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# NEW MEDIA & GOVERNANCE: Tools and Trends

Abuja, Nigeria  
May 14 - 15, 2012

CONFERENCE REPORT



## Organizing Partners



**Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation**  
Host Organization

The Yar'Adua Foundation endeavours to further the ideals of late Shehu Yar'Adua; his commitment to national unity, good governance and to building a just and democratic society for all Nigerians. The Foundation's public policy initiative addresses issues of public concern through conferences, roundtable discussions, advocacy and publications.



**Enough is Enough Nigeria**  
Co-organizer

EiE is a coalition of individuals and youth-led organizations committed to a culture of public accountability in Nigeria. EiE created the RSVP (Register/Select/Vote/Protect) Campaign to leverage technology, especially social media, to mobilize significant participation from citizens in the 18-35 age bloc in the 2011 elections and beyond. Post-elections, EiE continues to focus on voter education, awareness and the use of technology to drive good governance and accountability.



**Galaxy Backbone Plc**  
Communications Partner

Galaxy Backbone provides information and communication technology infrastructure and services to the Federal Government of Nigeria. Galaxy Backbone is committed to encouraging and enabling the effective use of ICTs by government.



**AA PeaceWorks** is an NGO working in the fields of peace and development since 1992. Best known for its work in the Niger Delta with

governments, companies, communities and members of armed groups, AA PeaceWorks has used social media extensively in constructive engagement of youth in their own governance process.



**American University of Nigeria (AUN)** is the only American style university in Sub-Saharan Africa. Located in Yola, Adamawa State, its mission is to be a

development university-educating students to be future leaders and solving pressing local, regional and continent wide social, political and economic challenges.



**The Canadian High Commission** strives to strengthen a democratic

Nigeria under the rule of law, that protects human rights and advances good governance, transparency and accountability



**Center for Policy Research and Development Solutions**

(CPRDS) is a development policy organization and think-tank established to address policy and knowledge gaps within government, civil society and the private sector, and to produce robust advocacy materials.



**Department For International Development (DFID)**

is leading the British Government's fight against world poverty.



**CLEEN Foundation**

works to promote public safety, security and accessible justice through legislative advocacy, demonstration programmes and publications in partnership with government and civil society. CLEEN is registered as a non-profit non-governmental organisation in Nigeria, works in several countries on the continent and has observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights.



**Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)** is the principal agent of democracy in Nigeria. INEC is a permanent body created by the constitution to organize Federal and State elections in Nigeria.



**The International Republican Institute (IRI)** is a nonpartisan organization based

in Washington DC that focuses on advancing freedom and democracy worldwide by developing political parties, civic institutions, open elections, good governance and the rule of law. IRI works in over 60 countries and has worked in Nigeria since 1999 to enhance the credibility of the electoral process. IRI's current work in Nigeria is funded by USAID and DfID.



**OMIDYAR NETWORK™**

**Omidyar Network** is a philanthropic investment firm dedicated to harnessing the power of markets to create opportunity for people to improve their lives through economic, social and political change.



**Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC)**

is an independent, non-governmental organization that promotes good governance and citizen participation. PLAC is committed to help make the Nigerian legislature at the local state and federal levels, accessible and accountable to the Nigerian people.

**MACARTHUR**

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

**The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation** established an office in Nigeria in 1994. It works in the areas of Population and Reproductive Health and Human Rights and International Justice. Its program on Higher Education is winding down while it explores the possibility of starting a new initiative on post primary education for girls.

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## Introduction

Nigerian citizens are increasingly determined to have a say in how they are governed. Communication is no longer a one-way process directed from leaders, but a two-way process that allows the public to interact with elected officials. Anonymity further emboldens citizens to speak their mind.

The Nigerian Government has responded positively to increasing access to ICT and mobile phone technology. The Ministry of Communication Technology is committed to facilitating the development of ICT infrastructure with an end goal of expanding the number of internet users in Nigeria to 70 million by 2015. As ICT infrastructure is rolled out, Nigerians will enjoy even greater access to cheaper and faster internet services. New media has the potential to become the preferred avenue for government to provide access to information while engaging with the electorate. This presents an important opportunity to mobilize new media to achieve civil society goals and objectives for transparency, accountability and good governance.

New media tools are predominately accessed using portable electronic devices, the most common being mobile phones. It is estimated that six billion active lines exist world-wide. Sixty seven percent of Nigerians own mobile phone SIM cards that enable access to new media tools. This may be a relatively low percentage compared to 96% in Botswana and 92% in South Africa but with Nigeria's population well over 150 million people, 67% translates to 101,271,578 active SIM cards. Nigerian internet subscribers total 45,039,711.<sup>1</sup> This critical mass of mobile phone users offers extraordinary untapped potential for the use of new media as a force for public good.

New media technologies are comprised of micro-blogging, podcasts, photo and video-sharing sites, weblogs, internet forums and social bookmarking. Facebook is reputed to have over one billion users, 901 million of which are active; Twitter features more than

**...It is estimated  
that 6 billion active  
mobile phone lines  
exist worldwide...**



465 million accounts and is growing at a rate of 11 accounts every second; YouTube witnesses over one billion video views in a day.

What becomes increasingly clear is that new media encompasses vital tools of convergence for people across the world - a rallying point for sharing information. When the goal is social action, new media offers exciting tools for engaging with governments and public institutions. Between June 2009 and February 2012 an interconnected series of upheavals described as the "Arab Spring" spanned countries including Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen where new media served as a powerful agent of change, deployed in ways traditional media was incapable of.

The most popular social media tool in Nigeria is Facebook with 5,051,980 subscribers; the 32nd most populous country on the networking site. Sixty eight percent of users are male and 32% female; 71% are Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 34.<sup>2</sup>

New media technologies enable real-time data collection and monitoring, innovative forms of information sharing as well as service provision. These tools offer organizations

effective new ways of advocating, creating awareness and fundraising. Organizations and people across sectors can collaborate efficiently and work cost-effectively. Moreover, service users can take part in discussing and designing solutions to problems that affect them.

Putting these tools to effective use does, however, require new approaches and skills. Successful adoption requires social change organizations to innovate and think creatively about their programmes, invest in learning, develop long-term technology engagement strategies, allocate human and financial resources differently, and forge new partnerships.

This report seeks to cover highlights of the New Media and Governance: Tools and Trends conference and attempts to offer pointers for the future on the promotion of sustainable development, good governance and peaceful co-existence. The report generally follows the chronological order of the conference, first establishing Nigeria's current capacity and the work of international players. It then considers the role new media played in the 2011 elections and looks at how government is using new media. Breakout sessions introduced new media tools to provide citizens increased access to information.



**...Nigeria is the fastest growing mobile phone market on the continent...**

Finally, the report makes recommendations to government, civil society organizations, and citizens for improved governance in Nigeria.

The conference sought to answer the following questions:

- How do we leverage tools and information so that more Nigerians are aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens to ensure that our elected and appointed officials are accountable to the people they serve?
- How do we influence governance at all levels in Nigeria using new media?
- Conversely, how does government pursue the goal of good governance through new media?

Conference participants were drawn from all tiers of government, civil society and the private sector, and included policy makers, international development partners, representatives of non-governmental and community based organizations and individuals. Over 450 participants took part in the two day event. Guest speakers featured from the US, UK, Canada, Finland and Kenya, joining Nigerian speakers, popular performing artists, activists, bloggers and some of Nigeria's most talented, tech savvy purveyors of new media.

<sup>1</sup> Nigerian Communications Commission  
<sup>2</sup> socialbakers.com

## How Did We Get Here?

Nigerian politicians actively utilized social media in their 2011 campaigns, sending bulk text and voice messages in unprecedented numbers. President Jonathan declared his intention to run on Facebook and subsequently became the second most "liked" head of state in the world after US President Barack Obama (fanpagelist.com).

Following a roundtable in early March 2011, INEC officials welcomed the assistance of civil society volunteers to establish Facebook and Twitter accounts as well as a new media Situation Room. The Situation Room received feedback from the public and later began to provide real time information.

### Social Media Tracking Credits

Center Managed by EIE Nigeria Volunteers

Supported by Yar'Adua Centre

Aggie Developed by Technologies & International Development Lab Georgia Institute of Technology

Partners:

INDEPENDENT National Electoral Commission

iAMLAGOS Ebo a ni ba

Berkman The Public Good in Digital Worlds

In an effort to capture the impact of this phenomenon, a Social Media Tracking Centre was established by a coalition of government and non-government partners. The project was funded by the Yar'Adua Centre and staffed by volunteers from Enough is Enough. Technical help came from the Berkman Center at Harvard University and a team at the Technologies & International Development Lab, Georgia Institute of Technology. Activities of this first-ever tracking centre are documented in a report, **Tracking Social Media: The Social Media Tracking Centre and the 2011 Nigerian Elections**.

### Total Social Media Numbers ALL Elections

	<b>157,975</b> Number of SMS messages sent by citizens relating to the April 2011 elections		<b>1,685</b> Number of pictures citizens posted relating to the April 2011 elections
	<b>296,254</b> Number of comments made by citizens relating to the April 2011 elections using twitter, and other web-based services		<b>70,000</b> Estimated number of voters who contributed to the content
			<b>455,914</b> Total social media content tracked

What began as a review session on the role new media played in the 2011 elections, quickly evolved into the idea of a strategic conference to build on the exciting work of numerous groups and individuals, including youth.

## Opening Plenary



**Yemi Adamolekun**  
Executive Director  
Enough is Enough Nigeria

**“Welcome to the first conference on the African Continent on new media and governance.”**

In her welcome address, Yemi Adamolekun highlighted the role of new media in opening up governance channels in Nigeria and acknowledged preliminary efforts made by state actors to embrace new media as a tool for governance.

She noted that ‘the dynamics have changed. While we agree that a relatively small percentage of Nigerians are connected and literate, our objective is to make critical information available to those who can then influence and disseminate information in their local communities.’

Organisations including Enough is Enough Nigeria, ReclaimNaija, WangoNet and iamLagos established platforms to provide the Nigerian public with real time information on the elections by leveraging new media tools that enabled citizens to participate fully. Following the successful deployment of these new media tools and initiatives, organizing partners of the New Media and Governance Conference were determined to further gain from what had started during 2011 elections by bringing together government policy makers, civil society, academic institutions, the private sector and the youth to explore the use of new media for improved governance, transparency and accountability in Nigeria.

Specific objectives of the conference were:

- To increase awareness amongst citizens, civil society actors and policy makers of the potential of new media as a tool for public good;
- To share experience and knowledge of tools used around the world and explore possibilities for adaptation, particularly pertaining to key governance issues such as budget tracking and security;
- To create a space for hands on learning on the use of different forms of new media for civic engagement.

She closed by stating that while social media did not cause the Arab Spring, it gave a voice to existing real networks and made organizing and communicating easier and more dynamic.

What is unarguable is that new media has made it easier for citizens to make their voice heard and force government officials to respond. She asked participants to consider how we leverage tools and information to ensure that more Nigerians are aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens to ensure that our elected and appointed officials are accountable to the people they serve.

## Opening Address



**Mrs. Omobola Johnson**  
Honourable Minister  
Communication Technology

Honourable Omobola Johnson reaffirmed the importance of new media to facilitate access to information through innovative new platforms that give people a voice concerning how they should be governed as well as setting an agenda for their government. She stated that events have clearly demonstrated that governments cannot afford to ignore new media.

The Federal Government, through the Ministry of Communication Technology, is committed to enhancing the democratization of information on the internet so that all Nigerians, regardless of their social or demographic status, can have access to government information and services. Publishing budgets on the internet gave room for all Nigerians to know how their money is being spent. She noted that the National Assembly’s recently passed Freedom of Information Act commits government to provide non classified information to citizens on demand.

Beyond providing relevant, accurate and up to date information to citizens, the Federal Government is also committed to increasing the delivery of government services online. At present only 49% of

## Global View

“... Governments cannot afford to ignore new media. This is becoming THE way in which citizens want to communicate and engage with government and with the outside world...”



**Professor Steven Livingston**  
George Washington University  
Washington D.C.

“There is a new African revolution underway. It may well produce the most important socio-economic and political change seen on the continent since de-colonization. It isn’t fought with bombs and bullets, but rather with bytes.”

government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) have functional websites. By December 2014, it is expected that every MDA will have a website and information on a general government portal to facilitate easy access to government information. The Federal Government is also committed to increase procurement of government services online and is on the verge of ensuring that 15-20% of government service procurement is online by the end of 2012.

For those citizens without access to the internet, government contact centers are being established as call centers to provide information in English and local languages. Two pilot centers are expected to be operational by the end of 2012 or early 2013 in Lagos and Calabar. ICT incubation centers will also be established to provide developers with testing support, access to cutting edge market research, mentoring and business development advice, grants and funding to help turn an idea into a commercially successful or socially beneficial application.

She closed by challenging the conference to provide useful, practical insights on how new media can be used to improve governance.

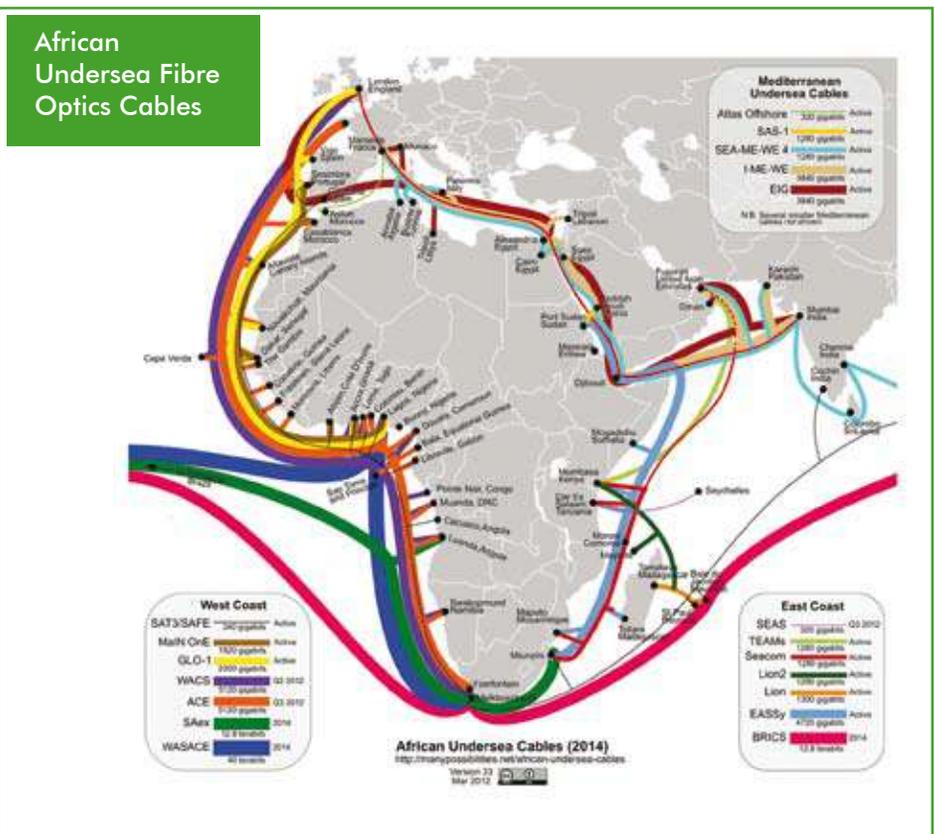
Professor Livingston’s thought provoking lecture focused on how technology can be utilized to empower civil society. He stated that information technology and collective action in the developing world through the use of new media tools may well produce the most important socio-economic and political change seen on the continent since decolonization. He observed that Africa’s information revolution relies on an interlocking constellation of overlapping and reinforcing technologies that are refined and harnessed by human ingenuity to solve problems and meet culturally specific needs.

These include:

- Mobile telephony
- Fibre optic connectivity
- Remote sensing satellites and geospatial data
- Communication satellites and ground receivers

The recent expansion of cellular service in Africa has had significant political effects as a direct result of the growth of mobile technology. New media tools and platforms created to effect political change in Africa include:

- Ushahidi following the 2007 Kenyan elections that incorporated



45,000 incident reports to create digital maps visualizing patterns of violence;

- ReclaimNaija election reporting system used in 2011 and 2012 elections;
- RapidSMS used to track stocks and distribution of 70 million long lasting insecticide treated bed nets to prevent malaria;
- Rapid Android used to report community statistics on health, food supply, and bed net usage;
- Community knowledge workers who close critical information gaps for poor smallholder farmers in Uganda;
- Voix des Kivus employs mobile phones to report conflict in the Congo;
- M-Pesa and MTN MobileMoney to collect salaries, pay bills and transfer funds;
- Networked collective action in areas of limited statehood as an alternative mode of governance;
- Innovation centres and support services.

Additional international platforms include:

- Ipaidabribe.com to report incidences of requests for bribes by government service providers in India;
- In Afghanistan, electronic payment alerts done via SMS exposed fraudulent commissioners who had been carving out chunks of salaries from police officers working under them. This had been going on for years and would not have been exposed if the new payment method had not been adopted.



**Stephen King**  
Partner, Omidyar Network, UK

“...Government, civil society and businesses working together equals a race to the top for open, effective and responsive government...”

Stephen King addressed the conference on the ‘Power of Open’. He noted that events of the last 18 months, including Occupy Nigeria, Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring have doused skepticism about the importance of open government in fighting corruption. He expounded on opportunities now open to Nigeria.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) was launched in September 2011 by the U.S. and Brazil with eight countries as inaugural members including Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. The OGP now features 55 nations representing 1.78 billion people or 25% of the world’s population.

Countries applying for Open Government Partnership must fulfill the following requirements:

- Fiscal Transparency
- Access to Information
- Disclosures related to elected or senior public officials
- Citizen Engagement

The multilateral initiative is headed by a steering committee that aims to restore people’s faith in government by securing concrete commitments to ensure openness and transparency in government, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to make government work for people.

Mr. King acknowledged a burgeoning interest in these themes and a growing tech community in Nigeria that is experimenting and collaborating. Co-Creation Hub in Lagos is supported by Omidyar Network and a great example of an incubation space producing social applications and using technology for social benefit.



September 2011 Launch

## Nigerian Elections and New Media: Moving Forward

The session reviewed the role new media played in the 2011 elections and examined how stakeholders can leverage this experience to expand citizen engagement in future elections.



**Professor Attahiru M. Jega**  
The Honourable Chairman  
Independent National Electoral Commission

“...The level of interest shown by the younger generation in the 2011 elections was never before witnessed in Nigeria’s political history...”

Professor Jega stated that the use of social media was ‘a profound experience in real time interaction with the public’ and went further to say there is no doubt that this helped the transparency of the process and contributed in no small measure to the acclaimed success of the 2011 general elections. The 2011 general elections represented the first election in Nigeria driven by new media. A newly established Situation Room served as the main vehicle for interaction with the general public using new media platforms. Beyond this, the use of new media provided a vehicle for the unprecedented mobilization of the emergent generation of youth in the political process. This was crucial as voters between the ages of 18 and 35 constitute 62.4% of the 73.5 million people registered by INEC during the voter registration exercise conducted in early 2011.

New media tools and applications have profoundly added value to the electoral process. Specific benefits include:

- Enhanced transparency of the political process and making INEC more accountable to the public in its conduct of elections;
- Strengthened oversight of the electoral process by empowering the public to alert INEC of

incidents requiring swift security intervention;

- Mobilised citizens, particularly the younger generation, to participate at every level of the electoral process;
- Potential to entrench and deepen our democracy.

Professor Jega also identified challenges and potentially negative aspects of these undoubtedly useful tools including:

- Vehicle for information as well as misinformation. Number of alarms received in the Situation Room during elections turned out to be red herrings. Might there be a way to filter communication on new media platforms to avert possible unsavoury consequences of false alarms?
- Basic requirement for access to most new media platforms is literacy which can be a daunting challenge in Nigeria. How can we make these platforms less restrictive, so they can be used more widely for voter education purposes?
- Unlike conventional media, new media platforms are particularly active only when elections are underway. Can we propose a programme for sustained

interaction with the public on these platforms even outside election days/seasons?

- In this era of freedom of information, courtesy of the act signed into law by Mr. President on May 28, 2011, how can we deploy new media platforms more effectively for proactive dissemination of information?



**Amara Nwankpa**  
Enough is Enough Nigeria

Moderator, Amara Nwankpa, reaffirmed that a major learning point of the 2011 elections was the fact that people felt they owned the process. Communities organized themselves to ensure that voter registration and election processes succeeded. New media helped to bring all of this to fruition as people regularly shared information about the process on platforms that encouraged and mobilized greater participation.



**Dr. Mohammed J. Kuna**  
Special Assistant to the Chairman (INEC)

Dr. Mohammed Kuna provided further details about the Situation Room established during the 2011 elections:

- Featured banks of television monitors, cable television, mobile phones, analog lines, BlackBerry messenger service, computers, printers, internet connectivity, power point projectors and screens, notice boards and social media platforms Twitter and Facebook.
- Phone operators collected calls from voters and complaints were attended to through a chain of command.
- Messages received from various incoming platforms were classified according to urgency and responded to accordingly.
- New media was critical as it increased participation, provided a transparent platform for reporting incidents and offered feedback to INEC.

### Trends in the Use of New Media by Electoral Monitoring Boards

- India: Participation & Fraud Prevention
- UK: Encouraging Youth to Register & Vote
- New Zealand: Youth Participation in Registration & Voting

### Real Time Monitoring of Events: 2011 General Elections

1. Situation Room: Deluge of SMS
  - i. Inbound: 111,992 (Including SMSs from ReclaimNaija)
  - ii. Outbound: 300,000
2. Tweets: 1,173
3. Facebook: 861 Updates with 15,530 likes
4. Call Logs
  - i. Inbound: 12,235
  - ii. Outbound: 852
5. Arrests : Unknown; Deaths: 8; Kidnaps: 39
6. Total Data Transmitted / Received: 3GB

Source: INEC

As Nigeria moves toward 2015, Dr. Kuna stated that INEC is making arrangements to expand on the use of new media. He challenged participants to develop rules that can govern its use by political parties and drew attention to the importance of civil society organizations holding political parties to certain minimum requirements to make primary elections more transparent and share funding sources for campaign donations on line.



**Nike Adekanbi**  
iamLagos

**"...farmers, market women - everyone can use SMS."**

IamLagos created awareness during voter registration and supported Lagos residents in monitoring the 2011 elections.

- Information sent via SMS, websites, newspaper adverts, tweets, Facebook and fliers to create awareness and encourage participation in the electoral process;
- Technology inexpensive, user friendly, and easily duplicated. Application can be used in other states during future elections;
- Use of SMS had biggest impact because of its cost effectiveness;
- To succeed you must build relationships with relevant government agencies to ensure that complaints are attended to.





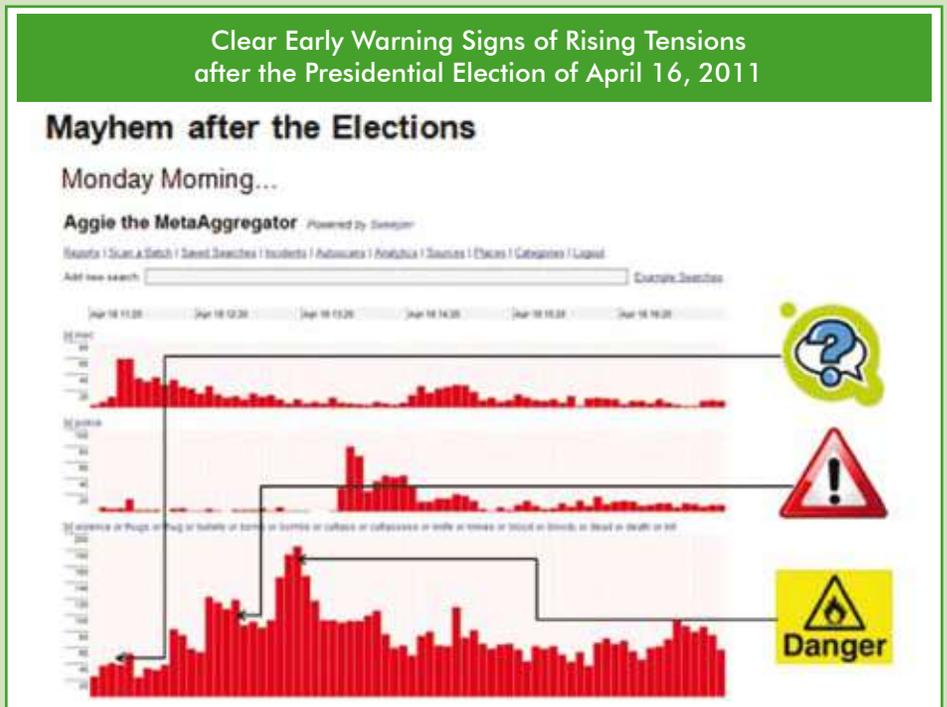
**Michael Best**  
Georgia Institute of Technology

Highlights of his presentation:

- Georgia Tech provided technical assistance in establishing and running the Social Media Tracking Centre. During post-election violence, the Centre was reconfigured to analyze incidents of violence and electoral malpractice;
- Imperative that Africa develop its own applications and software created to address local realities;
- Elections are periodic. How can we use new media to increase citizen engagement in order to ensure a robust democracy by introducing checks on government.

Mr. Best described the power of new media as a vehicle for a ‘virtual political revolution’, as witnessed in the Arab Spring and OccupyNigeria, with an emphasis on social and political processes of governance, participation, accountability and transparency.

New media offers availability of information to stimulate debates, make informed choices, organize broad based participation and become a voice for the voiceless. He suggested these tools are so powerful they can regulate relationships between states and citizens as well as shape how the Nigerian Government is viewed around the world.



**Audience Participation**

Questions:	Reponses:
1. How can INEC harness the voter registration database to reach out to citizens for voter education purposes?	1. INEC is willing to establish stakeholder consultations on how to better deploy new media for successful elections.
2. What plans does INEC have for on-line voter registration?	2. Continuous voter registration will commence before the end of the year.
3. Can the experience of the Situation Room be adapted for peace building and conflict management?	3. Important to establish an electoral offenses tribunal to hear cases of electoral offenses. INEC was faced with 875,000 cases in the 2011 elections.

## Engaging Government

The session examined how government and civil society stakeholders can establish appropriate structures to take advantage of new media tools. It sought to identify existing federal, state and local government initiatives that can be embraced by elected officials. Speakers also encouraged citizens to take responsibility for engaging with government.



**Governor Kayode Fayemi**  
Ekiti State

Governor Fayemi, a scholar, development practitioner and human rights activist stated that his administration is deeply committed to running an open, accountable administration. He offered that he has 'disrupted' governance through the use of digital media and the citizens are better for it.

The Governor identified ongoing initiatives in Ekiti State to integrate new media tools into the affairs of government. He stated this is key to executing his vision to position Ekiti State within a global framework in order to transform the state into an economic hub and destination of choice for business and tourism.

The administration embarked upon the development and implementation of a robust digital media strategy in 2011, identifying civic engagement as its most critical aspect. Key objectives of the programme include: Providing real-time or near real-time authentic, believable, credible evidence of service delivery. Elements of the programme include:

- Creating and institutionalizing effective global engagement with Ekiti stakeholders;
- Promoting participatory democracy, inclusive governance and accountability;
- Making the state one of the top three leading public digital brands in

**"...social media has changed the game, even for those in government. You ignore citizens at your own peril."**

Nigeria by June 2012.

- Creating an e-portal ([www.ekitistate.gov.ng](http://www.ekitistate.gov.ng)) where citizens can access information, ask questions and seek clarification. Most notably, Ekiti was the first state to post its complete budget online.
- Establishing a wireless state through the laying of fibre optic cables.
- Introducing a biometric system for the state and local government civil service.

The following projects have been realized in Ekiti State:

- Citizen identification cards establish accurate information for beneficiaries of social services.
- E-payment system in tax administration has increased internally generated revenue from approximately 100 million naira to over 600 million naira.
- State website is now the second most visited state government website in Nigeria.

The Governor was questioned whether he anticipates the increased use of ICT will lead to redundancy in the public service and how he intends to deal with this challenge. He was also asked whether the state's presence in new media has translated to increased foreign investment. Governor Fayemi replied that he believes there is a direct correlation between visits to the website and interest in investment in the state.



**Gerald Ilukwe**  
CEO, Galaxy Backbone

Galaxy Backbone's pioneer Chief Executive Officer, Gerald Ilukwe, reaffirmed his company's mission to encourage and enable the effective use of ICT in government.

As the provider of communications technology services to the Federal Government, Galaxy is committed to delivering critical government services online to a larger percentage of Nigerians. To this end, Galaxy Backbone has provided over 3,500 government locations with access to a common network infrastructure it calls OneGov.net. This essentially means that over 450 Federal Government MDAs have sufficient access to begin engaging citizens electronically.

Furthermore, Galaxy Backbone is working with relevant ministries to develop a single window portal to facilitate easy access to government information via new media tools.

These moves are an essential part of the e-Governance campaign of the Federal Government to expand citizen engagement and facilitate access to government information from anywhere.

**“Citizen engagement should encompass the entire spectrum of new media – including SMS which is a common denominator even for those in the rural areas.”**

Examples of how the Nigerian Government at the federal, state and local levels has embraced new media include:

- Posting the federal budget on line;
- State governors, ministers and legislators using Facebook and Twitter platforms to engage with the public.



**Caroline Sage**  
Social Development Specialist  
The World Bank

**“Communication is key but there has to be a dialogue.”**

Caroline Sage stated that interaction between citizens and government is rapidly changing. She noted that new media is the primary medium of communication among youth, and suggested that if government wants to engage young people, it will have to use new media.

The World Bank is fully committed to helping the Nigerian Government achieve its aim of creating policy dialogue on open government at federal and state levels by incorporating mainstream ICT applications for social accountability into existing programs and projects via an open framework. The idea behind the initiative is to provide a common platform for strengthening citizen-state service provider relationships; reframing understandings about ICT and social accountability; leveraging existing projects and partnerships; and

facilitating learning and innovation while ensuring effectiveness of scale.

The World Bank supports the Nigerian State Health Programme Investment Credit (NSHPIC), FADAMA III and the Nigerian Open Government Framework in Edo State. Each project features the assessment of roles and responsibilities of government and citizens, beneficiary capacity for cell phone reporting, and identification of relevant civil society organizations as facilitators.

World Bank Support to Government of Nigeria	
<p><b>Objective: To test innovative ICT-enabled approaches to enhancing informed, inclusive and accountable relationships amongst the state, service providers and citizens in Nigeria.</b></p>	
<p><b>Policy Dialogue on Open Government at Federal and State levels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Open Data</li> <li>-Budget and Expenditure Tracking and Reporting</li> <li>-Citizen's Information Center</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mainstream ICT applications for Social Accountability into existing programs and projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NSHPIC</li> <li>- Fadama III</li> <li>- Crime and Violence Prevention and Urban Upgrading</li> </ul>

Donor partner support to government innovations include:

- Budget/ expenditure tracking
- Citizen information centres
- ICT for crime and violence detection and prevention





**Yemi Keri**  
Open Government Pilot Project  
Edo State

Yemi Keri noted that Edo State enjoys one of the highest literacy rates in the country and therefore has a large reservoir of human capital that can be tapped for economic and technological transformation. She identified political will as essential to the success of new media initiatives and stated that ICT is viewed as one of the enablers of the development strategy of Edo State to generate employment and expand production in key sectors. To this end, 500 graduates have been employed to run the state's ICT programme. She highlighted ongoing Edo State efforts in support of open government.

The Open Government Pilot Project in Edo State recognizes that:

**“We intend to make technology the engine of running government.”**

- ICT is one of the enablers of the development strategy of Edo State to generate employment, expand production in key sectors, provide information via an open data plan and engage citizens.
- The state's ICT development strategy will run from 2009-2020. Targets include harnessing ICT as a development tool, encouraging involvement of all stakeholders in Edo State, moving the perception of ICT from a cost to an enabler and using ICT to promote transparency, participation and collaboration.
- Goals of the Edo State pilot project beyond 2012 include fully embracing e-government for efficiency, transparency and technology-driven data management within a citizen driven process that is open and networked.

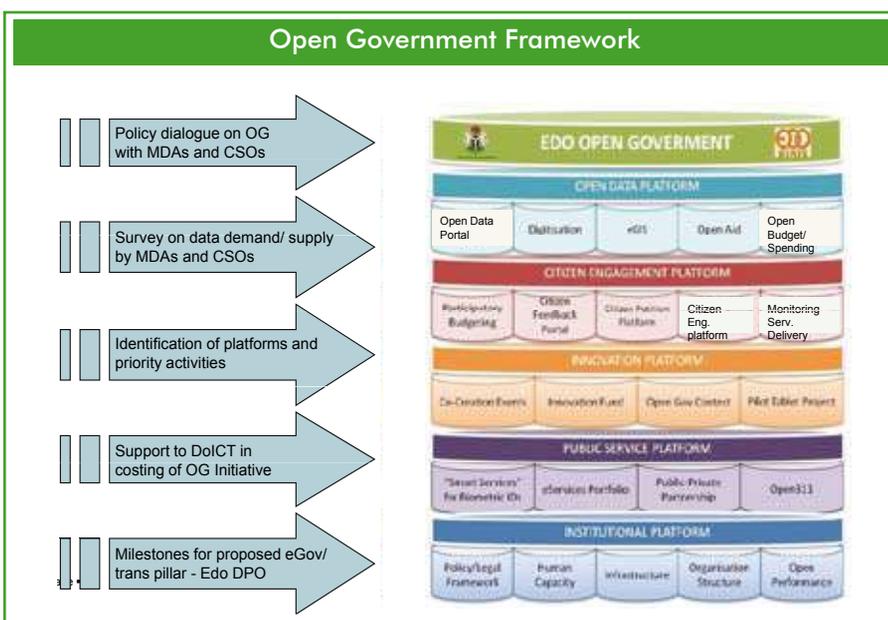


**Honourable Tonye Isenah**  
Member, Bayelsa State House of Assembly

Honourable Tonye Isenah discussed how he is using new media to provide access to information and elicit public opinion to government policies through his online constituency office.

Primarily run on Facebook, the initiative enables him to interact with citizens, including those in the Diaspora, and includes:

- Dissemination of key documents, including the state budget;
- Circulation of proposed Bayelsa State House of Assembly legislation;
- Eliciting public opinion and reactions on proposed bills and government policies.





**Paul Lenz**  
Head of Finance and Operations  
mySociety

**“Less can be more. Government websites should offer simple tools that deliver tangible benefits.”**

Mr. Lenz stated that public office holders should be open to public scrutiny but we need to work to persuade government that releasing information is to its own benefit. Citizens must demonstrate that value can be unlocked from data released. He suggested that Nigeria focus on local communities in order to carry people along through the use of new media. He recommended simple approaches that deliver benefits, use of existing channels and replacement of poor solutions where necessary. It is important that citizens

find a champion who will promote their cause within government.

Further to this, he noted that:

- Most government websites are usability failures. A way forward is to concentrate scarce internal resources to provide basic information and contact details of elected officials;
- Focus should be on making available accurate, timely and useful data in formats that can be used by researchers, charities and social entrepreneurs;
- To encourage people to embrace your programme, you must be passionate about issues. Don't just do things for monetary or social gains;
- The success of citizen engagement with government depends on the creation of effective tools and strategies;
- Citizens and government must be convinced that the use of new media would create a win-win situation; where citizens can convey their expectations to government and government in turn can inform citizens about their efforts and intentions.



**Senator Bukola Saraki**  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Environment and Ecology

Senator Bukola Saraki is recognized for his active use of ‘tweet meets’ by his Senate colleagues and the general public. His #ABS interactive sessions have enabled him to put names with faces of online constituents and members of the community. The response has been instructive as it has helped sharpen the approach needed to tackle matters such as unemployment, education and entrepreneurship.

In prepared remarks sent to the conference, he suggested it has become paramount for government officials, employees and even contractors to embrace the use of new media to show transparency and accountability in public service through direct engagement with stakeholders.

Additional highlights include:

- It is now possible for citizens to make their political opinions and presence known and to play a more active role in governance;
- Through his website and Twitter account he obtained real life images and reports from people affected by the Bonga oil spill. This made it easier to initiate an on-the-spot assessment by the committee who visited the location in record time;
- Encourages the use of new media to fight crime.



**Chidi Odinkalu**  
Head of The Africa Programme  
Open Society Justice Initiative

Lead discussant, Chidi Odinkalu, asked, “How do you achieve interaction between government and the governed? How can citizens make demands on government?” He suggested this is best achieved through public service though the

concept of public service is lacking in Nigeria. He noted that:

- Citizens do not make demands on government. When they do so, messages need to be framed appropriately;
- Use of new media is limited by poor electricity supply in Nigeria;
- Public servants underutilize government’s ICT infrastructure – many government agencies do not have functional websites;
- Information produced by government agencies is not organized in ways that can be easily accessed.

## Music and The Spoken Word

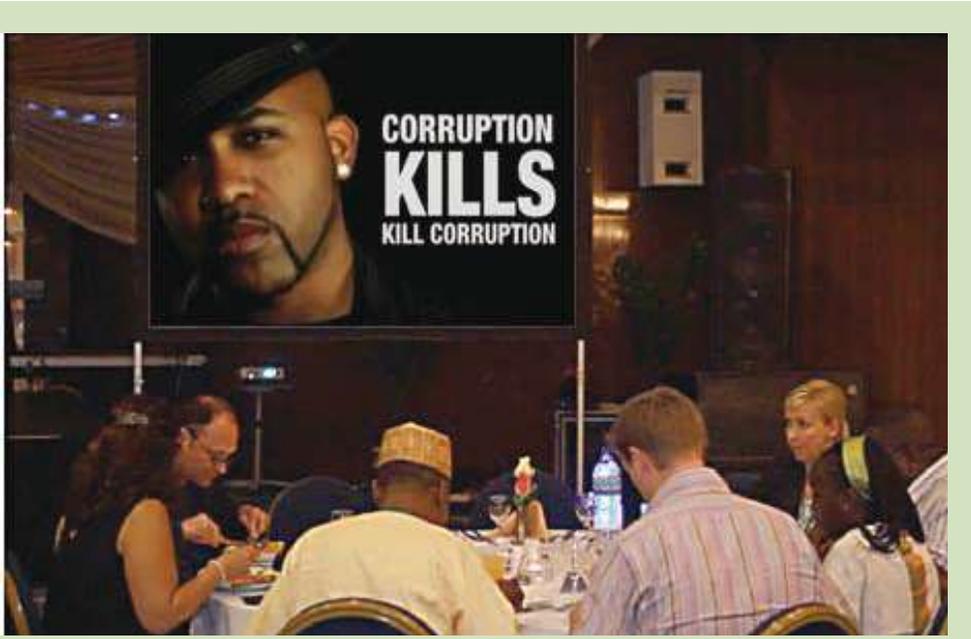
*Entertainment genres serve as powerful vehicles for inspiring youth to affect social, political and economic change in Nigeria. The conference hosted a dinner featuring socially conscious performances by cutting edge artists, Darey, Banky W, and Efe Paul.*

**Honourable Farouk Muhammad Lawan**, Chairman, Ad-Hoc Committee on the Subsidy Regime, House of Representatives, reminded the audience that politicians respond to public pressure. “The truth is that when politicians are put under pressure, they respond. In a country like ours, we need transparency and accountability. Steadfastness can bring about the change we desire in this country. We need to create a new Nigeria with new ideas and new principles. We have the responsibility to make a change. We can do it.”

**Mr. Julius Court**, Team Leader, Governance and Social Development, DFID spoke on the importance of good governance and transparency and noted that the British government was immensely proud to be associated with the event. He congratulated everyone who either contributed formally or raised questions in the meetings.

**His Excellency, Mr. Chris Cooter**, High Commissioner of the Canadian High Commission, stated that this is a new and wonderful world thanks to new media and we need to think about how we will use it to promote transparency, accountability and governance in Nigeria.





**Bill Gates**  
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

In a recorded goodwill message, Bill Gates noted, "A lot is happening in social media in Nigeria. Pushing it towards improved governance will be very important. I've always believed that technology can improve lives." He encouraged Nigerians to use new media and said that "the impact you can have will be incredible."



**Efe Paul Azino**

*This is Not a Political Poem*

"...all men are created equal. But some men have become more equal than others so they loot and plunder, dip their bowls into our collective purse, fill their bellies..."



## Naija Generation and New Media

The session focused on how new trends in entertainment and popular culture can drive increased levels of youth engagement and participation in governance.



**Honourable Bolaji Abdullahi**  
Minister  
Youth Development

The Minister defined the Naija generation as those who have embraced the totality of their Nigerian identity by transcending primordial ethnic and religious affiliations. As children of a post modern culture, the Naija generation is uniquely empowered to effect social change.

While acknowledging that new media and popular culture have dismantled the last vestige of limits on freedom of expression and offers the potential for mobilizing youth engagement and participation in government, he fears that too often engagement and participation become ends in themselves rather than opportunities to affect how decisions are made and government is run.

He suggested that engagement has resulted in a celebrity culture where columnists, bloggers, and publishers become 'stars' obsessed with a quest for internet hits, media subscriptions and Twitter followers. Stating that changing Nigeria is a marathon not a sprint, he offered recommendations to the Naija generation in order to take advantage of its unique power as offered by new media:

**"...only constructive engagement on a platform of knowledge and in an atmosphere of mutual respect can bring about enduring positive change..."**

- Seek and cultivate opportunity for knowledge and meaningful information on a broad range of policy subjects, including understanding how governments at all levels operate;
- Be conversant with legislative processes and executive policy, developing real understanding of budgets;
- Develop an active interest in politics, engage with the political system at all levels, even beyond elections;
- Become more inclusive, democratic and representative;
- Provide multiple platforms for engagement;
- Be more tolerant of alternative viewpoints;
- Seek to build mutual respect, where other people and government officials can engage without being insulted and/or abused.

**Chude Jideonwo**, Managing Partner, Red Media Group and Executive Director of the Future Nigeria Project moderated the session. He began by saying that:

- New media is about interaction using the best tools in relation to the cause and expected outcome;
- Focus should no longer be about using new media to attract followers but its use as a strategic tool for change;
- New media is incapable of solving all problems and its impact remains limited to a cadre of youth who keep up with the rapidly changing information landscape;
- Effective use of new media tools requires focus on capacity building.





**Banky W**

Bankole Wellington, stage name Banky W, offered a more optimistic perspective on new media in Nigeria. He encouraged the audience to take full responsibility of the new Nigeria project and suggested:

- The problem with Nigeria is failed leadership and citizen apathy;
- Nigeria will change when young people decide that ‘enough is enough’;
- New media is about us. Government representation on Twitter and Facebook is far lower than that of independent new media bloggers and users;
- It is the duty of youth to make change happen by voting and participating during elections;
- If you are not happy, protest.



**Darey Art Alade**

Darey Art Alade, a singer of international repute asked whether entertainment icons should use their status to influence the political process and suggested there may be unintended risks.

He identified present realities:

- The use of new media is constrained by poor infrastructure;
- Nigerians should be practical regarding government communication with the general public using new media;
- More socially conscious music needs to be produced in Nigeria.



**Efe Paul Azino**

Efe Paul Azino, one of Nigeria’s foremost spoken word poets, noted that new media is not an end in itself but a means to an end - good governance. He also stated that:

- New media is a tool; the extent to which it can drive youth activism depends on the technical proficiency of those who use it;
- If youth are to engage government, they must develop organized structures to push through demands;
- Good governance requires character – selflessness and discipline;
- Popular culture is often an obstacle to the virtues of selflessness and discipline by promoting self glorification;
- To make popular culture relevant to demands for good governance, we need to make our music and other art forms more socially relevant to Nigeria.



# Linking Local Actors with New Media Tools

Breakout sessions introduced tools for assessing civic engagement, government accountability and citizen protection. Each session identified African uses of new media tools.

Technology is the answer – but what was the question? - Cedric Price

## ■ ■ ■ Governance: Transparency, Leadership and Accountability

The session featured methods, processes and applications of new media tools that have proven useful in demanding accountability and transparency from those exercising leadership.



**Kole Shettima**  
Country Director  
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

As facilitator of the session, Dr. Shettima's opening remarks included:

- New media offers mechanisms to hold leaders accountable;
- Occupy Nigeria was the most organized protest in recent memory due in part to the use of social media;
- New media on its own does not guarantee participation;
- A combination of new media and street organizing makes the difference.

Occupy Nigeria was the most organized protest in recent memory due in part to the use of social media



**Chuks Ojidoh**  
Deputy Project Director  
Community Life Project

Chuks Ojidoh introduced ReclaimNaija as a broad-based citizens reporting platform established in 2010 to bring together a vast network of community based partners across the country. The network is comprised of informal sector workers and trade-based-groups such as associations of mechanics, carpenters, vulcanisers, welders, commercial motor bike riders/owners, market women, electricians, tailors, hairdressers as well as community development associations, members of civil society, faith-based organisations and government agencies.

**ReclaimNaija** is:

- Designed to enhance participation of citizens, organizations and local institutions during elections by promoting electoral transparency, accountability and democratic governance in Nigeria;



My Vote, My Power!  
www.reclaimnaija.net

- Driven by the Ushahidi web engine as a reporting platform to enable citizens to monitor the electoral process and report incidents of electoral fraud and malpractices by sending text messages or calling dedicated GSM numbers in four major languages (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and Pidgin). Frontline SMS is used as the gateway for text messages. Citizens can also report via email, direct reporting on the site and Twitter;
- Reports received by ReclaimNaija were critical in INEC's decision to extend the deadline for voter registration by two days in communities with limited access to registration centres;
- The effectiveness of the platform depends on buy in from citizens. CLP encourages civil society organizations and stakeholders to use the reclaimnaija.net platform to facilitate open access to information.



**Jessica Musila**  
African Project Lead  
mySociety



**MZALENDO**

www.mzalendo.com

Mzalendo was created in 2002 by two young like-minded Kenyans to promote a stronger public voice and enhance public participation in politics.

Mzalendo seeks to keep an eye on Kenyan parliamentarians by:

- Providing relevant information on activities of Parliament; MPs, and aspirants ahead of upcoming elections;
- Demonstrating it is possible and necessary for Kenyans to demand accountability from public officials and institutions;
- Ensuring workings of Parliament are easily accessible to young Kenyans through the website, Twitter account, and Facebook page.

Mzalendo is the only free parliamentary monitoring site in Sub-Saharan Africa. mySociety,

UK offered technical expertise and experience to make it self-sustainable. The prototype is easily adaptable to fit other African contexts, including Nigeria.

Recent additions to the Mzalendo website include:

- MP scorecards rating accessibility, spending and attendance of parliamentarians;
- Searchable Hansard;
- Open data information including census, registered voter, education and health data;
- Additional partners to provide information and act as multipliers in disseminating data.



Future developments for the Mzalendo website will include:

- SMS interface
- Write to them
- Hear from your MP
- Polls
- Hansard breakdown (motions, ministerial questions)

Changes in Kenya since introduction of Mzalendo include a new constitution, access to information and increasing public participation in government.

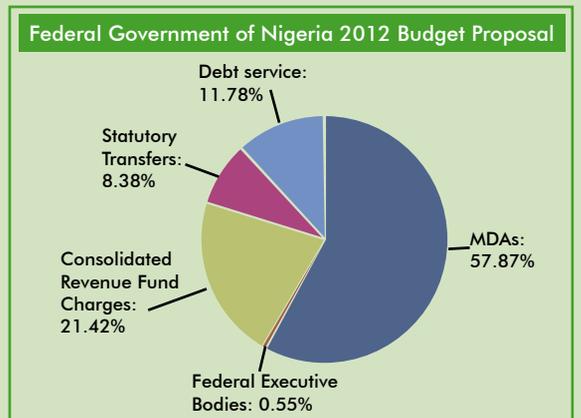


www.yourbudgit.com

**Olusegun Onigbinde**, Director of Green Acts Group and Project Lead, introduced BudgIT as a revolutionary new media tool created to educate Nigerians on the budget and other public information through the use of tweets, interactive formats and infographics.

The application presents statistics and facts in a format easy to read and understand.

Mr. Onigbinde offered that as a social enterprise, BudgIT is committed to transparency and sound governance by bridging the gap of ignorance, an important component for democracy to flourish.

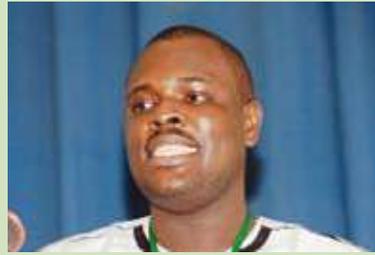




**Jibrin Ibrahim**  
Director  
Centre for Democracy and Development

As lead discussant, Dr. Ibrahim observed that new media tends to cater to society's trend toward limited sound bites and short attention spans. New media often does not provide context, analysis or a deeper understanding of issues. He did, however, note that new media was instrumental in bringing increased awareness of the federal budget when figures of the President's food budget were released.

**"When that thing came out, within minutes it was all over - everybody was talking about it. It brought attention back to the budget."**



**Chude Jideonwo**  
Executive Director  
The Future Project

## THE FUTURE PROJECT

[www.thefuturenigeria.com](http://www.thefuturenigeria.com)

Chude Jideonwo introduced The Future Project as a social enterprise focused on leadership, entrepreneurship and governance with an emphasis on young Nigerians. The platform has adopted Media4Development as its primary tool. Projects include:

- The Future Enterprise Support Scheme
- The Youth Application Centre
- The Ideas and Innovation Fair

Mr. Jideonwo stated that new media is about interaction and discussion, not just applications. Whichever tool or application is best suited for the achievement of your objectives is the right tool, whether websites, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, newspaper columns or bulk SMS.

## Social Trends: Drivers for Progress

The session explored current and future trends in new media applications that can drive good governance initiatives and discussed global trends that foster sustainable progress. Moderated by **Charmaine Pereira**, an independent feminist scholar and author, she emphasized that the session would focus on emerging social trends in the form and usage of new media to effect social change.



**'Gbenga Sesan**  
Executive Director  
Paradigm Initiative Nigeria



[www.eienigeria.org/revoda](http://www.eienigeria.org/revoda)

'Gbenga Sesan stated that deliberate attempts have been made by young people to effect social change, triggered by a sense of urgency regarding the security situation in the country and unmet expectations by our political leaders.

- Online discussions focus on the state of the nation and what people can do to save the country. This translates as significant information sharing among young people in both online and offline discussions and meetings;
- High point was the fuel subsidy protest in January 2012. However, that singular event should not be viewed in isolation.





**Mari Tikkanen**  
Founder and Managing Director  
M4ID



Mari Tikkanen stated that M4ID (Marketing for International Development) supports non-profit organizations in the use of new media technology to enable them to make a greater impact in development and health. M4ID provides a wide range of social media and mobile phone services. They have created numerous global campaigns and service concepts leveraging on a variety of new media tools. She suggested participants think about what motivates and triggers a targeted audience.

#### Key Shifts

- More people are becoming active on Twitter and using the platform to further causes and campaigns;
- People are changing their information sourcing habits. YouTube, Google, Wikipedia are quickly becoming the main source of information for bloggers;
- News is regularly finding us through networks of people we respect;
- Celebrities are not necessarily strong currency for social change through new media;
- New media has become a utility tool as much as a tool for social interaction.

#### Civil Society Uses for Social Media

- Extend visibility and reach of information
- Listen and engage in dialogue
- Establish trust, credibility, thought-leadership
- Become a curator of information - influencer
- Collect, act on and publish real-time information
- Harness collective intelligence/ crowd source
- Design targeted co-created services
- Enable digital activism/participation
- Employ effective collaboration tools
- Present issues in an engaging, inspiring way

#### Recommendations from the Session Included:

- Change makers should consider their target audience and means of communication in order to deploy tools that will be most effective.
- Policy formulation and implementation are not just about government; people have to be involved.
- Civil society organisations should obtain information regarding a range of new media applications available to them in order to choose those best suited for their purpose.
- Civil society doesn't have to re-invent new tools to be effective, what is important is that they use available tools to deliver their message to their target audience.
- New media tools must be contextualized to face local social-economic and political realities.
- The content of your message is very important because facts, figures, and analysis are critical to social change. Focus on research and build the content of your message for maximum effectiveness.
- Persons with disabilities should be mainstreamed into new media applications
- Government should see new media as a tool for effective governance rather than as an impediment.

An understanding of the big picture is relevant because the build up to the January 2012 protests actually started in 2010 during 'Save Nigeria' and other protests that occurred after that period.

The buzz on social media is being brought offline through various advocacy processes, street movements and protests. Mr. Sesan noted that new media is beginning to feed mainstream media with information for more effective, timely and efficient reportage.

Opportunities resulting from this revolutionary trend include:

- Enlightened citizens are working together through mobile based citizen empowerment platforms. While this trend continues, it holds massive opportunity for positive impact in the 2015 elections and thereafter in deepening democracy.
- Report of Honourable Farouk Lawan led probe panel on fuel subsidy removal dredged up a lot of figures and corrupt practices. Citizens can therefore seize the opportunity to ask probing questions and force government to act on the report. Politicians respond to pressure.
- Citizens should begin to concentrate on their Local Government Councils. They should keep their eyes open; ask questions, share information and form networks for holding Local Government officials accountable.

## Capacity Building: Citizen Empowerment Strategies

The session explored strategies and tools to provide citizens access to information and support networks to engage and empower those demanding greater participation in government.



**Clement Nwankwo**  
Executive Director  
Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre

As facilitator, Mr. Nwankwo emphasized that the focus would be how to:

- Help citizens mobilize through new media;
- Help government understand what citizens expect from them;
- Improve capacity of the messenger.



**Femi Longe**  
Co-founder, CcHUB



CcHUB was co-founded by Femi Longe and Bosun Tijani as a social innovation centre dedicated to accelerating the application of social capital and technology for economic prosperity. The platform encourages citizens to make contributions towards solving common problems by nurturing globally relevant

solutions and entrepreneurs. The Hub is Nigeria's first open living lab for technologists, entrepreneurs, technology companies and investors. It is a place to:

- Facilitate creative thinking and collaborative problem solving
- Encourage technology innovation in Nigeria
- Encourage shared accountability between technologists and innovators
- Serve as a living lab for prototyping and testing
- Build new skills and competencies
- Connect, share, create and find expertise

New media applications and platforms created by CcHUB include:

- **BudGIT:** a web platform designed to easily comprehend the Nigerian budget and public sector spending using infographics [www.yourbudgit.com](http://www.yourbudgit.com)
- **iWatchlive:** a platform for citizens to measure the performance of government against plans and promises provided for in their budgets [www.iwatchlive.org](http://www.iwatchlive.org)
- **Constitution App:** a web and mobile platform to make the Nigerian constitution available to all. Version 2.0 covers J2ME, Blackberry and Android [www.constitutionforall.com.ng](http://www.constitutionforall.com.ng)
- **Residents Report:** a platform that allows citizens to report damaged public services to responsible public institutions for prompt repair
- **Ideas2020:** a web platform to crowd-source small community projects to be implemented by citizens to drive Nigeria closer to achieving the goals of Vision2020 through grassroots led initiatives [www.ideas2020.com](http://www.ideas2020.com)
- **Voteguard:** a web and mobile platform to enable citizens to monitor election results reported by the electoral commission in Nigeria

## Approach



Jonaz Schwarz Lausten, Business Development Manager, described Seismonaut as a digital innovation consultancy founded in Denmark to create digital solutions, services and products for companies and governments across Europe and Africa. Their goal is to help mobilize citizens in order to make their voices heard to:

- Promote increased transparency in governance
- Help citizens express expectations of governance

Core offerings created specifically for Africa include:

- Online Ethnography
- Ethnographic Research
- Lead-User Identification
- Technology Scan

Innovation model:

- Map: Research based in ethnography pivotal to gaining insight into both the market and end user.
- Create: ideas and concepts based on the Mapping-phase.
- Shape: perfect concepts from the Create-phase.
- Build: solutions based on solid research, knowledge and methods.

## WANGONeT



[www.nigeriaelections.org](http://www.nigeriaelections.org)

**Oluwaseun Akinfolarin**, Project Lead, introduced WANGONeT as a nongovernmental organization that leverages technology to tackle multifaceted challenges facing our society.

WANGONeT's objectives include:

- To facilitate private sector efficiencies among NGOs by assisting them to become key critical sectors for advocacy of the reform process.
- To serve as a one stop shop for ICT support, solutions, and needs for NGOs, donor agencies, government and the private sector.

WANGONeT projects include:

- Drivers of Change
- Anticorruption Internet Database

- Budget Monitoring and Enlightenment Toolkit
- Local Government Budget and Expenditure Tracking Tool

Mr. Akinfolarin spoke to the importance of messaging and advised that users of new media consider the following:

- **Capacity of the message:** How a message goes viral is directly proportionate to the quality of the message.
- **Capacity of the channel:** Is the medium adoptable by an existing social action community? Can the system be modularized and distributed? How can the tool leverage the personal social network of the messenger?
- **Capacity of the messenger:** To consume, produce and propagate new media content.



**mysociety.org**

[www.mysociety.org](http://www.mysociety.org)  
[www.theyworkforyou.com](http://www.theyworkforyou.com)

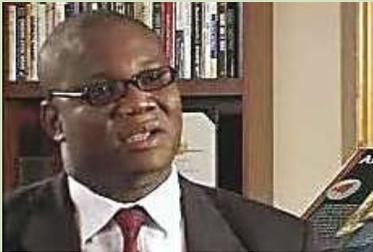
Head of Finance and Operations, Mr. Paul Lenz, defined mySociety as a nongovernmental organization that builds websites to give people simple, tangible benefits in the civic and community aspects of their lives. Through demonstration, it teaches the public and volunteer sectors how to use the internet most efficiently to improve lives

mySociety projects include:

- **TheyWorkForYou.com** – UK parliamentary monitoring
- **WriteToThem** – UK website for contacting elected representatives
- **WhatDoTheyKnow.com** – UK Freedom of Information request website
- **Alaveteli** – International Freedom of Information website used in Brazil and Kosovo
- **FixMyStreet.com** – UK local fault reporting website, also launched in Norway
- **FixMyTransport.com** – UK transport problem reporting and campaigning website
- **Mzalendo.com** – relaunch of Mzalendo website in Kenya in February 2012

## Early Warning Systems: Citizen Protection

The session focused on identifying innovative early warning system mechanisms driven by new media, featuring tools developed for mapping in the areas of crisis, conflict management, and peace building.



**Innocent Chukwuma**  
Executive Director  
CLEEN Foundation

Innocent Chukwuma served as facilitator of the session.

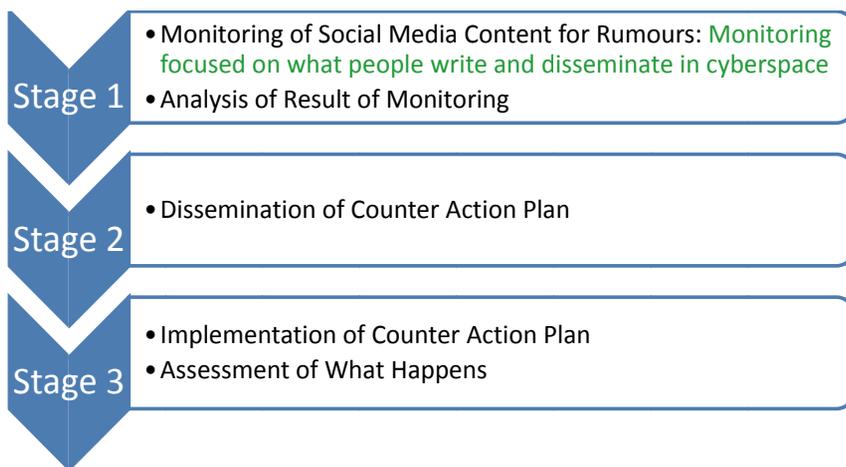
**Y. Z. Yau**, Centre for Information Technology and Development, suggested how to effectively deal with rumors. He advocated that:

- Civil society should monitor social media content for rumours through online platforms such as Ushahidi, websites, blogs, forums, twazzup.com.

**Otive Igbuzor**, Executive Director, African Leadership, Strategy and Development served as lead discussant for the session. He noted that Nigeria is one of the countries that has embraced the Ushahidi platform and explained how new media was used successfully in the 2011 elections:

- Throughout the election, the Nigerian Police, Civil Defence Corps and Police Service Commission operated hotlines open to the public.
- Following the post-presidential election violence, the National Security Advisor also established hotlines. The rapid exchange of information contributed to saving lives.

### Developing an early warning system for countering rumours



**Daudi Were**, a Kenyan technologist, data and information strategist introduced Ushahidi as an open source software platform for information gathering, visualization, interaction and mapping. Ushahidi, a Swahili word meaning ‘testimony’, is a crisis mapping tool developed to track violence following the flawed 2007 elections in Kenya. Digital maps were created to visualize patterns of violence based on 45,000 reports submitted via the web and mobile phones.

He further stated that the Ushahidi platform:

- Can easily crowdsource information using multiple channels, including SMS, email, Twitter and the web.
- Features tools for democratizing information, increasing transparency and lowering barriers for individuals to share their stories.

### Gidi\_Traffic

Bethia Idoko represented @Gidi\_Traffic, a service that leverages social media to provide real time traffic updates and useful information to motorists, victims of accidents, crime, crisis and violence. Gidi Traffic was created in 2011 using social media technology to aggregate and share traffic data. Initially focused to provide information on Lagos traffic, it has grown into a tool for quickly disseminating information in real time in order to help people navigate trouble hot spots. @Gidi\_Traffic:

- Is an interactive forum where inquiries are tendered and solutions offered.
- Has grown to become one of the most trusted Twitter handles in Nigeria.
- Served as one of the handles during the Occupy Nigeria protests that received live feeds from various protest grounds and broadcast them to users nationwide.
- Has been instrumental in dousing rumors of violence and chaos.

[www.twitter.com/gidi\\_traffic](http://www.twitter.com/gidi_traffic)  
[www.facebook.com/GidiTraffic](http://www.facebook.com/GidiTraffic)

## Closing



**H.E. Chris Cooter**  
Canadian High Commissioner

**“Be persistent, be patient, be practical and you will succeed.”**

His Excellency Chris Cooter, Canadian High Commissioner, delivered closing remarks.

He suggested that new media can change the direction of Nigeria’s future if we can leverage technologies and make use of our greatest asset, young people. Pursuing goals via platforms that encourage and support the two way flow of information between the public and the government can result in extraordinary development for our future.

He further stated that new media has replaced the way we report, live, learn, and work in Nigeria and while the full power of new media is yet to be felt, it is providing a springboard that can radically change the economic and political climate of Nigeria. He suggested that with the fastest growing telecoms market in the world, we need to properly leverage it for social and political change. The High

Commissioner noted that leaders must be careful of what they do, as their actions have consequences. Change is driven by champions and backed up by numbers, determination, and perseverance. He stated, “Government is not your enemy or partner; it is your servant.”

He asked participants to consider:

- What does the use of new media mean for future elections?
- How can new media platforms cope with a vast number of new media users?
- How can new media be used to introduce checks on government and increase civic engagement?
- How can we use new media to engage citizens to ensure a robust democracy?

A PowerPoint presentation summarising the conference was presented by Judith Burdin Asuni.

Conference presentations can be downloaded from [www.eienigeria.org/newmedia](http://www.eienigeria.org/newmedia)

## Social Media Surgeries



Booths featuring Facebook and Google; Blogs and Twitter; ISPs, Mobile Apps and Telecoms, catered to conference participants by providing answers to social media related questions and suggesting possible strategies for utilization of these tools and platforms.

Facebook and Twitter accounts were established or reactivated. Mobile apps were downloaded and blogs were created. Omidyar Network donated flash drives that enabled conference participants to download conference speeches and presentations.

## Press Coverage

Extensive press coverage of the event included both traditional media as well as new media. **Leadership** and **Daily Trust** newspapers offered complimentary full page adverts. Sixty journalists represented 11 newspapers, 7 magazines, 6 television networks, 2 radio stations, 14 bloggers and 4 civil society organization media offices.

The conference was discussed live on Twitter using the hashtag #NGNewMedia and live-streamed on several websites. The BBC Hausa service conducted a comprehensive interview with Dr. Kole Shettima, MacArthur Foundation and Y. Z. Yau of the Center for Information Technology and Development, Kano, that was broadcast in their popular morning radio programme.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from a broad cross section of stakeholders, partners and participants:

### Government

- See new media as a tool for effective governance rather than an impediment
- Utilize new media to find out what people are saying in order to serve people better
- Use new media to study trends for a proactive approach to solving problems
- Extend visibility and reach of information
- Listen and engage in dialogue
- Establish trust, credibility and thoughtful leadership
- Publish real-time information
- Enable digital activism/participation
- Create a crisis communication plan to respond to crisis and deploy the best platform to communicate with citizens
- Present public policy in an engaging fashion
- Use new media platforms to engage and involve youth

### Civil Society

- Align current strategies with the right media tools
- Adapt new media tools and applications readily available in Africa
- Present issues in an engaging, inspiring way
- Deploy strategies to reach target audiences using new media
- Learn more about target audience; know what motivates and triggers their involvement
- Become a curator of information and use it to influence social change
- Establish clear boundaries and guidelines on the use of new media

### Individuals

- Look beyond the use of new media for purely personal ambitions
- Utilize new media tools at your disposal to find your voice and engage with government
- Analyze data and remember that facts and figures are critical for social change

Response to the post-conference survey indicated an enthusiastic embrace of new media tools for advocacy and awareness. Project and partnership initiatives include:

### Government

- INEC committed to expanding its use of new media for civic education
- Ministry of Communication Technology committed to Open Government Partnership
- Police and Road Safety Commission to incorporate new media platforms into their current strategies

### Civil Society

- EiE to establish Situation Room to monitor Edo State elections with World Bank funding support
- IRI to partner with Banky W to produce a documentary encouraging Nigerian youth to participate in the political process
- EiE and Yar'Adua Foundation to partner on an oil revenue tracking initiative
- Omidyar to support a partnership between EiE and mySociety to develop a Mzalendo project in Nigeria
- IRI to implement a Mzalendo digital score card project for state government elected officials
- CLEEN, ReclaimNaija and EiE to create government monitoring tools to be used by transport workers
- CITAD to train northern based organizations on use of new media tools
- ReclaimNaija to assist BudgIT to expand its capacity to mainstream at the grassroots level
- CcHUB and AA PeaceWorks to develop a platform for monitoring roads in the Niger Delta
- M4ID to partner with Women's Rights Advancement & Protection Alternative (WRAPA) to offer free help in campaigning and mobilizing support for the Violence Against Persons Protection Bill
- Interest in introducing new media into curriculums of youth skill acquisition training programmes
- Interest in monitoring abandoned government projects
- Deaf Association to establish ICT trainings
- Partners for Peace created a Facebook page

## Conference Presenters

**Adamolekun, Yemi** is the Executive Director of Enough is Enough Nigeria.

**Adekanbi, Nike** initiated the iamLagos project that created awareness during voter registration and supported Lagos residents in monitoring the 2011 elections.

**Akinfolarin, Oluwaseun** is the Project Lead in WANGONeT, where he manages ICT for Development projects including using mobile and social media technology for an electoral intervention in Nigeria through the [www.nigeriaelections.org](http://www.nigeriaelections.org) portal.

**Art Alade, Darey** popularly known as Darey - is a Nigerian multi-platinum, award-winning musician and singer-songwriter.

**Asuni, Judith Burdin** is Founder and Executive Director of AAPeaceWorks. AA PeaceWorks has trained thousands of Niger Delta citizens in the use of social media.

**Azino, Efe Paul** is regarded as one of Nigeria's leading spoken word poets. He leads a generation of visionary poets in using the medium as a transformative tool for the masses.

**Best, Michael L.** is associate professor at the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs and the School of Interactive Computing at Georgia Institute of Technology. He is also a Faculty Associate of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. Best's research focuses on information and communication technologies (ICTs) for social, economic and political development.

**Chukwuma, Innocent** is Executive Director of CLEEN Foundation, an NGO that promotes public safety, security and access to justice through empirical research, legislative advocacy, demonstration programmes and publications in partnership with government and civil society.

**Idoko, Bethia** created Gidi\_Traffic, an online based service using Twitter to update users on traffic, security and general information generated via crowd-sourcing.

**Igbuzor, Otive** is the Executive Director of the African Centre for Leadership Strategy and Development, an NGO established to build strategic leadership in Africa. He is also a member of the Police Service Commission (PSC).

**Ilukwe, Gerald C.** is the pioneer Chief Executive Officer of Galaxy Backbone. As an IT professional, he has made significant contributions to the Nigerian and African Information Communications and Technology industry.

**Isenah, Tonye Emmanuel** is the Deputy Majority Leader of the Bayelsa State House of Assembly, representing Constituency 1 of Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Area. He is the first member of the BYSA to have an online constituency office.

**Ibrahim, Jibrin** is the Director of The Centre for Democracy and Development, a non-profit research, training, advocacy and capacity building organization established to mobilize global opinion and resources for sustainable democracy and development in the West African sub-region.

**Jideonwo, Chude** is a journalist, media entrepreneur, new media consultant and public speaker. He is a Managing Partner of Red Media Group with a development subsidiary called The Future Project.

**Keri, Yemi** serves as the Executive Director of the Directorate of Information Communications and Technology (ICT) for Edo State Government responsible for the management and supervision of the centralized ICT structure and various ICT initiatives resulting in the use of ICT as critical enabler for the full delivery of e-government in Edo State.

**Kuna, Mohammed J.** is Professor and Technical Adviser to the Chairman, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

**Lausten, Jonas Schwarz** has established digital strategies for several Danish municipalities, which have evolved around citizen engagement and Government 2.0. Jonas is always up-to-date with the latest digital trends in Africa, in both the mobile space and on the web.

**Lenz, Paul** is Head of Finance and Operations for mySociety, a U.K.-based organization that builds websites to give people tangible benefits in the civic and community aspects of their lives. He project managed re-launch of the Mzalendo.com website in Kenya.

**Longe, Femi** is Co-founder & Director for Programmes at Co-Creation Hub Nigeria. He leads on Open Living Labs, CcHub's approach for co-creating innovative solutions to social and commercial challenges.

## Conference Presenters contd.

**Musila, Jessica** is the Africa Project Lead for mySociety, the UK-based organisation that created TheyWorkForYou, WhatDoTheyKnow, FixMyStreet, etc. Her role is to ensure that Mzalendo (Patriot in Swahili) has the maximum positive social impact in Kenya, overseeing social media promotion and marketing of the site and building a volunteer network to support the initiative.

**Nwankpa, Amara** is an I.T. professional who served as a social media strategist with the Enough is Enough (EiE) Nigeria, R.S.V.P. campaign. He was responsible for coordinating the Social Media Tracking Centre during the April 2011 general elections.

**Nwankwo, Clement** is currently Executive Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) based in Abuja, Nigeria. He co-founded Nigeria's first human rights group in 1987 – the Civil Liberties Organisation. He found and led the Constitutional Rights Project (CRP) from 1990-2003.

**Odinkalu, Chidi Anselm** heads the Africa programme of the Open Society Justice Initiative; is a member of the National Executive Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association and Co-Chairperson of the Citizenship Rights in Africa Initiative based in Kampala,

Uganda. Odinkalu became Chairperson of the Governing Council of Nigeria's National Human Rights Commission in 2011.

**Ojidoh, Chuks** is the Deputy Project Director for Community Life Project (CLP), initiators of the ReclaimNaija project. CLP works to promote gender equality, participatory grassroots development and the inclusion of marginalized, vulnerable sub-populations in the governance process.

**Onigbinde, Olusegun** founded BudgIT in February 2011 based on his belief in a transparent society where every citizen within a community has equal access to information about the monetary and fiscal position of their society.

**Sage, Caroline** is a Senior Social Development Specialist in the World Bank Abuja Office where she manages projects that use social media and other ICT tools to promote more transparent and open governance processes. Caroline has a background in Law, Anthropology and Film and has worked on justice and governance issues in developing countries.

**Saraki, Bukola** is a Senator representing Kwara Central and the former Governor, Kwara State (2003 - 2011).

**Sesan, Gbenga** is the Executive Director of Paradigm Initiative Nigeria (PIN), a social enterprise that connects underserved people-groups with ICT-enabled opportunities. He was Nigeria's first Information Technology Youth Ambassador and served as the Vice Chair of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's African Technical Advisory Committee.

**Shettima, Kole** is Director of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation in Nigeria.

**Tikkanen, Mari** is the founder and Managing Director of M4ID. Based in Helsinki, Finland, M4ID's mission is to leverage new communication technology in support of development and health.

**Wellington, Bankole** popularly known as BankyW - is a Nigerian multi-platinum, award-winning musician and singer-songwriter.

**Were, Daudi Khamadi** is a Kenyan technology, data and information strategist who supports citizens to provide solutions to problems in their communities. As Project Director at Ushahidi, Daudi works on innovative ways technology can be used to bring about positive change in communities across the world.

**Yau, Y.Z.**, Centre for Information, Technology and Development (CITAD) employs technology as a tool to promote sustainable development, good government and peaceful coexistence. It uses ICT to empower youth and women through access to information, skills and online mentoring opportunities and utilizes platforms such as social networking, web-to-text interface and Google alert to provide information to promote peaceful coexistence.



New media technology enables all of us to work better together to promote sustainable development, good government and peaceful co-existence. This conference offered an important opportunity to share experiences that we believe will enhance the work of government policy makers, civil society activists, students and community based organizers and citizens committed to the public good. We want to once again express our sincere appreciation to our organizing partners, presenters and sponsors who contributed to this ground breaking conference. Most importantly, we want to thank participants who traveled from across the country and around the world to attend.

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