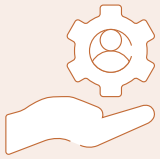
Governance is the most consistently cited concern across all six regions and in both survey instruments used in this report. What has changed since 2023 is not the presence of the concern — the first Nigeria We Want report identified governance and leadership as the primary crisis facing the country — but its texture. Young people in this cycle's consultations describe governance failure less as an abstract deficiency of leadership character than as a specific, recurring sequence: policy announced, consultation conducted, input solicited — then silence on implementation.

This is a meaningful distinction for anyone designing a response. A leadership character problem is diffuse and resistant to institutional fixes. An implementation and follow-through problem is specific, trackable, and — this report argues in Chapter Five — precisely the kind of gap a well-designed National Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership framework is built to close, provided the plan is built around visible, monitorable delivery rather than another round of consultation with no delivery mechanism attached.

Across every region, participants distinguished between being consulted and being included. Consultation without visible influence on outcomes was repeatedly described not as neutral but as actively corrosive to trust — in several regional consultations, worse than not being asked at all, because it spends young people's time and goodwill and returns nothing they can point to.

PILLAR TWO

ECONOMIC DIGNITY, JOBS, AND HUMAN CAPITAL



Every regional consultation named unemployment, underemployment, and the cost of living among its leading concerns, and Chapter Two's account of subsidy removal, currency unification, and monetary tightening supplies the specific policy context this finding sits inside. What distinguishes this cycle's economic findings from 2023 is the shift from structural critique — an economy overly dependent on oil, insufficiently diversified — to acute, immediate hardship tied to identifiable decisions taken since the last report.

Young people across regions are not, in the main, asking for a return to the pre-2023 subsidized and managed-currency economy. What recurs instead is a demand for the human cost of transition to be treated as seriously as its fiscal logic — through wage policy that keeps pace with inflation rather than trailing it (a live concern given how quickly the 2024 minimum wage increase was eroded in real terms), through credit conditions that do not foreclose the small enterprise activity that employs the majority of young respondents, and through visible, well-targeted palliative and social protection measures rather than announcements of palliative intent that do not reach their intended recipients.

Entrepreneurship recurs, in every region, as the primary economic strategy young people are already pursuing largely without state support — a private, self-organized response to formal labour market conditions that are not currently generating sufficient employment. The strategic question this raises for government and development partners is not whether to support entrepreneurship in principle, but whether to support the entrepreneurship young people are already building at scale, through access to finance and infrastructure, rather than treating it as a program to be introduced from outside.

PILLAR THREE

EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION



Every region named some dimension of the education challenge, though the specific emphasis varies: cost and access in the Northwest and Southwest; quality and infrastructure decline in the Southwest specifically; the disruption of education by insecurity in the Northeast; and a general concern, present everywhere, that curricula and teaching quality have not kept pace with the skills a changing economy demands.

The introduction of the national student loan scheme since the 2023 report represents the most direct policy response to date to one dimension of this finding — the affordability barrier to tertiary education. Its relevance is felt most acutely in exactly the regions, particularly the Northwest, where the cost of tertiary education was named with the greatest specificity. Whether the scheme's early implementation is closing this gap in practice, as opposed to in policy design, is a question this report recommends be tracked explicitly rather than assumed.

Beyond affordability, a second and distinct concern recurs across regions: a mismatch between what education systems teach and what a technology- and entrepreneurship-oriented economy requires. Participants across regions, echoing language nearly identical to the 2023 report's own findings on this point, called for curricula that build problem-solving and technical capability rather than credentials disconnected from labour market demand — a concern that has not been resolved in the three years since it was first raised.

PILLAR FOUR

PEACE, SECURITY, AND SOCIAL COHESION

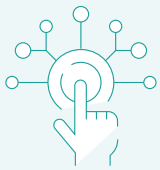


Security is a defining and present concern in every region, though its character differs sharply by geography, as Chapter Three makes clear. In the Northeast it is foundational — the precondition without which other reforms cannot take hold. In the North Central and Southeast it intersects directly with economic disruption, particularly to agriculture and small business respectively. In the South South it compounds an already acute governance and resource-benefit grievance.

What recurs across all regions, regardless of the specific security context, is a call for young people to be included as active participants in peacebuilding and community stability efforts rather than treated solely as either victims of insecurity or, in some contexts, its recruits. This distinction — between youth as a security risk to be managed and youth as a security asset to be engaged — is one this report recommends any national security or peacebuilding strategy treat as a starting design principle rather than an afterthought.

PILLAR FIVE

TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL GOVERNANCE



This is the pillar on which every regional consultation shows strong convergence , and the convergence itself is a finding worth stating plainly: across six regions that differ sharply in economic structure, security context, and governance experience, technology and the digital economy are named, without exception, as the clearest source of hope and the most credible pathway to economic opportunity currently visible to young people.

This finding should shape resourcing priorities directly. Where government, private sector, or development partner investment is discretionary, the evidence gathered for this report indicates that investment in digital infrastructure, digital skills, and technology-enabled governance will meet young people at the point of greatest existing motivation and self-directed effort, rather than requiring the harder and slower work of building interest in a sector from a standing start.

At the same time, the Southwest consultation's finding — that even the region with a relatively developed digital ecosystem still experiences real-time public information gaps — is a caution against assuming that digital infrastructure investment alone resolves the governance transparency concerns raised throughout Pillar One. Technology is a necessary but not sufficient instrument for the accountability young people are asking for; it must be paired with the institutional will to use it for transparency rather than only for service delivery.

PILLAR SIX

YOUTH INCLUSION AND LEADERSHIP PATHWAYS



Underlying every other pillar is a consistent, cross-regional finding about inclusion itself: young people do not believe they are meaningfully represented in the decisions that shape their lives, and this perception is not confined to formal politics. It extends to policy design processes, to the allocation of public resources, and — in the South South specifically — to cultural and traditional structures of leadership that operate in parallel to and sometimes reinforce formal exclusion.

The consistency of this finding across regions with otherwise very different governance and cultural contexts suggests that youth exclusion is not primarily a regional or cultural phenomenon but a structural feature of how Nigerian institutions at every level currently engage young people — a finding that argues for a genuinely national response, of the kind Chapter Seven of this report proposes, rather than region-specific interventions alone.

What Has Not Changed Since 2023

It is worth stating explicitly what the comparison between this report and its 2023 predecessor reveals about continuity as well as change. The specific policy environment has shifted substantially, as Chapter Two documents in detail. What has not shifted, in three years and under a change of administration, is the underlying structural grievance the 2023 report identified as its central finding: a gap between the volume of policy activity and the delivery of policy outcomes, and a persistent sense among young people that they are consulted more than they are included. Any assessment of progress since 2023 must hold both truths at once — the economic and policy environment has changed substantially, and the core governance grievance has remained largely unchanged.

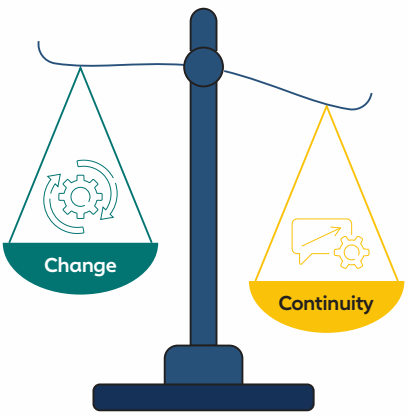
2023 vs. Current Report: Continuity and Change

What Has Changed (since 2023)

The specific policy environment has shifted substantially (as detailed in Chapter Two).

What Has Remained the Same (Continuity)

The core structural grievance identified in the 2023 report persists:
- gap between the volume of policy activity and the delivery of policy outcomes.
- A persistent sense among young people that they are consulted more than they are included.



Overall: There is clear change in the context, but continuity in the fund mental governance challenge.

Key Takeaway

Any assessment of progress since 2023 must hold both truths at once:

- The economic and policy environment has changed substantially,
- The core governance grievance has remained largely unchanged.

Before a commitment is finalized for NAP IV, it should be possible to articulate specifically what benefit a young Nigerian would be able to name and attribute to that commitment.



CHAPTER FIVE

Overnance Deep-Dive — Toward Nap IV

Justification for NAP IV

Nigeria's membership of the Open Government Partnership, which it joined as the 70th member, carries a commitment to develop and action National Action Plans — one of the few governance mechanisms in the country designed explicitly around the co-creation model. Young people across every region consulted for this report say they want government and civil society jointly designing commitments, with defined monitoring and evaluation built in from the start. A dedicated baseline survey was fielded specifically to inform the design of the fourth National Action Plan (NAP IV), assessing youth awareness of and experience with its predecessor, NAP III. This chapter treats that survey's findings on their own terms rather than folding them into Chapter Four's general governance findings, because NAP IV is a live, named policy vehicle this report can address directly — a rare case where research and recommendation can be joined without translation.

The findings below are drawn from the themes and patterns identified in the NAP IV baseline survey and corroborated across the regional consultations discussed in Chapter Three.

Awareness of NAP III

A substantial share of respondents to the baseline survey had not heard of NAP III prior to being surveyed, and a further group were unsure. This is, on its own, a significant finding for NAP IV's design: a National Action Plan cannot build youth ownership of commitments that youth do not know exist. Among respondents who had heard of NAP III, awareness came predominantly through civil society and NGO channels and through social media, with government programs and formal education institutions cited far less frequently as awareness channels. This distribution has a direct design implication — if NAP IV intends to reach young people at greater scale than its predecessor, the evidence suggests civil society partnership and digital/social channels are more effective vectors than government communication alone, at least as currently structured.

Perceived Impact and Benefit

Among respondents able to assess NAP III's impact, ratings clustered toward the middle of the scale — neither a strong endorsement nor a wholesale rejection, but an assessment consistent with the "policy activity without delivered outcome" pattern identified throughout this report. Asked directly whether they or their community had benefited from any NAP III commitment, responses were split between no benefit, uncertainty, and indirect rather than direct benefit — with very few respondents reporting clear, direct benefit. This is a meaningful data point for any future National Action Plan: commitments that are technically fulfilled on paper but do not translate into a benefit young people can identify and name will continue to produce this same middling assessment regardless of how the commitments themselves are designed.

What Respondents Identified as NAP III's Strengths

Where respondents identified strengths, several themes recurred: the co-creation model itself, bringing government and civil society into the same process, was cited as a genuine structural improvement over governance processes perceived as more closed. The attention paid to inclusion — efforts to bring youth, women, and marginalized groups into co-creation and implementation, even where imperfectly realized — was cited as a meaningful design intention. Specific commitments around anti-corruption measures, open budgets, and the beneficial ownership register were named by several respondents as concrete, if partial, achievements. The use of technology and open data to improve citizen access to information was also cited, though — consistent with the Southwest regional finding in Chapter Three — several respondents noted that digital platforms created under NAP III were not consistently maintained or kept usable after launch.

What Respondents Identified as NAP III's Gaps

The gaps identified by respondents cluster tightly around implementation rather than design. Several respondents specifically distinguished between commitments that were well-designed on paper and commitments that were inconsistently delivered in practice — citing budget transparency and open contracting as areas where progress was uneven despite being formally part of the plan. Coordination among the various government and civil society actors responsible for implementation was cited as weak. Monitoring and evaluation, though intended to be a core feature of the plan, was described by several respondents as having "major gaps" in practice. A recurring, specific recommendation was for greater inclusion of youth, women, and persons with disabilities not just in the design of commitments but throughout their implementation — echoing the South South region's finding in Chapter Three that inclusion named at the design stage does not automatically persist through delivery.

Priorities Named for NAP IV

Asked what NAP IV should prioritize, respondents most frequently selected peace and security for young people, political participation and leadership, and digital governance paired with skills development and innovation in governance — with quality and inclusive education, decent jobs and entrepreneurship, gender equality and social inclusion, fiscal accountability and extractive transparency, and participatory governance also recurring frequently. This distribution maps closely onto the six thematic pillars identified independently in Chapter Four, which is itself a form of cross-validation: a survey designed specifically around NAP IV priorities and a set of regional consultations designed independently around general youth reality converge on substantially the same set of concerns.

Recommendations for NAP IV Design

Drawing on both the specific NAP III assessment above and the broader governance findings in Chapter Four, this report recommends that NAP IV be designed around four principles:

1.

Visibility by design, not by accident

Drawing on both the specific NAP III assessment above and the broader governance findings in Chapter Four, this report recommends that NAP IV be designed around four principles:

2.

Monitoring built in from commitment design, not added afterward

The most consistent gap identified in NAP III was not the ambition of its commitments but the consistency of their delivery and the weakness of monitoring against them. NAP IV commitments should each specify, at the point of design, how delivery will be tracked and how that tracking will be made visible to the citizens the commitment concerns.

3.

Youth and women's inclusion sustained through implementation, not only design.

NAP III's inclusion intentions at the design stage were noted favourably; their erosion through implementation was noted as a gap. NAP IV should build inclusion mechanisms — for example, youth and gender representation on implementation and monitoring bodies, not only design workshops — that persist through the full lifecycle of each commitment.

4.

Direct, attributable benefit as a design test

Before a commitment is finalized for NAP IV, it should be possible to articulate specifically what benefit a young Nigerian would be able to name and attribute to that commitment. The most common assessment of NAP III recorded in this chapter was uncertainty about whether any benefit had occurred at all — a test any NAP IV commitment should be able to pass before it is adopted.

"Coalitions are stronger than individual organizations."

— Youth participant, Southeast regional consultation

“The son of a nobody can become somebody without knowing anybody.”



CHAPTER SIX

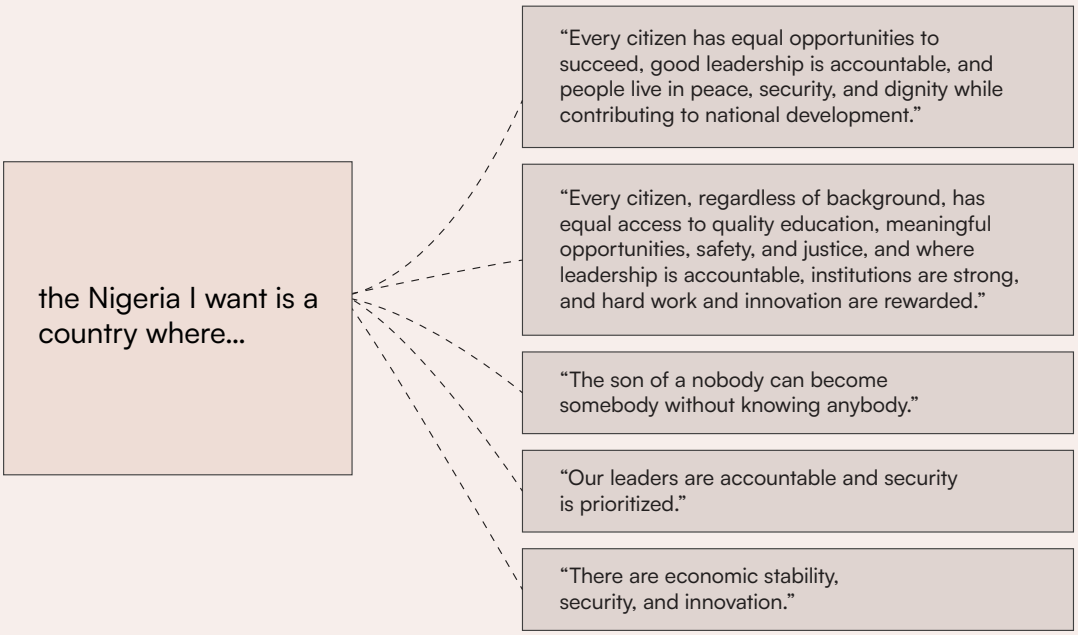
The Aspirations — What Young People Want

Why This Chapter Carries More Weight Than It Would Have in 2023

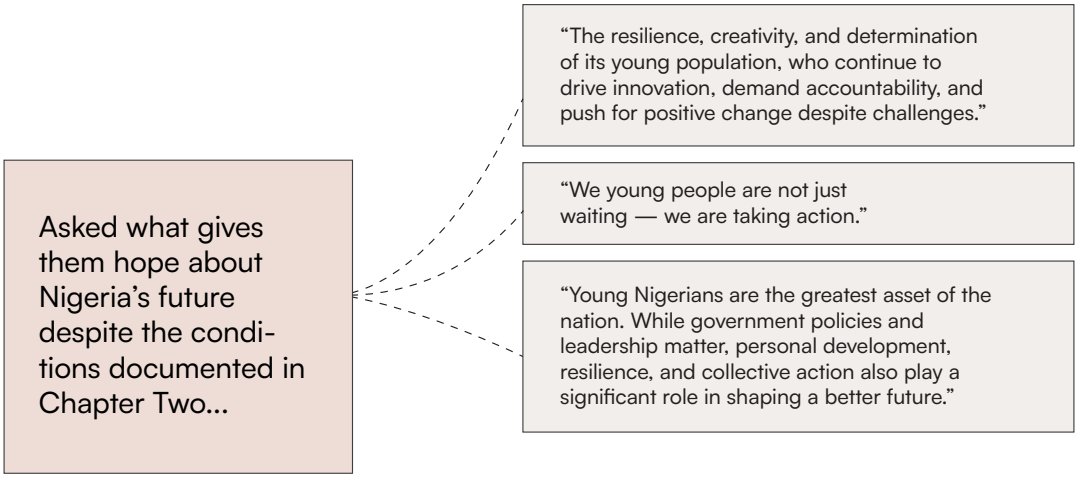
In the first Nigeria We Want report, the vision for the country's future was one output among several, sitting alongside four alternative scenarios that gave decision-makers a way to hedge against uncertainty. This report has no scenario chapter. That means this chapter — the direct statement of what young Nigerians want their country to become — is not one input into a broader strategic exercise. It is the report's centre of gravity. Everything in Chapters Two through Five documents distance from this chapter's content; everything in Chapter Seven exists to close that distance.

In Their Own Words

Asked to complete the sentence "the Nigeria I want is a country where...", respondents answered with a striking consistency — one corroborated independently by the regional consultations in Chapter Three. Representative responses include:



Asked what gives them hope about Nigeria's future despite the conditions documented in Chapter Two, respondents pointed overwhelmingly to the resilience, creativity, and determination of young Nigerians themselves — not to government action, and not to any specific policy. Representative responses include:



This is a finding that should be read with some caution rather than uncomplicated optimism. Hope that is grounded in what young people can build for themselves, rather than in confidence that institutions will deliver for them, is a resource — but it is also evidence of exactly the trust deficit documented throughout this report. A generation that has concluded it must generate its own hope independent of its institutions is a generation whose relationship with those institutions requires urgent repair, not congratulation for its resilience despite them.

The Values Young People Want to Define Nigeria's Future

Across both survey instruments and the regional consultations, a consistent cluster of values recurs when young people are asked what should define the Nigeria they want: accountability, justice, transparency, economic opportunity, security, inclusion, unity, and human dignity appear with the greatest frequency and in the widest variety of combinations, suggesting these are not competing priorities but a coherent, shared value set rather than a list assembled from disparate individual preferences.

Two further values recur with a specificity worth naming directly: meritocracy — a recurring frustration, expressed almost identically across several regions and both survey instruments, that opportunity in Nigeria currently depends on connection rather than capability — and gender equality, named specifically and separately from general inclusion language, particularly though not exclusively by respondents in the South South consultation.

What Success Looks Like to Young People

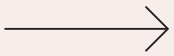
Asked to imagine Nigeria a decade from now, respondents described success in strikingly practical, non-abstract terms: stable electricity and functioning infrastructure; an economy where a young person's effort and education translate reliably into a livelihood; institutions that respond to citizen input rather than merely collecting it; and a country young people choose to build their lives in rather than one they plan to leave. This last point deserves direct attention: a meaningful share of respondents indicated they have seriously considered leaving Nigeria in the past two years, and asked what would change that calculation, answers centered consistently on the same cluster of conditions — jobs, security, and a credible sense that effort is rewarded — rather than on emigration-specific incentives. The clearest retention strategy available to Nigeria, in other words, is not a program aimed at discouraging emigration directly, but delivery on the conditions already named throughout this report.

What Young People Believe About Each Other

A specific and important finding, corroborating the convergence documented in Chapter Three: asked whether young Nigerians across different regions share similar aspirations, many respondents said yes or largely yes. This self-assessment — that young Nigerians recognize shared aspiration across regional, ethnic, and religious lines even as they describe a country experiencing rising division at the national level — is one of the more strategically significant findings in this report. It suggests that a genuinely national youth movement organized around common cause is not merely aspirational but consistent with how young Nigerians already perceive one another, providing a foundation the call to action in Chapter Seven builds on directly.

A Vision Statement

Drawing together the language, values, and specific aspirations documented above and corroborated across every regional consultation, this report offers the following as a statement of the Nigeria young people want — not as a new formulation imposed from outside, but as a synthesis of what has been said consistently, in different words, across every region and both survey instruments:



A Nigeria where opportunity is earned through effort and ability rather than connection; where leadership is accountable for delivering, not only announcing, but its commitments also; where young people are included in decisions as a matter of design rather than as a courtesy; where security and economic dignity are available in every region, not concentrated in a few; and where the country's own young people choose, with confidence rather than resignation, to build their futures here.

“We are hardworking. We are not just waiting — we are taking action.”

— Respondent, Youth Aspirations Survey



CHAPTER SEVEN

Call To Action

Why This Chapter Carries More Weight Than Its Equivalent in 2023

The original Nigeria We Want report closed with a call to action distributed across a scenario framework, a strategic agenda, and a set of roles for youth — its urgency spread across several chapters and several audiences. This report has none of that architecture to lean on. Everything documented in Chapters Two through Six leads to this chapter alone. That changes what this chapter needs to do: it cannot be a restatement of aspiration in imperative language. It must name who is responsible for what, by when it is reasonable to expect movement, and how progress will be visible to the young people this report represents.

Consistent with the finding running through every chapter of this report — that Nigeria's deficit is in implementation, not in the identification of what needs to be done — the commitments below are deliberately narrow and specific rather than comprehensive. A shorter list that is tracked serves young people better than a longer one that is not.

Government

- **Make NAP IV's commitments trackable from the point of design**, following the four principles set out in Chapter Five — visible communication, built-in monitoring, sustained inclusion through implementation, and a defined, attributable benefit for each commitment. Responsibility: the NAP IV Steering Committee, in partnership with the Open Government Partnership Secretariat and civil society co-chairs.

- **Publish, at a defined and recurring interval, a plain-language account of the status of major reforms affecting youth economic conditions** — including but not limited to the practical effect of the 2025 tax reforms and NELFUND's disbursement performance against its stated targets — so that assessment of these reforms need not rely solely on this report's necessarily periodic consultation cycle. Responsibility: The Federal Ministry of Finance and the Federal Ministry of Education, respectively, in coordination with the National Bureau of Statistics.

- **Establish or strengthen a formal mechanism for youth representation in the design and monitoring, not only the initial consultation, of policy affecting young people** — addressing directly the finding, recurring in every region, that consultation without sustained influence over outcomes is experienced as more corrosive than no consultation at all. Responsibility: The Federal Ministry of Youth Development, in coordination with the National Assembly's relevant committees.

- **Treat the security findings in Chapter Three as differentiated by region rather than addressed through a single national security posture** — the Northeast's foundational security constraint, the North Central and Southeast's insecurity-linked economic disruption, and the South South's governance-linked grievance each require a distinct response, not a uniform one. Responsibility: The National Security Adviser's office, in coordination with state security councils.

Private Sector

- **Direct discretionary investment in youth economic programs toward the technology, digital, and creative sectors young people have already identified, across every region, as their primary source of hope and economic activity** — rather than toward sectors selected for their alignment with existing corporate social responsibility templates. Responsibility: private sector partners and industry associations engaging in youth-focused corporate social investment.

- **Expand access to finance and credit specifically calibrated for the informal and small enterprise activity young people are already building,** recognizing that the entrepreneurship documented throughout this report is a response to labour market conditions already underway at scale, not a program to be introduced from outside. Responsibility: commercial banks, fintech operators, and development finance institutions active in Nigeria's SME lending space.

Civil Society & Development Partners

- **Continue and expand the awareness and communication role that this report's own evidence shows civil society and social media, not government channels, are most effectively performing** for initiatives like the Open Government Partnership — a role civil society should treat as a distinct mandate rather than an incidental byproduct of programmatic work. Responsibility: civil society organizations and NGOs active in the governance and youth development space, including LEAP Africa and NYFF's existing partner network.

- **Sustain the regional consultation and national validation cycle underpinning this report,** ensuring the next iteration of this process continues to speak with the same triangulated confidence this report has drawn on throughout. Responsibility: NYFF, in partnership with the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and other development partners supporting this work.

- **Maintain and strengthen the six regional consultation networks** that produced the findings in Chapter Three, ensuring regional voice is not a one-time data collection exercise but an ongoing channel available for future validation cycles. Responsibility: NYFF's regional coordination structure.

Young People

This report has documented, at length, what has been done to and around young Nigerians since 2023. It closes by naming, with equal specificity, what young people themselves committed to during this consultation process — not as a symmetrical obligation designed to balance the ledger, but because every regional consultation and survey instrument used for this report recorded young people naming their own role unprompted.

- **Continue building the entrepreneurial and technology-driven economic activity** that every region in this report names as the clearest source of hope currently available, and that this report's recommendations to government and the private sector are designed to support rather than supplant.

- **Engage in the political participation pathways set out in the original 2023 report's guidance on participation without contesting elections** — voting, party membership, community organizing, civic journalism, and institution-building — recognizing that the exclusion documented throughout this report will not close through protest alone, consequential as the 2024 #EndBadGovernance mobilization was in registering the scale of youth grievance.

- **Build and sustain coalitions across youth organizations and across regions,** drawing on the finding in Chapter Six that young Nigerians already perceive shared aspiration across regional and ethnic lines — a foundation for collective action this report recommends young people treat as an asset already in hand, not one still to be built.

- **Hold this report itself to account.** The commitments above are only as credible as the willingness of the constituency this report represents to track whether they are kept. The annual and recurring youth summit format recommended in the 2023 report, if reinstated, is one mechanism for this; the monitoring structure set out in Annex C is another.

Immediate (0—6 Months)

Establish the standing youth monitoring panel described in Annex C, drawing on the existing six regional consultation networks rather than building new structures from scratch. Begin publishing, even in preliminary form, the plain-language account of major reform status recommended for government in this chapter, so that a public reporting habit is established early rather than introduced only once NAP IV formally launches.

Near-Term (6—18 Months)

Finalize NAP IV's design incorporating the four principles set out in Chapter Five. Launch the public tracking dashboard described in Annex C. Convene the first annual public reporting cycle, ideally timed to a reconvened National Youth Summit. Begin structured private sector engagement using the commercial case set out in Chapter Sixteen, targeting the specific finance-access and skills-partnership commitments named in this chapter.

Sustained (18—36 Months and Ongoing)

Complete the first full cycle of NAP IV implementation against its published monitoring commitments, with civil society verification as specified in this chapter. Conduct the next full regional consultation and validation cycle, testing whether the implementation gap this report identifies as its central finding has measurably narrowed — the success criterion this report holds itself to in Annex C. Continue the recurring five-stage cycle described in Chapter Seventeen as an ongoing institutional practice rather than a project with a defined end date.

A Note on this Sequencing

The horizons above are offered as a reasonable starting sequence, not a rigid schedule immune to revision. What matters more than the specific timing is the underlying principle this report has returned to throughout: each stage should produce a visible, verifiable outcome before the next stage is treated as underway, so that sequencing itself does not become another instance of the implementation gap this report exists to document and address.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Youth Voices from the Consultations

The chapters preceding this one synthesize and organize what young Nigerians said into thematic findings and recommendations — necessary work, but work that inevitably smooths over the texture of individual testimony in service of pattern-finding. This chapter deliberately does the opposite. It presents, with minimal framing, a wider sample of what respondents to this cycle's surveys and consultations said in their own words, organized loosely by theme, so that the specificity and range of individual voice is not lost in the synthesis above. Respondents are not named, consistent with the survey's terms of participation; quotations are lightly edited only for clarity.

On What Is Wrong Today

- "Poor governance. This is so because governance touches on everything. It makes the economy decline, brings about insecurity and ineptitude of government to act, and of course, unemployment follows."
- "Insecurity and the rate at which youths are on drugs — it is causing so many unrest in the society."
- "Limited economic opportunity — talent is available, but opportunity is scarce, and this makes a lot of talent go to waste."
- "Insecurity, because the government is not proactive in solving the root cause of insecurity."

On What Would Make Nigeria Work

- "A better Nigeria for young people is one where talent is not limited by circumstance and hard work has a clear path to opportunity."
- "A working economy affects life generally. Families will even be happier, and the abuse that stems from and results from hardship would reduce."
- "Nigeria would be a better country for young people if there were more access to quality education, employment opportunities, skills development, and support for entrepreneurship. Good governance, security, and youth inclusion in decision-making would also empower young people to contribute meaningfully."
- "Political will and citizen will."

On Everyday Life, If Nigeria Worked Well

- "A redefined nation with happy youth and crime free."

  "Young people holding leadership positions, running for political offices without fear, getting employment and access to green skills."

  "If Nigeria worked well, young people would have access to quality education, decent jobs, reliable healthcare, and a safe environment. They would be able to pursue their goals, start businesses, and contribute to their communities without

facing unnecessary barriers or uncertainty."

- "A safe place where they are not scared for their lives or the lives of their families."

On Why Hope Persists

- "Because things cannot keep going this way — China was once worse off than Nigeria."
- "Every great country has had its dark days; these dark days culminate into something great. Young people are waking up — this is a good sign."
- "We have leaders and individuals who still genuinely stand for the right and growth of the country."
- "There is so much potential here — we just need to put structures in place to harness it."
- "I believe in the power and abilities of youth. If youth are given the chance, with the right tools and support, then we can have the Nigeria we want."

On Governance Reform

- "Several reforms could significantly improve governance in Nigeria by strengthening institutions, increasing accountability, and improving service delivery. Anti-corruption agencies should have greater independence and adequate funding."
- "Reducing the age of the presidency candidate, removing immunity for governors and other key stakeholders, [reforming] educational curriculums."
- "Governance in Nigeria can be improved through greater transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in decision-making. Strengthening public institutions, tackling corruption, ensuring the rule of law, and promoting merit-based leadership would help build trust."

On What Economic Success Means

- "Ability to meet work and earn value for service rendered, and in turn your revenue should meet your basic needs."
- "As a young Nigerian, economic success means having the opportunity to build a stable, dignified, and prosperous life through hard work, innovation, and talent — decent and sustainable employment, earning enough to meet basic needs, and long-term security."
- "Economic success means having Nigerian-made and produced goods and services without outsourcing from international partners, plus having basic key things that drive economic success like constant electricity and water."
- "Ability to work and get a return without having ridiculous economic crisis and inflation."

On What Would Make Young People Stay and Build

- "Working country where economy, security, peace and unity are order of the day."
- "A system where youths get employed automatically or paid an allowance to start something up after NYSC, plus allow youth voices to be heard and actions taken in terms of decision-making and leadership positions."
- "More young Nigerians would choose to stay and build the country if there were better job opportunities, improved

security, quality education, and a more accountable government. When young people see real prospects for success and fairness at home, they are more likely to invest their future here."

- "An obvious shift in the polity and economy of the nation, as well as security."

On Education Reform

- "Change in curriculum and teaching methods, as well as better remuneration for teachers to curb corruption and financial harassment."
- "Curriculum reform — transform education to a skills-based system."
- "Nigeria's education system needs reforms that focus on quality learning, practical skills, and better teacher training. Schools should be better funded, curriculum updated to match real-world needs, and students given more opportunities for innovation, critical thinking, and digital literacy."

On National Unity and Its Threats

- "Profiling of criminals along tribal lines by the media."
- "The biggest threats to national unity include ethnic and religious divisions, corruption, insecurity, inequality, and lack of trust in leadership. When people feel excluded or unfairly treated, it weakens national cohesion and increases tension within society."
- "Unity among Nigerians can be strengthened through fairness, justice, and equal opportunities for all citizens regardless of ethnicity or religion. Promoting good governance, reducing inequality, encouraging dialogue, and fostering mutual respect will also help."
- "A greater Nigeria — a Nigeria where young people can seek opportunities and get them fairly, and one where they are not scared while they go about their lives."

On What Worries Young People Most

- "Bad leadership."
- "Her people."
- "What worries me most about Nigeria's future is the combination of insecurity, unemployment, corruption, and lack of effective leadership, which can limit opportunities for young people and slow national development if not addressed."
- "The leaders' indifference to the lives of Nigerians."

On the Role Young People Want to Play

- "Get involved in governance and advocacy."
- "Mentorship to younger ones and speaking up whenever I have the opportunity to."
- "I want to play a role in shaping Nigeria's future by contributing to youth empowerment, education, and community development. Through leadership, advocacy, and service, I hope to help create opportunities that enable young people to reach their potential."

What Young People Would Tell Nigeria's Leaders Directly

- "Fix the security, tone down the corruption and fix infrastructure, and see how the country will never forget you."
- "This nation is ours to do with as we want, but most importantly in consideration of the fact that it is ours."
- "Get your acts together. Don't joke with people's lives and future."
- "To have the fear of God in whatever they do, and to remember that democracy is Nigerian, by the people and for the people — not the way they have now positioned it."
- "If I could advise Nigeria's leaders directly, I would urge them to prioritize good governance, accountability, and the well-being of citizens. They should focus on creating jobs, improving education and healthcare, ensuring security, and leading with integrity."
- "Care about the lives of your people."

"This chapter takes that finding further, examining five sectors young people across this report's evidence base identify as holding the greatest promise, and setting out what each sector specifically requires to convert youth enthusiasm into economic outcomes."



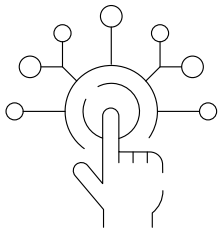
CHAPTER NINE

Sector Deep-Dives

Chapter Four identified technology, entrepreneurship, and the digital and creative economies as the clearest source of hope named consistently across every regional consultation. This chapter takes that finding further, examining five sectors young people across this report's evidence base identify as holding the greatest promise, and setting out what each sector specifically requires to convert youth enthusiasm into economic outcomes.

1

Technology and the Digital Economy

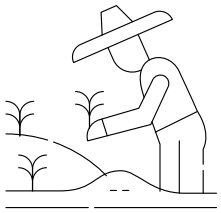


Every region represented in this report names technology as central to the future its young people want, and survey respondents rank it as the single most important enabler of the Nigeria they envision. This is not a diffuse aspiration; it reflects lived experience of a sector where Nigerian youth have already demonstrated global competitiveness, from fintech to software development to the outsourced digital services increasingly cited by respondents as a credible path to income independent of the domestic labour market's constraints.

What the sector requires to scale further, according to this report's evidence, is not further validation of its potential but resolution of three specific constraints repeated across regions: reliable electricity, since intermittent power remains a direct tax on digital enterprise regardless of how skilled its workforce becomes; affordable and reliable internet access, particularly outside major urban centres, where the Northwest and North Central consultations both noted that digital opportunity is unevenly distributed within their own zones; and a regulatory and financing environment that treats young digital entrepreneurs as a sector to be supported rather than, in the language used by several respondents, merely taxed.

2

Agriculture and Food Systems

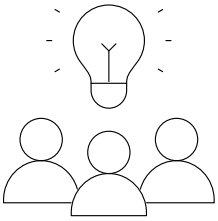


Agriculture recurs as a named priority particularly in the North Central and Northwest consultations, regions where agricultural livelihood and youth economic opportunity are directly linked. What distinguishes this cycle's findings from a generic call to "modernize agriculture" is the specificity with which respondents connect agricultural opportunity to the security and infrastructure findings elsewhere in this report: agricultural potential in conflict-affected areas cannot be separated from progress on the security question, and agricultural productivity cannot be separated from the electricity and infrastructure deficits named as a constraint in nearly every region.

Youth engagement with agriculture, where it is described positively in this report's evidence, centres overwhelmingly on value-addition and technology-enabled agriculture — processing, logistics, agri-tech platforms — rather than on primary production alone, a distinction with direct implications for where investment and skills programs targeting youth in this sector should be concentrated.

3

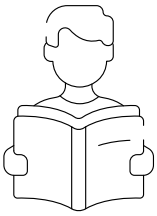
The Creative Economy



Nigeria's creative economy — music, film, fashion, and adjacent creative industries — is named across multiple regional consultations and survey responses as a sector of genuine, demonstrated national competitiveness, one of the few areas where respondents describe Nigerian achievement on a global stage without qualification. The sector's continued growth, in the account of this report's evidence, depends less on direct government support than on the same enabling conditions named throughout this report — reliable digital infrastructure, financial services capable of supporting creative enterprise, and intellectual property protections that allow creative entrepreneurs to capture the value of their own work.

4

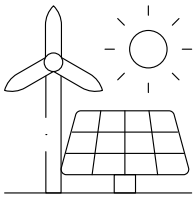
Education and Human Capital Services



Beyond its treatment as a challenge in Chapter Four, education also appears throughout this report's evidence as a sector of opportunity in its own right — private tutoring, skills training platforms, and technology-enabled learning services that young people are themselves building in response to gaps in the formal education system. This report treats this as a meaningful signal: where formal institutions have not closed a gap, young entrepreneurs are already building services to close it privately, a pattern of self-organized response this report has noted elsewhere in the economic findings of Chapter Four and recommends policymakers treat as evidence of unmet demand worth formalizing support for, rather than a parallel system to be ignored.

5

Renewable Energy



Given how consistently electricity and infrastructure deficits recur across every regional consultation as a constraint on nearly every other sector named in this chapter, renewable energy — solar mini-grids and off-grid power solutions in particular — deserves explicit treatment as a sector rather than only as an infrastructure line item. Youth-led enterprise in decentralized renewable energy provision, where it appears in this report's evidence, is described as directly addressing the electricity constraint that recurs across the technology, agriculture, and creative economy findings above — making this sector's development a multiplier for the others rather than a competing priority for scarce investment attention.

“Certain themes recur despite this regional distinctiveness — validation that a flattened summary would have quietly discarded.”



CHAPTER TEN

Gender, Disability, and Inclusion

Why This Chapter Stands Alone

Gender and disability inclusion appear throughout this report's regional and thematic findings, but this report treats the subject as warranting dedicated treatment rather than only distributed mention, for a specific reason documented most directly in the South South regional consultation: exclusion on the basis of gender and disability in Nigeria operates through both formal governance channels and informal, cultural structures that persist independent of formal policy change. A recommendation that addresses only the formal channel will leave the informal one in place, and this report's evidence suggests the informal channel is, in several regions, the more durable of the two.

Gender Inclusion

Young women's exclusion from leadership and decision-making was named as a distinct priority — not folded into general youth exclusion — most explicitly in the South South and Southeast regional consultations and recurs in the values young people across both survey instruments say should define Nigeria's future, where gender equality appears consistently alongside but separately from general inclusion language.

The South South consultation's specific finding — that cultural and traditional systems constrain young women's leadership participation in ways that operate independently of and sometimes reinforce formal governance exclusion — is a finding this report treats with particular seriousness, because it implies that policy reforms targeting formal representation (electoral quotas, appointment targets) will be necessary but insufficient on their own. Durable change on this front requires engagement with the traditional and cultural institutions the South South consultation identified directly, a more difficult and slower undertaking than formal policy reform, but one this report's evidence suggests cannot be skipped.

Disability Inclusion

Persons with disabilities were represented as a distinct delegate category in the original 2023 consultation process — a practice this report recommends be continued and, where possible, strengthened. Disability-related findings, however, appear less frequently across this report's regional consultations than gender-related findings. Future cycles should address that gap directly, including through targeted outreach to disability-focused youth organisations.

Where disability inclusion is raised in this report's evidence, the request is consistent and specific: inclusion should be counted and

planned for, not treated as an afterthought to general youth programming. This report endorses that framing directly and recommends that any implementation or monitoring structure established under Chapter Seven's call to action include explicit representation from disability-focused youth organizations, rather than assuming general youth representation is sufficient to capture disability-specific concerns.

A Recommendation on Intersectionality

This report recommends that future consultation and survey design treat gender, disability, region, and economic status not as separate demographic categories to be reported independently, but as intersecting characteristics whose combined effect on a young person's experience of exclusion may be greater than any single category would suggest alone — a young woman with a disability in a rural, security-affected community faces a materially different set of barriers than a young man in an urban, digitally connected one, even where both are nominally counted within the same "youth" category. Future consultation cycles should be designed with sufficient disaggregation to make this kind of intersectional analysis possible.

Before a commitment is finalized for NAP IV, it should be possible to articulate specifically what benefit a young Nigerian would be able to name and attribute to that commitment.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

Overnance Deep-Dive — Toward Nap IV

This chapter compares the first Nigeria We Want report and this one directly, pillar by pillar, so that the continuity and change documented throughout this report can be seen in one place rather than assembled by the reader from scattered references across earlier chapters.

Governance and Leadership

	2023 Report	2026 Report
FRAMING	Crisis of values and leadership; weak institutions favouring lawlessness and impunity	Implementation gap; policy announced and consulted on, but not delivered or tracked
PRIMARY EVIDENCE	Corruption Perceptions Index ranking; general leadership critique	Specific NAP III awareness and delivery gaps; consistent cross-regional finding on consultation without influence
WHAT HAS CHANGED	-	Sharper, more specific critique; a named policy vehicle (NAP IV) to address it directly
WHAT HAS NOT CHANGED	-	Trust deficit between citizens and institutions persists at similar intensity

Economic Conditions

	2023 Report	2026 Report
FRAMING	Structural: oil dependence, weak diversification, high debt service	Acute: subsidy removal, currency depreciation, and monetary tightening compounding in real time
PRIMARY EVIDENCE	Multidimensional poverty statistics; debt-to-GDP ratio	Direct respondent testimony on worsened conditions since 2023; entrepreneurship as default response
WHAT HAS CHANGED	-	Structural critique has become lived, dateable hardship tied to specific policy decisions
WHAT HAS NOT CHANGED	-	Entrepreneurship remains the primary self-organized response to formal labour market limitations

Education

	2023 Report	2026 Report
FRAMING	Underfunding; curriculum misalignment with labour market needs	Same underfunding and curriculum concerns; new affordability response via NELFUND
PRIMARY EVIDENCE	-	A national student loan scheme now exists; its effectiveness at closing the affordability gap is untested at time of writing
WHAT HAS CHANGED	-	Curriculum-to-labour-market mismatch remains unresolved in both reports

Security

	2023 Report	2026 Report
FRAMING	National existential threat scenario spanning terrorism, banditry, secessionist agitation	Same threats persist, differentiated more precisely by region and by their specific economic consequences
PRIMARY EVIDENCE	-	Sharper regional differentiation of security's specific economic and governance consequences
WHAT HAS CHANGED	-	The Northeast's severe security constraint remains unresolved

Youth Political and Civic Participation

	2023 Report	2026 Report
FRAMING	Barriers to participation catalogued extensively (Box 5.1); call to action to engage without necessarily contesting elections	Same barriers persist; a specific, large-scale demonstration of the barrier's consequence occurred (#EndBadGovernance, August 2024)
PRIMARY EVIDENCE	-	Youth civic mobilization has since occurred at a scale the 2023 report anticipated only in general terms
WHAT HAS CHANGED	-	Structural barriers to formal political inclusion remain largely unaddressed

Reading the Comparison

Two conclusions follow from this side-by-side reading, and this report considers both important enough to state directly rather than leave to inference.

First, the direction of youth aspiration has not shifted in three years — the Nigeria described in Chapter Six of this report is recognizably the same Nigeria the 2023 report's vision chapter described, differently worded but substantively continuous. This is a form of validation: two independently conducted, methodologically distinct exercises, three years apart, arrive at substantially the same articulation of what young Nigerians want.

Second, the policy environment has changed more in these three years than in the preceding decade, and yet the core governance grievance — implementation without delivery, consultation without inclusion — has not moved. This is the finding this report considers most consequential for anyone reading it to decide what to do next: the constraint on Nigeria's youth agenda is demonstrably not a shortage of policy activity. It is the persistent gap between that activity and its delivery — precisely the gap Chapter Seven's call to action is built to close.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Youth Economy in Detail

What Young People Say They Need to Thrive

When asked directly what opportunities would help them most achieve their personal goals, respondents to this report's survey instruments most frequently cited access to jobs, access to finance and credit, mentorship and leadership development, and skills training, with stable electricity, affordable internet, and government support also recurring frequently. Two things stand out in this pattern. First, the emphasis on finance and mentorship alongside jobs suggests respondents are not describing a passive wish to be employed, but an active intention to build enterprise and leadership capacity of their own — consistent with the entrepreneurship finding threaded throughout this report. Second, the recurrence of stable electricity and affordable internet alongside more conventional economic asks confirms that infrastructure is not a separate category from economic opportunity in how young people themselves experience it — the two are functionally inseparable.

What Young People Say Stands in Their Way

Asked what barriers most prevent them from achieving their aspirations, respondents named corruption, insecurity, and exclusion from decision-making with the greatest frequency and in the widest range of combinations — a pattern that recurs closely with the barriers to political participation specifically, where lack of trust in government, corruption, lack of opportunity, exclusion by older political figures, and lack of mentorship dominate. Gender discrimination and limited access to quality education recur as well, though somewhat less frequently in aggregate — a finding that should be read alongside, not instead of, the more specific gender findings detailed in Chapter Ten, since aggregate frequency understates the intensity with which gender barriers were raised in the regions where they were most salient.

Which Sectors Young People Believe Hold the Greatest Promise

Asked which sectors hold the greatest promise for Nigeria's future, respondents named technology and the digital economy with by far the greatest frequency, typically in combination with agriculture and the creative economy — a pattern directly consistent with the sector deep-dives in Chapter Nine. Renewable energy, education, healthcare, and manufacturing recur as secondary but still frequent choices. This ranking should inform where discretionary investment from government, the private sector, and development partners is directed: the evidence in this report indicates such investment will find young people already engaged and motivated in exactly these sectors, rather than requiring interest to be built from a standing start.

Institutional Trust

Asked which institutions they trust most, respondents consistently ranked civil society organisations and youth-led organisations above government institutions, with the private sector, educational institutions, and religious institutions also recurring, and government institutions and traditional institutions trailing behind. This finding should be read directly alongside the governance findings in Chapter Four and Chapter Five: it is not that young people distrust institutions as a category, but that they extend trust unevenly, toward the institutions — civil society, youth-led organisations — that this report's evidence suggests have been more consistent in translating engagement into visible outcome than government institutions have. This has a direct implication for the implementation and monitoring framework recommended in Annex C: mechanisms led or co-led by civil society and youth-led organisations are likely to command greater youth confidence, at least initially, than mechanisms designed and run by government alone.

Reading the Youth Economy Findings Together

Taken together, the patterns in this chapter describe a youth population that has a clear and consistent view of where economic opportunity lies (technology, agriculture, creative economy), a clear and consistent view of what stands in the way (corruption, insecurity, exclusion, and specific infrastructure gaps), and a clear and consistent view of which institutions have earned enough trust to be worth engaging with in the meantime (civil society and youth-led organisations, more than government). This is not a population that lacks direction. It is a population whose direction is well-formed and has been reported consistently — in this survey, in the regional consultations, and in the 2023 report before it — and whose primary unmet need, as Chapter Four concludes, is delivery rather than further diagnosis.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Stakeholder Analysis

Chapter Seven names commitments for government, the private sector, civil society and development partners, and young people themselves. This chapter sets out, in more detail than a call-to-action permits, why each stakeholder can be expected to act — or to struggle to act — on those commitments, based on the incentive structures this report's evidence and Nigeria's recent policy history suggest are in play. A recommendation that ignores the incentive structure of the party it addresses is a wish, not a strategy; this chapter is included so that Chapter Seven can be read as the latter.

Federal Government

- The federal government's strongest incentive across the period this report covers has been visible reform announcement — subsidy removal, currency unification, minimum wage legislation, tax reform — each of which delivers a clear political moment of decisive action. Its weaker incentive, this report's evidence consistently suggests, is sustained implementation follow-through, precisely because follow-through rarely generates a comparable moment of visibility. The recommendation in Chapter Five and Annex C — public, recurring, trackable reporting on implementation — is designed specifically to correct this imbalance by manufacturing a recurring visibility moment for delivery, not only for announcement.

  A further consideration specific to federal government: the officials responsible for policy announcement (typically at ministerial or presidential level) are frequently distinct from the officials responsible for implementation (typically at agency, parastatal, or civil service level), and these two groups do not necessarily share the same political incentives or accountability structures. Any implementation-tracking mechanism should be designed with this internal distinction in mind, directing accountability specifically toward the implementing agencies rather than diffusing it across "government" as an undifferentiated whole.

State and Local Government

- The July 2024 Supreme Court ruling on local government financial autonomy is a genuinely significant shift in this stakeholder's incentive structure, in principle giving local government direct access to resources previously mediated through state governments. Whether this translates into improved local service delivery — the level at which most of the infrastructure and governance concerns in Chapters Three and Four are actually experienced — depends on local government's administrative capacity to make use of that autonomy, a capacity this report's evidence does not directly assess but which future consultation cycles should examine explicitly, since local government is, in principle, now positioned to be the tier of government most capable of rapid, visible response to youth concerns.

  State governments retain significant influence over the specific policy areas — education, agriculture, and security coordination among them — most frequently named in this report's regional findings. State-level engagement with the commitments in Chapter Seven should not be treated as secondary to federal engagement; several of the specific reforms young people are asking for, particularly around education access and quality, sit substantially within state rather than federal authority.

The Private Sector

- Private sector actors face a straightforward incentive alignment with several of this report's recommendations — investment in the technology, creative, and digital sectors young people themselves rank as most promising is also, on ordinary commercial logic, a reasonable growth bet independent of any social responsibility framing. This alignment is worth naming explicitly because it means the private sector recommendations in Chapter Seven do not depend on appeals to corporate goodwill; they can be pursued on commercial merit, which this report considers a more durable basis for sustained private sector engagement than social responsibility framing alone typically provides.

  Financial institutions specifically face a more complex incentive picture: the monetary tightening described in Chapter Two, whatever its macroeconomic justification, raises the cost of exactly the credit young entrepreneurs most need, creating friction between the sector's near-term risk management incentives and the longer-term case for financing the youth entrepreneurship this report identifies as Nigeria's most promising economic asset. Development finance institutions and blended finance structures, which can absorb risk that commercial lenders alone cannot, have a particular role to play in resolving this friction.

Civil Society

- This report's own evidence — the finding in Chapter Twelve that young people trust civil society and youth-led organisations above government institutions — positions civil society as the stakeholder best placed to lead, rather than merely support, the implementation and monitoring structure recommended in Annex C. This is both an opportunity and a responsibility: civil society's credibility with young people is a genuine asset, but it is also, this report notes directly, not unlimited or permanent. It depends on civil society organisations themselves delivering visibly on the monitoring and advocacy roles this report assigns them, rather than trading on accumulated trust indefinitely.

Development Partners

- International development partners — foundations, multilateral institutions, and bilateral donors — retain significant influence over which parts of the youth agenda described in this report receive sustained financial support, particularly given the funding relationship already established between NYFF and its founding partners. This report's specific recommendation to development partners, beyond the general commitments in Chapter Seven, is to resource the monitoring and data collection infrastructure this report has repeatedly flagged as incomplete, since that infrastructure is a public good that benefits every other stakeholder's ability to act on evidence rather than assumption, and is the kind of infrastructure investment individual programmatic grants do not typically cover.

Traditional and Religious Institutions

- Named directly in the South South regional consultation and implicitly relevant across several other regions, traditional and religious institutions retain governance authority — particularly over questions of youth and women's leadership — that operates independently of formal government structures. This report's evidence suggests these institutions are not uniformly a barrier; several respondents across the survey instruments cited religious institutions among those they trust. The strategic implication is that engagement with traditional and religious leadership should be pursued as a distinct workstream from formal government engagement, rather than assumed to follow automatically from progress on formal governance reform.

Media

- Traditional and digital media — shapes how each of the reforms and conditions described in Chapter Two is understood by the public, and several regional consultations noted specific concerns about media practices, including the tribal profiling of crime reporting raised in the Youth Aspirations Survey. Media is not a direct party to the commitments in Chapter Seven, but its role in shaping whether implementation progress (or its absence) becomes visible to the public is significant enough that this report recommends the monitoring framework in Annex C include a specific media engagement strategy, rather than assuming reporting mechanisms alone will reach the public without deliberate communication effort.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Youth Population in Context

A Demographic Reality that Shapes Everything Else

No finding in this report can be properly weighed without holding in view the demographic scale of the population it concerns. Nigeria has one of the largest and fastest-growing youth populations in the world; a substantial majority of its citizens are under the age of thirty, and that share is not projected to fall meaningfully within the working lifetime of most people reading this report. This is the single most important structural fact underlying every chapter that precedes this one, and it cuts in two directions simultaneously that this report considers essential to hold together rather than resolve prematurely in favour of one or the other.

1.

The opportunity direction

A young, growing population is, on the evidence of many other countries at comparable stages of demographic transition, a genuine economic asset — a large working-age population, if adequately educated and employed, can drive sustained economic growth through a period demographers describe as a demographic dividend. Nigeria's youth population, on the evidence gathered throughout this report, is entrepreneurial, digitally engaged, and specifically identifies technology, agriculture, and the creative economy as sectors of genuine promise. This is precisely the raw material a demographic dividend requires.

2.

The risk direction

A demographic dividend is not automatic. It requires that the growing working-age population finds productive employment, adequate education, and functioning infrastructure at the pace population growth demands — and the evidence in Chapters Two and Four of this report suggests Nigeria's economy and public institutions are not currently expanding capacity at that pace. A large youth population that cannot find productive economic engagement does not remain neutral; it becomes, on the international evidence, a source of social and political instability risk precisely in proportion to how large and how underemployed it is. The insecurity documented in several of this report's regional findings, and the specific concern several respondents raised linking unemployment to social ills including drug use and cybercrime, should be read against this broader demographic backdrop.

Nigeria is, in other words, not choosing whether its youth population will shape the country's trajectory — it is choosing, through the pace and quality of its response to the findings in this report, which direction that shaping takes.

Urban-Rural Distribution

It is worth stating plainly what the urban and educated character of Nigeria's most digitally visible youth population likely means for the true scale of the challenges documented here: a population positioned to organize, consult, and advocate at this level of visibility is, if anything, likely to understate rather than overstate the severity of conditions facing Nigeria's full youth population, since rural and less-connected young Nigerians typically face the same structural barriers documented in this report with fewer resources available to absorb or work around them. This report recommends that its central findings be read as a floor, not a ceiling, on the severity of youth hardship nationally.

Migration Pressure as a Demographic Signal

Chapter Six's finding — that a meaningful share of respondents have seriously considered emigration in the past two years — should be read in this demographic context as well. Youth emigration intent is not unique to Nigeria among countries with large, young populations and constrained domestic opportunity; it is a well-documented pattern internationally, and Nigeria's own diaspora, discussed at length in the 2023 report as a source of remittance income and returning expertise, is itself partly a product of previous cycles of exactly this pressure. The strategic risk this report highlights is that emigration intent among the specific population segment surveyed for this report — educated, digitally connected, entrepreneurially engaged young people — represents a disproportionate loss relative to its share of the population, since this is precisely the segment most likely to be economically mobile enough to act on emigration intent, and most likely to have been the segment driving the entrepreneurial and technology-sector activity this report identifies as Nigeria's clearest source of domestic economic hope.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Comparative Context

Why Comparison Matters Here

None of the challenges documented in this report are unique to Nigeria in kind, even where they are acute in degree. Placing Nigeria's experience alongside comparable transitions elsewhere is useful not because other countries' circumstances are identical, but because it clarifies which parts of Nigeria's current experience are the predictable, well-documented consequences of a specific category of reform, and which parts reflect choices — in sequencing, communication, or social protection design — that were genuinely optional and could plausibly have been made differently.

Subsidy Reform Elsewhere

- Fuel and energy subsidy removal has been attempted, with varying degrees of success and social disruption, in multiple economies over the past two decades, from Indonesia's phased subsidy reductions to Egypt's more compressed reform timeline. The comparative literature on these episodes consistently identifies two factors as decisive in determining whether subsidy removal produces sustained economic benefit or prolonged social and political instability: the credibility and speed of compensating social protection measures, and the transparency with which savings from subsidy removal are shown to be redirected toward visible public benefit. Nigeria's experience, as documented throughout this report, suggests that both factors — the speed and visibility of palliative measures, and the visible redirection of subsidy savings — remain areas where young Nigerians perceive a substantial gap between intention and delivery, a pattern consistent with, rather than exceptional relative to, the broader international experience of this category of reform.

Currency Unification and Its Aftermath

- Nigeria's move from a managed, multi-window exchange rate to a unified, market-determined rate mirrors reforms undertaken by several other economies facing similar external reserve pressures. Where such reforms have produced more manageable social outcomes elsewhere, the comparative pattern generally involves either a more gradual unification process or more extensive currency-adjustment support targeted specifically at import-dependent small enterprise — precisely the population segment this report identifies as most acutely affected by Nigeria's faster, more compressed unification process.

Open Government and Youth Co-Creation Internationally

- Nigeria is one of a substantial number of countries participating in the Open Government Partnership framework discussed in Chapter Five, and several of those countries have incorporated youth co-creation into their National Action Plan design. This is consistent with, and provides external precedent for, the specific recommendation in Chapter Five that NAP IV sustain youth inclusion through implementation rather than only through initial co-creation.

Youth Demographic Transitions Elsewhere

- Several countries that have successfully converted a large youth population into a demographic dividend rather than a demographic burden — a distinction discussed directly in Chapter Fourteen — share a common feature worth naming: sustained, multi-decade public investment in education and infrastructure that kept pace with, rather than trailed, population growth, generally sustained across multiple political administrations rather than restarted with each electoral cycle. This is directly relevant to the specific and repeated call, across every regional consultation in this report, for long-term policy continuity — a request that, read against this comparative pattern, reflects an accurate diagnosis by young Nigerians themselves of what successful demographic transitions elsewhere have required.

The Limits of Comparison

- This report treats comparative context as informative, not prescriptive. Nigeria's federal structure, its specific security context, and the scale of its youth population relative to its institutional capacity are distinct enough from any single comparator that this report does not recommend importing any other country's reform model wholesale. What comparative context does responsibly support is confidence that the specific gaps this report identifies — palliative delivery speed, transparency of subsidy savings redirection, sustained rather than episodic youth inclusion, and long-term policy continuity — are the gaps the international evidence suggests matter most for whether a reform period of this kind produces durable benefit or durable grievance.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Business Case for Youth Investment

Beyond Corporate Social Responsibility

The private sector commitments in Chapter Seven are deliberately framed in commercial rather than philanthropic terms, and this chapter sets out why that framing is accurate rather than merely convenient. Nigeria's youth population is not principally an object of corporate social responsibility; on the evidence gathered throughout this report, it is a commercial opportunity that a narrow corporate social responsibility framing systematically undersells.

The Consumer & Talent Case

- A population this large, this young, and — on the evidence in Chapter Twelve — this consistently oriented toward technology, digital services, and the creative economy represents both a growing consumer market and a talent pool that Nigerian and international businesses operating in or through Nigeria will increasingly compete for. Businesses that engage this population early, through the finance access, skills partnerships, and infrastructure investment recommended in Chapter Seven, are positioning themselves ahead of that competition rather than responding to it once it has already intensified.

The Financial Inclusion Case

- Chapter Twelve documents that access to finance and credit is among the most frequently cited unmet need across this report's survey evidence — a gap that exists alongside, not despite, demonstrated entrepreneurial activity and technology-sector engagement at scale. This represents a specific and addressable market opportunity for financial institutions and fintech operators: an underserved segment with demonstrated economic activity and digital fluency but constrained by the specific credit access and collateral requirements that conventional lending models were not designed around. Institutions that develop lending products calibrated to this population's actual economic behaviour — rather than requiring collateral and credit history structures more suited to established enterprise — stand to capture market segment this report's evidence suggests is currently underserved relative to its actual creditworthiness and economic activity.

The Human Capital Pipeline Case

- Nigerian and multinational businesses operating in sectors named throughout this report as high-promise — technology, agriculture value-addition, renewable energy, the creative economy — depend on a skilled talent pipeline that Chapter Four's education findings suggest the formal education system is not yet fully supplying. Private sector investment in the specific skills partnerships and technical training recommended in Chapter Seven is not solely a development contribution; it is direct investment in the talent pipeline these businesses will themselves need to draw from as they scale, a case this report considers more durable grounds for sustained private sector engagement than social responsibility framing typically provides on its own.

The Stability Case

- Chapter Fourteen's demographic analysis notes that a large, underemployed youth population carries social and political instability risk in a manner well-documented internationally. Businesses operating in Nigeria — particularly those with fixed regional infrastructure, retail presence, or supply chains dependent on stable operating conditions — have a direct commercial interest in the kind of youth economic inclusion this report recommends, independent of any broader social commitment, simply because the alternative carries operational risk to their own continuity of business.

What This Means for Private Sector Engagement Going Forward

- This report recommends that private sector partners approach the commitments in Chapter Seven not as a request for corporate philanthropy to be weighed against other discretionary giving, but as a set of commercially grounded investment opportunities that happen to also serve the youth agenda this report documents. This framing does not diminish the social value of that engagement; it strengthens the case for its durability, since commercial rationale, unlike philanthropic goodwill, tends to persist through changes in corporate leadership, economic cycles, and shifts in social responsibility fashion.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

How this Report Fits NYFF's Theory of Change

From Consultation to Institution

The Nigeria Youth Futures Fund exists to provide targeted capacity building, youth ecosystem development, and financial support to youth-led movements across Nigeria, sustaining their work and creating structured opportunities for learning and influence over national direction. This report is one output of that broader mandate, and this chapter situates it within NYFF's longer-term theory of change, so that readers evaluating this report's value can see how it connects to work before and after it.

The Logic Connecting this Report to Institutional Change

- This report's underlying theory of change runs as follows: structured, credible consultation with young people across all six geopolitical zones produces findings that are more specific and more actionable than either isolated advocacy or untested assumption about what young Nigerians want; those findings, presented with the evidentiary discipline this report has tried to maintain throughout, carry more weight with government, private sector, and donor audiences than unstructured youth advocacy typically can on its own; that weight translates into the specific policy engagement opportunities this report has identified, most directly through NAP IV; and sustained engagement through mechanisms like the monitoring framework in Annex C converts one-time consultation influence into durable institutional relationship, rather than a single moment of attention that fades once this report's publication cycle ends.

Where This Report Sits in the Cycle

- This report is the second in what this document's own recommendations propose should become a recurring cycle — regional consultation, national validation, survey enrichment, national reporting, and a public accountability mechanism to track delivery, feeding into the next cycle's consultation with an established record of what was and was not delivered against the previous cycle's commitments. The 2023 report established this cycle's first iteration around a foresight methodology; this report establishes its second iteration around a documentation and accountability methodology; NYFF's own institutional judgment, informed by whichever of these approaches proves more effective at driving delivery, should determine which methodology or combination the next cycle adopts.

What Success Looks Like for NYFF Specifically

- Beyond the success criteria named in Annex C for this report's own recommendations, this report recommends that NYFF itself track a narrower set of institutional outcomes as evidence its broader theory of change is functioning: whether NAP IV's final design incorporates the specific recommendations in Chapter Five; whether the monitoring framework in Annex C is established and maintained beyond this report's publication rather than existing only on paper; and whether the next iteration of this consultation cycle, whenever undertaken, finds measurable movement on the implementation gap this report and its predecessor both identify as Nigeria's central and unresolved governance challenge.



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Risks and Mitigations

Chapter Two identified three risks specific to the current reform period. This chapter broadens that analysis into a systematic account of the risks facing this report's own recommendations, so that anyone acting on Chapter Seven's call to action does so with a clear view of what could cause that action to fail, and what can be done about it in advance.

Risk	Likelihood	Potential Impact	Mitigation
Government treats this report as a consultation exercise rather than a delivery commitment	High, based on the pattern documented in Chapters Four and Five	Repeats the implementation gap this report identifies as its central finding	Public, recurring reporting cycle in Annex C; civil society-led monitoring independent of government self-reporting
Youth monitoring panel loses momentum after initial enthusiasm	Moderate to high, common in civil society-led accountability initiatives generally	Monitoring framework in Annex C exists on paper but not in practice	Tie panel activity to the recurring annual reporting cycle and National Youth Summit, rather than relying on standing motivation alone
Youth monitoring panel loses momentum after initial enthusiasm	Moderate to high, common in civil society-led accountability initiatives generally	Monitoring framework in Annex C exists on paper but not in practice	Tie panel activity to the recurring annual reporting cycle and National Youth Summit, rather than relying on standing motivation alone
Reform fatigue reduces youth engagement with future consultation cycles	Moderate, given the accumulated disruption documented in Chapter Two	Declining response rates and engagement quality in future NYFF consultation cycles	Demonstrate visible delivery on at least some Chapter Seven commitments before the next consultation cycle is launched, so participation is not perceived as consequence-free
Private sector engagement remains framed as philanthropy rather than commercial opportunity	Moderate	Private sector commitments in Chapter Seven receive discretionary rather than sustained investment	Active use of the commercial case set out in Chapter Sixteen in donor and private sector engagement materials

Risk	Likelihood	Potential Impact	Mitigation
Regional consultation networks weaken between reporting cycles	Moderate, given reliance on continued NYFF and partner funding	Future consultations lose the regional depth and consistency that gives this report's convergent findings their evidentiary weight	Sustained, multi-year rather than single-cycle funding commitments from development partners, as recommended in Chapter Seven
Findings are used selectively to support predetermined positions rather than read in full	Moderate to high, a common risk for any report addressing politically salient topics	Misrepresents this report's balanced treatment of contested questions, particularly around the reform agenda in Chapter Two	Clear framing throughout this report, restated explicitly in the executive summary and Annex G, that this report does not adjudicate the merits of specific reforms
Emigration among the most economically engaged youth segment continues to accelerate	Elevated, based on the finding in Chapter Six	Compounding loss of the entrepreneurial capacity this report identifies as Nigeria's clearest source of hope	Prioritize the specific retention conditions named directly by respondents in Chapter Six — jobs, security, and reward for effort — over emigration-specific messaging or discouragement campaigns

Reading the Risk Table

No single mitigation in this table is sufficient on its own; each depends on the others being pursued in parallel. A monitoring panel without sustained funding will not persist; sustained funding without visible early delivery will not sustain youth engagement; visible delivery without accurate data to measure it against will not be credible. This report recommends the risks above be read and acted on as an interdependent set, consistent with the systems-level treatment this report has tried to apply throughout, rather than as a checklist to be addressed item by item in isolation.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Sustainability

Sustaining this Report's Findings Beyond a Single Publication Cycle

A report of this kind carries a specific risk that is easy to overlook precisely because it is structural rather than substantive: even a report whose findings are entirely correct and whose recommendations are entirely sound can fail to produce change simply because the institutional attention it generates fades once its initial publication cycle ends. This chapter addresses directly how this report's findings and recommendations can be sustained past that initial attention.

Institutional Sustainability

- The recurring cycle proposed in Chapter Seventeen — consultation, validation, survey enrichment, reporting, and public accountability, feeding into the next cycle — is this report's primary sustainability mechanism, converting a single document into an ongoing institutional practice. This depends on NYFF's continued institutional capacity and funding, which in turn depends on the sustained development partner engagement named as a specific commitment in Chapter Seven.

Financial Sustainability

- This report's recommendations do not depend solely on continued philanthropic funding. Chapter Sixteen's business case argument is, among other things, a sustainability argument: private sector engagement grounded in commercial rationale is more likely to persist through funding cycles and changes in donor priority than engagement grounded in social responsibility framing alone. Similarly, the local government financial autonomy discussed in Chapter Two creates a potential domestic funding pathway for some of the local infrastructure and service delivery improvements this report recommends, reducing total dependence on external development partner funding for those specific commitments.

Political Sustainability

- Recommendations that depend on a single administration's continued goodwill are not sustainable across Nigeria's electoral cycles. This report has tried, throughout, to frame its recommendations around institutional mechanisms — NAP IV's design, the local government financial autonomy ruling, civil society-led monitoring — that are more resilient to changes in political leadership than recommendations dependent on any single office-holder's personal commitment. Chapter Thirteen's stakeholder analysis is offered partly in service of this goal: recommendations grounded in an accurate reading of institutional incentive, rather than in appeals to individual political will, are more likely to survive the change in leadership Nigeria's next electoral cycle will bring.

Environmental and Demographic Sustainability

- Several regional consultations, particularly North Central, raised climate variability and environmental pressure as a growing concern directly affecting youth livelihoods in agriculture. This report treats environmental sustainability as inseparable from the economic and governance sustainability discussed above, consistent with the finding, restated throughout this report, that the challenges young Nigerians describe do not operate in isolation from one another.



CHAPTER TWENTY

A Note on Youth-Led Research Practice

This report is itself an instance of the youth agency it recommends elsewhere — produced through youth-led regional consultation, tested through youth-led validation, and enriched through survey instruments designed to centre youth-defined priorities rather than externally imposed research questions. This is not incidental to the report's content; it is a deliberate methodological choice consistent with LEAP Africa and NYFF's founding premise that young Nigerians can document their own reality and articulate their own agenda with a rigor that external research alone cannot substitute for.

This report's authors consider it worth stating directly that the multi-stage design underlying this document — regional consultation, national validation, and survey enrichment — is itself an expression of that same premise, rather than a shortcut around it. Youth-led research practice that triangulates across different methods, and stands behind the findings that convergent evidence supports, is the durable foundation for the institutional relationships this report is designed to build.

Future iterations of this consultation and reporting cycle should continue to be led, at every stage from design through drafting, by young Nigerians themselves, with external technical support — statistical, editorial, or otherwise — treated as a resource in service of that leadership rather than a substitute for it.

Conclusion

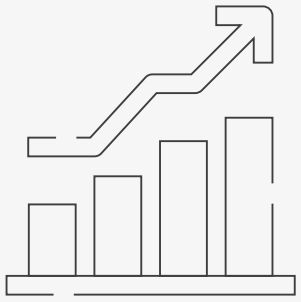
The Nigeria young people want remains, as it was in 2023, entirely within reach.

Three years separate this report from its predecessor, and in that time Nigeria has changed more than most three-year periods in its recent history — a new administration, a new currency regime, a new tax system, a new minimum wage, a new model for financing higher education, and a new demonstration, in the #EndBadGovernance protests of August 2024, of the scale at which young Nigerians will mobilize when the cost of reform outpaces its visible benefit.

What has not changed is what young Nigerians want. Read alongside each other, the 2023 and 2026 reports converge on the same underlying vision — a country where opportunity is earned rather than inherited through connection, where leadership delivers rather than merely announces, and where young people are included in shaping their own future as a matter of design rather than courtesy. This continuity should not be read as evidence that nothing has been achieved; genuine reforms have been enacted, at real political cost, since 2023. It should be read as evidence of where the work still remains not in identifying what Nigeria's young people want, which has now been documented twice in three years with striking consistency, but in the harder and slower task of delivering it, visibly and verifiably, at the pace this generation has made clear it is no longer willing to wait indefinitely for.

The Nigeria young people want remains, as it was in 2023, entirely within reach. What this report adds to that earlier finding is a documented account of what three years of reform without full delivery on inclusion has cost in trust — and a specific, owned set of commitments in Chapter Seven that this report's authors intend to hold every named stakeholder to, including themselves.

Three Years On: Progress, Continuity and the Work Ahead



Key takeaways from the 2026 Report in perspective with 2023.

What Has Changed Since 2023

- A new administration
- A new currency regime
- A new tax system
- A new minimum wage
- A new model for financing higher education
- The #EndBadGovernance protests (Aug 2024), showing the scale of youth mobilization when reform costs outpace visible benefit.

What Has Not Changed

The 2023 and 2026 reports converge on the same vision

Opportunity is earned, not inherited through connection.

Leadership delivers, not merely announces.

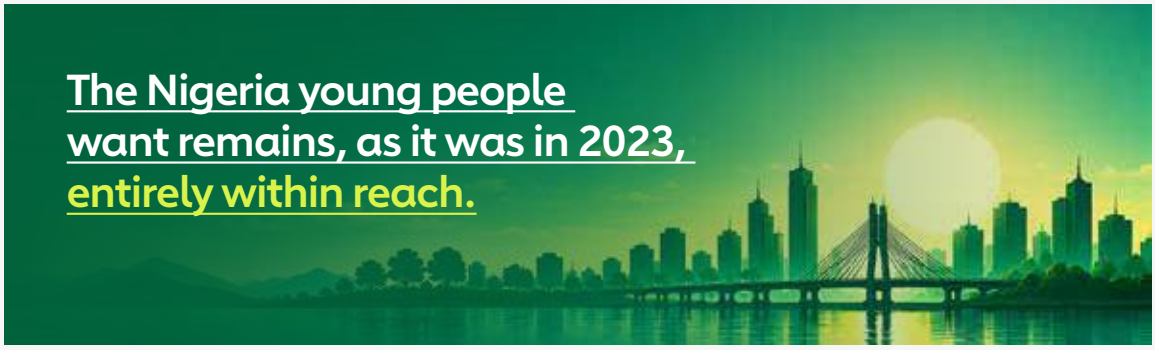
Young people are included in shaping their future as a matter of design, not courtesy.

What This Means

Not that nothing has been achieved — genuine reforms have been enacted, at real political cost, since 2023.

What This Means

Not in identifying what young Nigerians want (now documented twice with striking consistency), but in the harder task of delivering it — visibly, verifiably, and at the pace this generation demands.



This report adds a documented account of what three years of reform without full delivery on inclusion has cost in trust — and a specific, owned set of commitments in Chapter Seven to hold every named stakeholder to, including the report's authors.

A Closing Reflection

Every report of this kind carries a risk its authors should name rather than leave unstated: that its findings, however carefully gathered, become one more document added to a shelf of documents, cited occasionally and acted on rarely.

Every report of this kind carries a risk its authors should name rather than leave unstated: that its findings, however carefully gathered, become one more document added to a shelf of documents, cited occasionally and acted on rarely. This report has tried, in every chapter, to work against that outcome — through the disclosure of its own limitations, through the specificity of its recommendations, through the naming of owners and timelines rather than only aspirations, and through the monitoring framework this report asks to be judged against in its own next iteration.

Whether it succeeds in that ambition is not, in the end, a question this report can answer about itself. It is a question the next consultation cycle, the next survey round, and the next generation of youth delegates convened across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones will answer instead — by reporting, with the same honesty this report has tried to maintain throughout, whether the Nigeria described in Chapter Six has moved closer to reach, or remains, as it has for three years and longer before that, a destination named more often than it is built toward.

That judgment belongs to them. This report's task was only to make sure they inherit an honest account of where things stood when this cycle's work was done.



Annex A: Regional Priorities

The narrative treatment of each region in Chapter Three is summarized below as a quick-reference matrix, intended for readers — including policymakers and donor partners — who need to identify the specific priority actions relevant to a given zone without reading the full chapter.

North Central

Priority Area	Specific Action Called For
Governance	Clearer, more consistent communication of policy; genuine citizen-government collaboration
Security	Protection of agricultural livelihoods from conflict disruption
Infrastructure	Stable electricity supply as a precondition for economic activity
Economy	Inflation control; long-term policy continuity across administrations
Environment	Investment in climate adaptation for agricultural communities

North East

Priority Area	Specific Action Called For
Security	Continued, sustained investment in ending insecurity as the precondition for all other reform
Governance	Accountability and transparency systems; effective grievance mechanisms
Youth Inclusion	Genuine participation in governance, not limited to consultation
Reconstruction	Youth-led participation in rebuilding institutions and local economies
Data	Use of digital tools to track public resource use and hold leadership accountable

North West

Priority Area	Specific Action Called For
Education	Expanded access to and reduced cost of tertiary education
Economy	Job creation and genuine economic diversification
Infrastructure	Improved and stable electricity supply
Governance	Greater youth participation in politics and governance
Technology	Adoption of technology and innovation across economic and governance systems

South West

Priority Area	Specific Action Called For
Education	Improved teacher quality and remuneration; expansion of schools to rural/underserved areas
Governance	Digital access to public information; consistent policy implementation
Youth Inclusion	Stronger, structured youth participation in governance
Innovation	Deployment of existing digital and entrepreneurial capacity toward governance transparency

South East

Priority Area	Specific Action Called For
Political Inclusion	Genuine youth inclusion in governance and political processes
Governance	Improved accountability and transparency systems
Awareness	Greater visibility of youth-focused policies and programs
Technology	Expanded digital governance and automation
Coalition-Building	Support for youth organization coalitions and digital advocacy

South South

Priority Area	Specific Action Called For
Governance	Stronger anti-corruption measures and transparency systems
Youth Inclusion	Increased youth representation in leadership positions specifically
Gender Inclusion	Distinct action on young women's inclusion in governance and leadership
Resource Governance	Visible local benefit from regional resource wealth
Diversification	Technology and innovation as alternative pathways beyond the extractive sector

Priorities for the Next Three Years

Building on the regional accounts in Chapter Three and the priority matrix above, this annex sets out, for each region, the single priority this report's evidence suggests should anchor the next three years of engagement — not to the exclusion of other priorities named elsewhere, but as the entry point most likely to unlock progress on the others given each region's specific findings.

- **North Central:** Restoring the security conditions necessary for agricultural livelihoods to recover, paired with visible, consistent communication of policy from federal institutions the region sits closest to but does not yet feel adequately served by.
- **Northeast:** Sustained, continued investment in the security transition already underway, without which the accountability, education, and economic recommendations in this report cannot take hold at meaningful scale.
- **Northwest:** Expanding tertiary education affordability and access at the pace the region's demographic scale demands, given that this is the single zone where national youth policy outcomes will be most visible in aggregate simply by population size.
- **Southwest:** Closing the gap between the region's advanced digital infrastructure and its citizens' actual access to real-time public information — a deployment challenge rather than an infrastructure-building challenge, and one this report's evidence suggests is solvable faster than in any other zone given the tools already present locally.
- **Southeast:** Converting the region's demonstrated entrepreneurial self-reliance into formal political inclusion, treating the two as connected rather than separate priorities.
- **South South:** Addressing formal governance accountability and informal, cultural barriers to youth and women's leadership as a single, coordinated priority rather than two separate workstreams, given this report's finding that addressing only one will leave the other in place.

Annex B: Methodology Notes

Consultation Design

Following the model established by the original Nigeria We Want process, this report's regional findings were generated through structured, in-person consultations convened separately in each of Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, each bringing together youth participants selected to reflect the diversity of their region across state of origin, gender, disability status, and socio-economic background. Consultations followed a common discussion framework — covering lived reality, current challenges, emerging opportunities, aspirations for the future, and the youth role in achieving them — while allowing each region's facilitation team latitude to probe the specific concerns that emerged as most salient locally.

Validation Process

Following the six regional consultations, a national validation exercise was convened in December 2025, bringing together representatives from each region to review the consolidated findings, test whether issues identified regionally were genuinely shared or specific to a single zone, and refine the framing of national priorities before they were finalized. This step is what allows this report to distinguish, with reasonable confidence, between findings presented in Chapter Three as regionally distinct and findings presented in Chapter Four as national.

Survey Instruments

Two structured surveys were administered to complement and quantify the qualitative consultation findings:

The Open Government Partnership NAP IV Baseline Survey was designed specifically to assess youth awareness of and experience with Nigeria's third National Action Plan (NAP III) under the Open Government Partnership framework, and to solicit priorities for the design of the fourth National Action Plan (NAP IV). Its findings are presented in full in Chapter Five.

The Youth Aspirations Survey was designed to capture a broader assessment of youth sentiment, comparing self-reported conditions before and after 2023, probing trust in institutions, values, and long-term aspiration, and testing intent to remain in or leave the country. Its findings are woven throughout Chapters Four, Five, and Six, and its open-ended responses form the basis of Chapter Eight.

Reading the Evidence Together

This report treats convergence across independent sources as its central form of validation. Where a finding is corroborated across multiple regional consultations, confirmed through national validation, and echoed independently in the survey data collected afterward, this report states it with confidence. It is this combination, consultation findings tested through formal validation, and then found to align with data gathered separately through survey, that allows this report to move from individual testimony to national finding, even though the survey stage itself was not run back through a further validation exercise.

Annex C: Implementation and Monitoring Framework

Consistent with this report's central finding — that Nigeria's deficit lies in implementation rather than in the identification of what needs to be done — this annex sets out how the commitments in Chapter Seven should be tracked, by whom, and on what basis progress should be reported.

Governing Principle

No commitment in Chapter Seven should be considered complete on adoption. Each should carry, from the point it is agreed, a named owner, a monitoring mechanism, and a definition of the specific, attributable outcome a young Nigerian would be able to point to as evidence the commitment has been kept — the same test recommended for NAP IV commitments in Chapter Five, applied here to this report's own recommendations.

Recommended Monitoring Structure

An annual public reporting cycle, timed to coincide with a reconvened National Youth Summit of the kind recommended in the original 2023 report, at which progress against each commitment in Chapter Seven is reported publicly by the named responsible party, in a format accessible to the young Nigerians the commitment concerns — not only to the institutions responsible for delivering it.

A standing youth monitoring panel, composed of representatives from each of the six regional consultation networks, with a specific mandate to track implementation of NAP IV commitments and the commitments in Chapter Seven, and empowered to flag stalled or abandoned commitments publicly rather than only through internal reporting channels.

A shared, published tracking instrument — at minimum a simple public dashboard — listing each commitment, its owner, its target date, and its status, updated at a defined recurring interval. The specific technology used matters less than the discipline of maintaining it consistently and making it genuinely accessible; several of this report's findings in Chapter Five note that platforms created under NAP III were not consistently maintained after launch, a failure mode this framework is designed explicitly to avoid repeating.

Roles in the Monitoring Structure

Function	Responsible Party
Convening the annual reporting cycle	NYFF, in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Youth Development
Chairing the standing youth monitoring panel	Regional coordinators nominated by each of the six consultation networks
Maintaining the public tracking instrument	NYFF Secretariat, with technical support from civil society technology partners
Verifying government-reported progress	Civil society co-chairs of the NAP IV process, in coordination with the Open Government Partnership Secretariat
Commissioning the next data collection cycle	NYFF, in partnership with the Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, and other supporting development partners

Success Criteria for This Report Itself

This report will have succeeded not if its findings are cited, but if the next iteration of the Nigeria We Want process — whenever it is undertaken — finds that the specific implementation gap this report and its 2023 predecessor both identify as Nigeria's central governance failure has measurably narrowed. That is the standard this report's authors intend to be held to, and the standard against which its own recommendations should be judged.

Annex D: Glossary of Terms

- **Co-creation** — A governance design process in which government and civil society jointly design policy commitments, as distinct from processes where government consults civil society on commitments it has already finalized.
- **Economic dignity** — Used throughout this report to describe an economic condition in which a young person's effort and ability translate reliably into a livelihood, as distinct from mere employment or income level alone; the term is drawn directly from language young people themselves used across the survey instruments and regional consultations underpinning this report.
- **Implementation gap** — This report's term for the recurring finding, described most fully in Chapter Four, that Nigerian governance processes are perceived by young people to be stronger at policy design and announcement than at delivery, monitoring, and follow-through.
- **National Action Plan (NAP)** — A defined set of governance commitments produced under the Open Government Partnership framework, jointly designed by government and civil society, against which delivery is intended to be tracked; NAP III is the plan preceding this report and NAP IV the plan this report's Chapter Five is intended to inform.
- **Regional consultation** — Used throughout this report to refer to the structured, in-person engagements convened separately in each of Nigeria's six geopolitical zones during 2025 as part of the process underlying this report, as distinct from the survey instruments, which were administered separately.
- **Validation** — The process, convened nationally in December 2025, of testing whether findings emerging from individual regional consultations were shared nationally or specific to a single region.

Annex E: Consultation Locations

Consistent with the practice established in the 2023 Nigeria We Want process, regional consultations informing this report were convened in a lead location within each geopolitical zone, bringing together delegates from across the zone's constituent states.

Zone	States Represented	Consultation Anchor City
North Central	Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, FCT	Lokoja
North East	Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe	Gombe
North West	Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara	Kano
South West	Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Ekiti	Akure
South East	Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo	Enugu
South South	Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Rivers	Port Harcourt

[Placeholder — specific consultation dates, delegate counts, and facilitation team details to be finalized and inserted ahead of publication.]

Annex F: Timeline — Nigeria's Reform Journey, 2023–2026

The table below consolidates, in date order, the principal policy events referenced throughout this report, for readers who want the sequence in one place rather than distributed across Chapter Two's narrative treatment.

Date	Event
May 2023	New federal administration inaugurated; petroleum subsidy removal announced at inauguration
June 2023	Central Bank unifies multiple exchange rate windows into a single market-determined rate
June 2023	Student Loan (Access to Higher Education) Act signed into law
September 2023	New Central Bank Governor appointed amid broader monetary policy reset
April 2024	Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) begins disbursing interest-free student loans
July 2024	Supreme Court rules local governments have direct constitutional right to federation account allocations
July 2024	New national minimum wage of ₦70,000 signed into law following sustained labour union pressure
August 2024	#EndBadGovernance protests held across multiple states over cost-of-living pressures
June 2025	Four-part tax reform package signed into law (Nigeria Tax Act, Nigeria Tax Administration Act, Nigeria Revenue Service Act, Joint Revenue Board Act)
Throughout 2025	Regional youth consultations convened across all six geopolitical zones for this report
December 2025	National validation forum tests and confirms cross-regional findings
2025—2026	Survey instruments fielded to enrich consultation findings

[Placeholder — this timeline will be reviewed and updated with any developments after January 2026 before final publication, consistent with the disclosure in Chapter Two.]

Annex G: Frequently Raised Questions

This annex anticipates questions this report's authors expect from government, donor, and civil society readers, and answers them directly rather than leaving them to be inferred from the body of the report.

- **Why does this report not include scenario planning like the 2023 report?**

  This is addressed fully in Chapter One and reiterated in the note on continuity following the front matter. In brief: scenario planning is the right instrument for navigating genuine strategic uncertainty. Nigeria's economic and policy direction has, since 2023, been substantially set by a specific and dateable set of reforms. This report's task is to measure the distance between that set direction and young people's stated aspiration, not to model alternative directions that are no longer, in the same sense, undetermined.

- **Is this report critical of the current administration's reform agenda?**

  This report does not take a position on whether the reforms described in Chapter Two were the correct policy choice and says so explicitly in the executive summary and again in the section on what this report does not cover. It documents, as accurately as its evidence base allows, how young Nigerians report having experienced those reforms, and treats that documentation as valuable regardless of what position a reader holds on the reforms' underlying merit.

- **How confident should I be in this report's findings?**

  This report's central findings are corroborated independently across all six regional consultations, confirmed through national validation, and echoed in the survey data gathered afterward — the centrality of implementation failure, the salience of economic hardship, and the consistent naming of technology as a source of hope all recur across every independent source this report draws on. That convergence, achieved without engineering it across independently conducted consultations and a survey process that was never itself run through a second validation round, is the strongest basis this report can offer for the confidence with which it states its findings.

- **What happens if the recommendations in Chapter Seven are not acted upon?**

  Chapter Fourteen's demographic analysis and Chapter Two's discussion of emigration and disengagement risk both address this directly: this report treats continued non-delivery, following the same pattern that both this report and its 2023 predecessor document, as carrying a compounding rather than a static cost — in accumulated distrust, in continued emigration of the specific population segment most capable of building the economic sectors this report identifies as most promising, and in the credibility of any future consultation exercise NYFF or similar bodies undertake with young Nigerians.

- **Why does this report recommend civil society, rather than government, lead the monitoring framework in Annex C?**

  Because Chapter Twelve's evidence on institutional trust indicates civil society and youth-led organisations currently command greater youth confidence than government institutions do, and Chapter Thirteen's stakeholder analysis suggests government's own incentive structure is weighted more toward announcement than toward the sustained, less visible work of monitoring implementation. This is a pragmatic recommendation based on where the evidence suggests monitoring is most likely to be sustained and trusted, not a judgment that government has no role — Chapter Seven's commitments to government include specific, direct responsibilities of its own.

- **How does this report relate to NAP IV specifically, versus being a general youth agenda document?**

  Chapter Five is written to speak directly and specifically to NAP IV's design process, and this report recommends it be read by anyone involved in that process as a distinct, actionable chapter. The remainder of the report addresses a broader youth agenda that NAP IV is one part, but not the entirety.

Annex H: Regional Variation Within The Six National Pillars

Chapter Four presents six pillars as national findings, on the basis that they recur across every region despite the significant differences documented in Chapter Three. This annex makes that regional variation explicit for each pillar, so that "national" is not read as "uniform."

Governance, Leadership, and Accountability

Regional emphasis differs even where the underlying concern is shared: the North Central and Southwest consultations frame governance failure primarily around communication and implementation gaps; the Northeast frames it around accountability for resources in a security-affected environment; the Southeast frames it around political exclusion specifically, distinct from general implementation concerns; and the South South frames it around corruption intersecting with resource-benefit grievance. Any governance reform program treating these as identical will miss the specific entry point each region's evidence suggests is most salient locally.

Economic Dignity, Jobs, and Human Capital

The Northwest and Southeast consultations emphasize job creation and formal employment access most heavily; the North Central and Southeast emphasize the disruption of agricultural and small business livelihoods by insecurity; and the South South emphasizes the specific grievance of resource wealth not translating into local economic benefit — a distinct economic concern from unemployment alone, requiring a distinct policy response focused on revenue transparency and local content rather than job creation programs alone.

Education Transformation

Affordability dominates the Northwest's education finding specifically, given its explicit naming as a primary barrier; quality and infrastructure decline dominate the Southwest's finding, in a region where affordability is comparatively less acute; and disruption of education access by insecurity dominates the Northeast's finding, a distinct problem from either affordability or quality that requires physical security restoration as a precondition rather than a curriculum or financing intervention.

Peace, Security, and Social Cohesion

This pillar shows the widest regional variation of the six: foundational and existential in the Northeast; linked directly to agricultural and economic disruption in the North Central; linked to business and mobility disruption in the Southeast; and linked to governance and resource-benefit grievance rather than physical conflict in the South South. The Southwest and Northwest consultations raise security concerns with comparatively less intensity than the other four zones, a difference in emphasis this report considers as significant as the concerns themselves.

Technology and Digital Governance

This is the pillar with the least regional variation in tone — every region names technology and digital opportunity with comparable enthusiasm — but meaningful variation exists in access: the Southwest's consultation notes gaps in real-time public information despite comparatively advanced digital infrastructure, while the Northwest and North Central raise more basic connectivity and electricity constraints as the binding limitation on digital opportunity, a distinction between an access gap and a governance-use gap that matters for where technology investment should be targeted regionally.

Youth Inclusion and Leadership Pathways

The South South consultation is distinct in explicitly naming cultural and traditional barriers to youth and women's leadership operating alongside formal governance exclusion, a dimension less prominent in other regions' findings; the Southeast frames exclusion specifically around political participation given the region's demonstrated economic self-reliance; and the North Central and Northeast frame inclusion primarily around genuine influence in policymaking processes rather than symbolic representation.

"Peace is the foundation of everything. Without security, nothing else can work."

— Youth participant, Northeast regional consultation

Annex I: Sequencing — What Should Happen First

Chapter Seven's commitments are not listed in order of priority or timing. This annex sequences them into three horizons, so that stakeholders know where to direct immediate attention versus sustained, longer-term effort.

Annex J: Key Indicators for Monitoring Progress

Annex C recommends that progress against this report's commitments be tracked publicly. This annex proposes specific, defined indicators for that tracking, organized by the six national pillars in Chapter Four, so that "progress" is measured consistently rather than assessed impressionistically from one reporting cycle to the next.

- **Governance, Leadership, and Accountability**

  Proportion of NAP IV commitments meeting their published delivery timeline; proportion of young people surveyed who report awareness of NAP IV, tracked against the low awareness of NAP III documented in Chapter Five as a specific baseline to improve upon; existence and currency of a public, accessible tracking dashboard as specified in Annex C.

- **Economic Dignity, Jobs, and Human Capital**

  Youth unemployment and underemployment rates disaggregated by region and gender; NELFUND disbursement volume against its stated targets; growth in registered youth-led micro, small, and medium enterprises; access-to-finance indicators specific to youth-owned enterprise, tracked separately from general SME lending data given the distinct barriers documented in Chapter Twelve.

- **Education Transformation**

  Tertiary education enrolment and completion rates disaggregated by income quartile, tracking whether NELFUND is measurably closing the affordability gap documented in Chapter Three; curriculum reform milestones against the specific skills-alignment concerns raised across regional consultations; teacher remuneration and retention data.

- **Peace, Security, and Social Cohesion**

  Region-specific security incident trends, read alongside rather than instead of the differentiated regional security findings in Annex H; youth participation rates in formal peacebuilding and community stability initiatives, tracking the specific call for youth to be engaged as security assets rather than only security risks, discussed in Chapter Four.

- **Technology and Digital Governance**

  Digital infrastructure access and reliability metrics, particularly electricity and internet access disaggregated by region; the currency and usability of digital government platforms specifically, addressing the Southwest finding in Chapter Three that platforms existed without being consistently maintained.

- **Youth Inclusion and Leadership Pathways**

  Proportion of youth in elected and appointed public office; proportion of youth represented on implementation and monitoring bodies specifically, not only in initial consultation processes, tracking the sustained-inclusion principle recommended in Chapter Five; gender-disaggregated leadership representation data, addressing the distinct priority named in Chapter Ten.

- **A Note on Indicator Discipline**

  This report recommends these indicators be adopted with discipline rather than treated as an aspirational list to be revisited only when convenient. An indicator that is never measured provides no more accountability than no indicator at all, and this report's own credibility in future iterations depends partly on whether the indicators proposed here are tracked and reported against, consistent with the standard set in Annex C's success criteria.

Annex K: A Guide for Regional Coordinators

This final annex is addressed directly to NYFF's regional coordination structure — the network responsible for convening the consultations this report depends on — with practical guidance for the next consultation cycle, informed by what this cycle's process revealed about its own strengths and limitations.

What Worked

The six-zone regional structure, anchored in a single lead city per zone, continued to produce findings specific and distinct enough to resist flattening into a single national narrative, as Chapter Three demonstrates. The national validation step, convened in December 2025, proved valuable in distinguishing genuinely national findings from regionally specific ones, and this report recommends it be retained as a mandatory stage in every future cycle rather than treated as optional.

What Should Change

Future consultation cycles should build in, from the design stage, the demographic stratification this report's evidence base currently lacks — specifically, deliberate outreach to rural, offline, and disability-affiliated youth networks, rather than relying on the urban and digitally-connected participants who are easiest to reach through conventional recruitment channels. Coordinators should also build a specific mechanism for tracking, between consultation cycles, whether the commitments made in response to a previous cycle's findings were delivered — turning each new consultation into an opportunity to test the previous cycle's promises against reality, rather than starting each cycle's inquiry from a blank page.

A Practical Checklist for the Next Cycle

Before convening the next regional consultation, coordinators should confirm: that demographic recruitment targets for gender, disability status, urban/rural residence, and education level have been set in advance rather than left to organic participation; that a standard discussion framework consistent across all six zones has been agreed, while preserving facilitator discretion to probe region-specific concerns as they emerge; that a specific mechanism exists for feeding back to participants, in a future cycle, what became of the recommendations they contributed to; and that survey instruments accompanying the consultation are piloted for length and clarity before full distribution, given the demands full completion places on respondent time and attention.

Why This Guidance Belongs in This Report

Including operational guidance of this kind alongside the substantive findings in the rest of this report reflects a view this report has tried to embody throughout: that the process by which youth voice is gathered is not separate from the credibility of what that process produces. A future cycle that improves on this cycle's demographic reach and follow-through will produce findings this report's authors expect to be even more actionable than those presented here — and that improvement depends on the practical lessons in this annex being applied deliberately, not assumed to happen automatically.

Annex L: A Nap IV Readiness Checklist

Building on Chapter Five's recommendations, this checklist consolidates what NAP IV's design team should be able to confirm before finalizing each commitment, drawn directly from the principles established throughout this report.

- **For every proposed commitment, confirm:**

  A communication plan exists that reaches young people through the civil society and social media channels this report identifies as most effective, not government channels alone.

  A monitoring mechanism is specified at the point the commitment is adopted, not added retroactively once implementation is underway.

  Youth and gender representation is built into the bodies responsible for implementation and monitoring, not only into the initial design workshop.

  A specific, attributable benefit can be named — something a young Nigerian would be able to point to and recognize as the direct result of this commitment.

  A responsible implementing agency is named specifically, distinct from the ministerial or executive office that announces the commitment, consistent with the stakeholder analysis in Chapter Thirteen.

  A reporting interval is set and published in advance, so that the absence of an update is itself visible rather than simply unremarked upon.

- **Using this checklist**

  This report recommends that any commitment unable to satisfy each item above be revised before adoption rather than finalized with the expectation that these elements will be worked out later. The pattern identified throughout this report — strong commitment design paired with weak delivery and monitoring — is, on the evidence in Chapter Five, best addressed by resolving these questions at the design stage, when they are far easier to build in than to retrofit once a commitment is already underway.

Annex M: How This Report Was Quality-Assured

This report's findings passed through several layers of review before reaching this draft, and this annex sets out that process for readers who want assurance beyond the report's own stated confidence in its findings.

- **Cross-regional corroboration.** No finding in Chapter Four is presented as national unless it recurred independently across multiple regional consultations conducted separately and, in several cases, by different facilitation teams — a design choice that guards against any single region's experience being mistaken for a national pattern.
- **National validation.** The December 2025 validation forum brought representatives from all six zones together specifically to test and, where necessary, challenge the framing of cross-regional findings before they were finalized, ensuring this report's national claims reflect agreement reached in the room rather than only the drafting team's synthesis of separate reports.
- **Survey confirmation.** Where consultation findings could be tested against structured survey data, this report checked for alignment before stating a finding with confidence — the consistency between the qualitative regional findings and the quantitative survey patterns discussed throughout Chapters Four, Five, and Twelve is a further, independent form of confirmation.
- **Direct quotation.** Chapters Six and Eight present findings through direct, minimally edited quotation specifically so that readers can assess the underlying evidence themselves, rather than relying solely on this report's synthesis of it.
- **Explicit scope discipline.** This report states directly, in the section on what it does not cover, where its claims stop — avoiding the temptation to extend findings beyond what its evidence supports, a discipline this report considers as important to its credibility as the strength of the findings themselves.

Annex N: How this Report Should be Cited

Organizations and individuals referencing this report ahead of its final public release are encouraged to cite it as a working draft of the Nigeria Youth Futures Fund's second national youth report, distinguishing it from the finalized version to follow. A suggested citation format:

Nigeria Youth Futures Fund. The Nigeria We Want 2.0: A Report by Nigerian Youth on the Present Reality and the Nigeria They Are Building — Realities, Aspirations, and a Call to Action. Working draft, 2026.

Specific findings, quotations, and recommendations drawn from this report should be attributed to the relevant chapter, given that this draft may still be refined ahead of final publication. NYFF welcomes feedback from any reader engaging with this draft in its current form, to be incorporated ahead of finalization.

Annex O: Bibliography and Sources

This annex lists the external sources this report draws on or ought to draw on to support the macroeconomic and comparative claims made in Chapter Two and Chapter Fifteen. It is organised in two parts. The first lists claims that can be cited with confidence, since they refer to specific, well-documented, single events. The second lists claims that are almost certainly supportable by real, credible sources, but where the exact publication, date, or figure has not yet been verified against the live source, and should be confirmed by the NYFF team before this report is published externally.

Part One: Sources That Can Be Cited With Confidence

The following claims, made in Chapter Two, refer to specific, dateable national events that are well-documented and can be cited directly.

Removal of the petroleum subsidy. Announced at the presidential inauguration on 29 May 2023. Source: presidential inaugural address, Eagle Square, Abuja, and contemporaneous national news coverage.

Unification of the foreign exchange market. Announced by the Central Bank of Nigeria in June 2023. Source: Central Bank of Nigeria circular to authorised dealers, June 2023.

National Minimum Wage (Amendment) Act. Signed into law on 29 July 2024, raising the minimum wage to ₦70,000. Source: Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Minimum Wage (Amendment) Act, 2024.

Supreme Court ruling on local government financial autonomy. Delivered in July 2024. Source: Supreme Court of Nigeria judgment; national news coverage of the ruling. The exact case citation should be confirmed before publication.

The #EndBadGovernance protests. Began on 1 August 2024. Source: contemporaneous national and international news coverage, widely reported across Nigerian and international outlets.

Part Two: Sources Requiring Verification Before Publication

The following claims are very likely supportable by real, credible sources, but the specific title, date, or figure has not been verified against a live source at the time of this draft. Each is flagged here so the NYFF team can locate and confirm the exact citation before this report circulates beyond internal review.

Tax reform legislation. The four tax reform Acts described in Chapter Two (the Nigeria Tax Act, the Nigeria Tax Administration Act, the Nigeria Revenue Service Establishment Act, and the Joint Revenue Board Establishment Act), and the specific month in 2025 they were signed into law.

NELFUND disbursement start date. The exact month in 2024 that the Nigerian Education Loan Fund began disbursing interest-free student loans under the Student Loan (Access to Higher Education) Act.

Arrests and detentions of minors during the 2024 protests. The specific reports documenting arrests and detentions of minors during the August 2024 protests. Given the sensitivity of this claim, this report recommends it be supported by a named, credible source before publication, rather than left as an unattributed statement.

Comparative subsidy reform experience (Indonesia and Egypt). The specific reports or case studies describing Indonesia's fuel subsidy reform as phased, and Egypt's as more compressed, referenced in Chapter Fifteen. These are well-established episodes in the international subsidy reform literature, commonly covered by IMF and World Bank publications, but the exact report titles and dates should be sourced and cited directly.

General findings on subsidy reform outcomes. The specific comparative literature Chapter Fifteen draws on for the claim that social protection speed and transparency of savings redirection determine subsidy reform outcomes.

OGP youth co-creation examples internationally. The specific Open Government Partnership country examples referenced in Chapter Fifteen as having embedded youth co-creation into their National Action Plan design. No specific country is currently named in the text.

Demographic dividend literature. The specific sources for the demographic dividend literature referenced in Chapter Fifteen and Chapter Fourteen, commonly associated with publications from the World Bank and the United Nations Population Fund.

This report recommends that Part Two of this annex be treated as a working checklist rather than a finished reference list, updated as each item is confirmed against its live source, with in-text citations then added to Chapters Two and Fifteen linking each claim to its corresponding entry here.

NIGERIA YOUTH FUTURES FUND

Our goal is to equip, empower and support young change leaders from across tertiary institutions in Nigeria with the skills, knowledge and resources to enable them to become self-leaders who will lend their voice towards national development issues and drive sustainable social change.

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