2024 ANNUAL REPORT



HOPE Behind Bars AFRICA

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2024 in Numbers

89760+ hrs
dedicated to providing pro bono legal services to indigent pretrial inmates and peaceful protesters

1595
individuals represented through pro bono legal services

759
incarcerated lives improved through reformatory and reentry programs

13
fines paid to facilitate the release of indigent individuals.

228
callers assisted through the toll-free legal support line

89
women beneficiaries of access to justice and reformatory programs

23
visits to police stations and custodial centres conducted with the Chief Judge and Magistrates

N89,561,577
spent directly on interventions benefiting justice-impacted individuals

150
inmates completed WAEC and NECO examinations

100
bags crafted by female inmates in rehabilitation programs

77
visits made to correctional facilities

2
vocational skills facilities established

13
International Human Rights Engagements conducted

2
high-level engagements on criminal justice policy reform

76
critical stakeholders engaged, including state and non-state actors

2
tech products

1
Policy change

125
unique civic engagement on TV, radio and newspapers

From the Executive Director's Desk

The year 2024 marked a significant milestone in our pursuit of justice. Balancing the urgency of supporting indigent incarcerated individuals with the broader need for systemic change was a challenge we embraced. Our dual approach, providing direct support while driving systemic reform, defined much of our work. This strategy allowed us to address immediate needs while building sustainable solutions for a more equitable justice system.

In 2024, a major concern was how the criminal justice system was increasingly being used to crack down on civic freedoms and silence people's voices. Equally troubling was the inadequate consideration of women's unique experiences and needs within the system, often leading to unfair treatment. Additionally, the treatment of children in conflict with the law raised alarms, as we saw several minors detained alongside adults in detention facilities, in clear violation of existing legal frameworks. At the same time, the rise of online tech harm added a new layer of injustice, with misinformation and AI-driven profiling disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations. False narratives about criminal cases spread rapidly on social media, fueling wrongful arrests, vigilante justice, and public distrust in the legal system.

Despite these hurdles, the opportunities for transformative change remained immense. From addressing grassroots justice challenges in Borno state, Northern Nigeria, to engaging in international advocacy efforts, our interventions had local and global outcomes. Our work with the #EndBadGovernance protesters resulted in the Attorney General of the Federation discontinuing the case of 119 peaceful protesters. Introducing our toll-free line also marked a significant step forward in expanding access to legal aid. Its rapid reach and impact highlight the potential of the AI-driven tech tools we are developing. We are also expanding our efforts to combat online tech harm within the justice system, tackling misinformation that contributes to wrongful arrests and public mistrust in the justice system.

To our partners, volunteers, pro bono lawyers, and supporters, your belief in our mission fuels our daily resolve. Thank you for being an integral part of this journey.



Vision & Mission

Vision

Hope Behind Bars Africa envisions a fair and rehabilitative criminal justice system, where fewer people are unjustly incarcerated, those within the system are treated with dignity, and justice institutions are strengthened to serve everyone equitably.

Mission

We are closing the justice gap through rapid legal & reformatory response, technology, and evidence-based advocacy.

Core Values

Human Rights for All

We are dedicated to promoting and protecting the human rights and dignity of all individuals, ensuring that state actors uphold and respect these principles.

Openness

We are open and accountable to the people and partners we serve, transparently sharing our results, stories and lessons.

Professionalism

We are committed to maintaining the highest professional standards in our service delivery, consistently transforming ordinary tasks into extraordinary outcomes.

Empowerment

We empower those we support to take control of their lives both during and after their time in prison, while also equipping all stakeholders in the criminal justice system to play a pivotal role in driving justice reforms.

Hope Behind Bars Africa – Theory of Change

Problem Statement

Nigeria's criminal justice system disproportionately targets individuals from low-resourced backgrounds and those with limited legal awareness, leading to wrongful arrests and prolonged pretrial detention. Weak policy implementation, combined with inadequate reformation and rehabilitation programs, traps many in a cycle of incarceration, reinforcing systemic injustice within an unsupportive correctional environment.

Impact Statement

A fair, rehabilitative, and rights-driven criminal justice system, where justice-impacted individuals receive timely legal support, have access to rehabilitation and reintegration opportunities, and where justice institutions are transparent, accountable, and effective.

Hope Behind Bars Africa works with key stakeholders to ensure fewer people enter prison unjustly, those who do are treated with dignity, and the justice system itself is strengthened to serve everyone equitably.

Assumptions

- Providing direct legal support is essential, but long-term change requires policy reform & system-wide improvements.
- Access to education, skills training, and psycho-social support reduces recidivism.
- Sustainable change depends on multi-sector partnerships with government, civil society, legal practitioners, and affected communities.

Pathways to Change

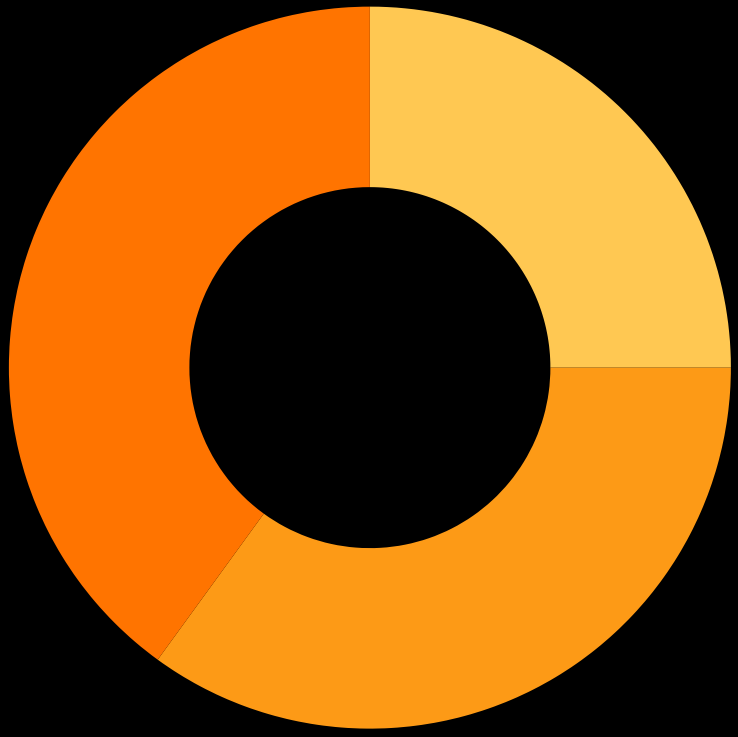
Gaps	Our Interventions	Short-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes
1	2	3	4
Unlawful arrests & prolonged pretrial detention	Rapid legal response & tech-driven pro bono legal defence	Fewer unjustly detained individuals & faster case resolution	Reduced pretrial detention & backlog of cases
Limited access to rehabilitative & reintegration programs	Prison-based skills training, psycho-social support, and non-custodial sentencing advocacy	More justice-impacted individuals gain employable skills	Lower recidivism & improved reintegration rates
Weak policy implementation & outdated legal frameworks	Policy advocacy & strategic engagement with justice institutions	Increased adoption of alternatives to incarceration & decriminalisation of petty offences	Reduced gap between policy and implementation.
Lack of trust between communities & justice institutions	Community-led justice dialogues & public awareness campaigns	Strengthened collaboration between law enforcement & communities	Greater accountability & public trust in justice processes
Limited digital infracstructure for justice delivery & unchecked tech harms.	Strenthen adoption of digital infracstructure & legal tech tools	Improved case management, prison rehabilitation programs, and reduction in online tech harm.	A more efficient, rehabilitative, and equitable justice system

Access to Justice

1354
Men represented

143
Women represented

98
Minors represented



57
Lawyers engaged

Felonies
Capital cases
Simple offences

*The number of felonies and capital cases increased in 2024 due to the charges filed against #EndBadGovernance Protesters.

Area Court Intervention



Criminalisation of poverty was evident in the case of 118 pre-trial detainees (114 Men, 4 Women) who were left in prison for several months following a directive by the Honourable Grand Khadi of the FCT, suspending the criminal jurisdiction of area courts across the FCT.

Our investigation revealed that most of these detainees faced charges for minor offences and all 118 individuals were socio-economically disadvantaged, 80% lacking formal education, while 20% had minimal literacy levels. This lack of education, compounded by their economic vulnerability, contributed significantly to their lack of legal representation.

Recognising the impact of these challenges, which led to significant overcrowding in the Suleja and New-Keffi Correctional facilities, we took action. Through our intervention, all 118 detainees were reassigned to Magistrate Courts, ensuring expedited and proper dispensation of justice.

Payment of Fines

The payment of fines as a condition for release from detention is often touted as an alternative to custodial sentencing, but in practice, it disproportionately punishes the poor and perpetuates systemic inequalities. Particularly in prisons in the Northern part of Nigeria, we found inmates languish in overcrowded cells for fines as low as **₦5,000 (approximately $3.21)** and for very trivial actions like dressing inappropriately.







This reflects a justice system that prioritises punitive measures over rehabilitation or fairness, penalising poverty rather than addressing the root causes of crime. The absence of monitoring mechanisms or standardised guidelines further exacerbates the problem, leading to inconsistent application and enforcement of fines.

With donations from our individual partners, we paid the sum of N950,000 approximately $611 fines for 13 inmates.

We also participated in several stakeholders' meetings to review the current state of alternatives to incarceration and non-custodial measures in Nigeria, contributing our expertise on evidence-based advocacy, insights from providing direct legal representation to indigent detainees, and recommendations for integrating community-based rehabilitation programs into the justice system.

Habibu Adamu spent 14 Years in Unlawful Detention Despite Court-Ordered Release

In September 2024, we received a report concerning Habibu Adamu from his son, Habibu had been unlawfully detained since 15th July 2011—**a period spanning 14 years,** in direct violation of a Federal High Court Judgment issued in 2014, which ordered his release. After his arrest by military personnel in Bauchi State, he was subsequently transferred to the Federal Special Anti-Robbery Squad (FSARS) office in Abuja for investigations.

Despite multiple investigations and a thorough review of his financial transactions, no evidence was found to establish any connection to terrorism or its financing.

Both the Attorney General and the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) advised against his continued detention.

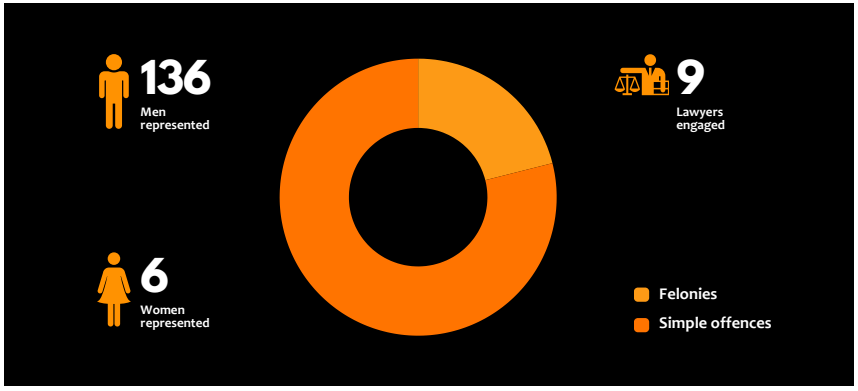
However, these recommendations were ignored, and Habibu remained **behind bars for 14 years**. In October 2024, Hope Behind Bars Africa issued letters to key stakeholders, including the Senate President, Inspector General of Police, National Security Adviser, Chief of Defense Staff, Chief of Army Staff, and Chief of Air Staff. We also began online advocacy on this case alongside our media partner.

In November 2024, official communication confirmed to us that Habibu had been transferred to a rehabilitation centre where he is expected to undergo a rehabilitation program before being reunited with his family in early 2025.



Representing Awaiting Trial Inmates in Edo State

Paul and Charles were detained at Oko Cusotdial Centre in Edo State for over two years without a trial. When we intervened and took up their case pro bono, we ensured it was listed for trial. During court proceedings, we emphasised that their detention had far exceeded the constitutionally permissible period. Recognising the injustice, the court ruled in their favour, granting them unconditional freedom.





Patrick was unjustly arrested and spent 3 years in prison after a stop-and-search

In 2021, Patrick was travelling to Ebonyi State when his bus was stopped by the Police at a checkpoint in Okada, Edo State. After a routine search of bus, everyone in the vehicle was arrested.

When we intervened pro bono, we reviewed his case and found that the allegations against him lacked substantial evidence. The prosecution relied on delay tactics rather than presenting a valid case. Due to our efforts, Patrick was discharged and acquitted, and today, he is a free man, reunited with his family after spending **3 years behind bars**.

Accelerating Justice Reforms in Nigeria

Accelerating Justice Reforms in Nigeria (AJURN) Program was initiated alongside Legend Golden Care Foundation to foster speedy dispensation of justice for indigent pre-trial detainees and advocate for the implementation of the Non-Custodial sanctions in Nigeria.





In Borno State, AJURN Volunteers took on Musa Umar's case after he was arrested for having a so-called 'marlian bad hairstyle. He was charged with being a 'vagabond' and summarily convicted. Through our lawyers intervention during allocutus, his sentence was reduced to **12 strokes of the cane** and a fine of **N20,000 ($12)** or, alternatively, one year in custody. Cases like this highlight the urgent need to decriminalize petty offences and repeal outdated laws, which we actively advocate for.





On another occasion, we had the case of a man was was charged with assault and being a vagabond. The AJURN volunteer lawyers in Borno State took up the case, at the end they prayed the court to impose a non-custodial sentence, which the court did and ordered that he irrigate/water all the flowers and trees in the court premises as the non-custodial sentence for his offence.



We encountered the case of three minors at the ages of 9,10 and 12 years old who were charged with criminal conspiracy, house trespass and theft. They were arrested and imprisoned alongside adults in a very congested prison facility. Through our interventions, they were released on bail with their matter still pending.

FCT Decongestion Committee Meeting

We actively participated in several decongestion committee meetings at the FCT High Court, led by Justice Kekemeke. During these meetings, cases of awaiting trial inmates were reviewed, and the AJURN partnership offered to provide legal assistance to those in need.



Balancing Direct Legal Support With Interventions That Change Systems

One of the major dilemmas we face is determining how many individuals we can realistically support within the vast scope of Nigeria's access-to-justice challenges. Addressing systemic issues such as overcrowded correctional facilities, delayed trials, and the lack of non-custodial measures is ultimately the responsibility of the government. Without political will and adequate resource allocation, there is only so much we can achieve.

To resolve this, we adopted a dual approach. We remain committed to providing direct legal support as seen above, ensuring that those trapped in the system receive timely and effective assistance. At the same time, we are working with key stakeholders to implement relevant provisions of our criminal justice legislations.

Magistrate & Chief Judge Visits in FCT

Magistrate Visits

Correctional facilities, by their inherently closed and restricted nature, create environments where incarcerated individuals are easily subjected to abuse.

H**ope Behind Bars Africa works with the Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee (ACJMC) to uphold the provisions of Section 34 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA).** This section mandates that the Chief Magistrate inspects detention facilities monthly to ensure detainees are not held beyond the legally stipulated time - 48 hours without being arraigned before a court.

Chief Judge's Visit

We accompanied the Chief Judge of the Federal Capital Territory under Section 110(6) of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015 for its decongestion exercise at the Kuje and Suleja Correctional facility, where **500 cases and 237 cases were reviewed respectively.**



Our Executive Director, Funke Adeoye & Legal Officer Samuel Olukade Esq during the Chief Judge's visit to Kuje Custodial Centre









Hope Behind Bars Africa visits Police stations in the FCT in line with Section 34 of the ACJA

Ending Child Detention in Adult Prisons

The incarceration of children in conflict with the law in adult prisons remains a troubling issue in Nigeria. Despite the provisions of the Child Rights Act, which prohibits the detention of children alongside adults, enforcement is inconsistent in states that are yet to domesticate the Act. This results in vulnerable children being placed in environments that expose them to abuse, exploitation, and a higher risk of reoffending. Our work indicates that many of these children are held for minor offences or as accomplices, often without legal representation or consideration of alternative measures like diversion programs.

We facilitated the release of 8 minors in Borno state, 2 in Kano state, 3 in Edo state and 38 in FCT.





Hope Behind Bars Africa found several minors arbitrarily detained for participating in peaceful demonstrations were charged to court in FCT, Kano, Kaduna and Borno state.

In FCT, they were charged for treason and terrorism, offences that carry the death penalty. For **95 days**, we worked tirelessly to provide legal representation and awareness to the plight of the kids, including working with our legal partners to file a fundamental human rights action against the government, which eventually led to their arraignment after several weeks of illegal detention.

We intensified online advocacy and launched a petition demanding the release of the detained minors, which garnered hundreds of signatures. Our campaign drew attention to the plight of these children which eventually, led the Attorney General to file a notice of discontinuance to release them.

Afterwards, we visited Kano to follow up on their reintegration and even though we faced significant hurdles in accessing them from the state government, we met with their parents and provided further support to them as donated by individuals.

The Shrinking Civic Space VS The Nigerian Criminal Justice System

In 2024, the criminal justice system increasingly became a tool for shrinking civic space in Nigeria, with a worrying rise in the use of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) targeting journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens. These suits, initially based on criminal defamation, the Cybercrime Act or subsequently treason and terrorism, were used to silence dissent and suppress free expression and free assembly.

At least 4,000 individuals were reportedly arrested and detained by the government during the #EndBadGovernance protests, a figure that remains significantly underreported by the media. Kano State alone accounted for over 1,000 of these cases.

The misuse of law enforcement officers and the courts exacerbates their inefficiencies, burdening already congested courts and correctional facilities with politically motivated cases. Additionally, the deployment of police to intimidate and arrest critics diverts law enforcement resources from addressing genuine security challenges.





Scenes from the Free Daniel Ojukwu Protest at the National Police Headquarters in the FCT.

We actively contributed to both online and in-person advocacy efforts that led to the release of the following persons



Daniel Ojukwu, a journalist with the Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ), who was detained by the State Criminal Investigation Department of the Nigeria Police Force for over 10 days due to a report he published. A day after our protest, Daniel was released.

Photo Credit: Punch Newspapers



Junaidu Abdullahi, a TikToker in Kano arrested for calling for a protest against hunger in Kano State.

Photo Credit: Amnesty International Nigeria



Fisayo Soyombo
An investigative journalist was arrested and detained by the army while conducting undercover work

Photo Credit: Centre for Investigative Journalism



Dele Farotomi, a lawyer and human rights activist arrested on claims of defamation.

Photo Credit: DF Legal



Lanre Arogundade, a civic actor who was harassed by officials of the DSS while he was in the airport.

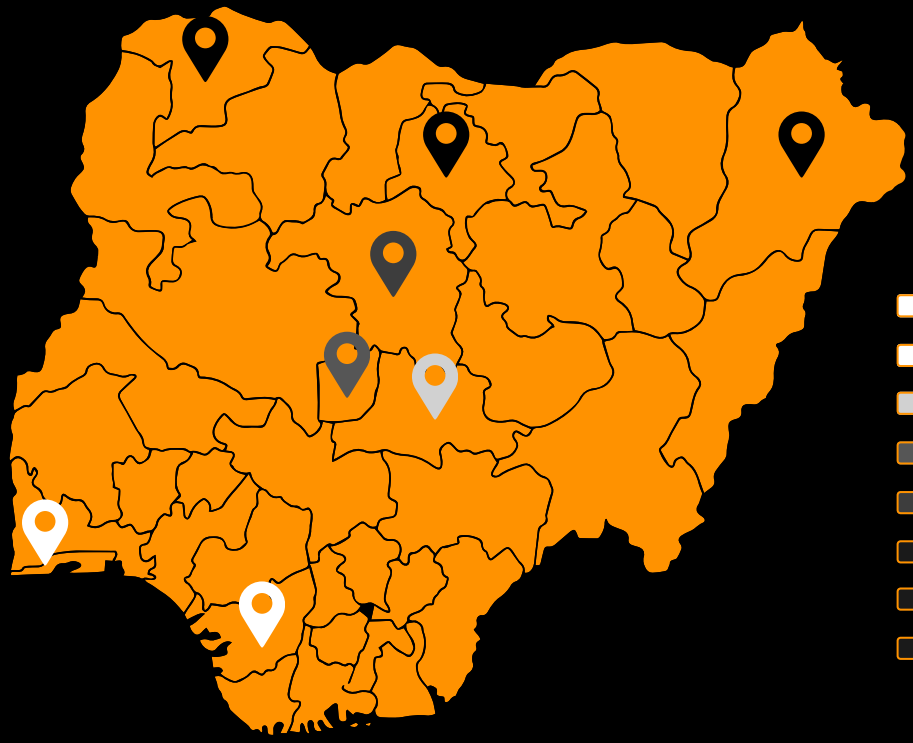
Photo Credit: ACSPN

Cases Handled during #EndBadGovernance Protest

Total Supported

1157
Men represented

13
Women represented



91.6%
Release rate

Interventions during the Protests

- Establishing a toll-free line for people to report arbitrary arrests during the protests
- **Deploying probono lawyers across multiple states including the FCT to secure the release of detainees promptly**
- Collaborating with law firms and other organisations to observe proceedings, ensuring accountability and representing indigent protesters arrested during the protests against hunger
- **This enabled us to assist and support over 1,000 arrested protesters including minors across several states, like Borno. Kano, Nassarawa, the FCT.**
- Securing the release of 119 protesters, including minors in the FCT
- **Representing indigent protesters to secure non-stringent bail terms pending trial**
- Gathering data to support advocacy efforts, media outreach, and engagement with state actors.

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

The **Toll-free line** is a powerful tool that leverages technology to enhance access to justice for justice-impacted individuals and their families. By providing a direct and cost-free channel, it ensures that even those in remote or underserved areas can seek immediate legal assistance without financial or geographical barriers.

key data from this intervention is currently being used to engage policy makers and other key stakeholders.

Toll Free Line

080000704222



Women, Girls and The Criminal Justice System

While women represent a smaller proportion of individuals in conflict with the law, they encounter distinct gender-specific challenges within Nigeria's criminal justice system.

For instance, cases like that of Deborah, a 17-year-old minor who was detained overnight at a police station with only male officers and later sent to Suleja Correctional Facility highlights the lack of gender-sensitivity in our criminal justice processes.

In 2024, we had 89 women beneficiaries of access to justice and reformatory programs



17-year-old Deborah stands with her mother, Dorothy Njemanze, and Hope Behind Bars Africa Legal Officer, Samuel Olukade, after securing her bail from the Dutse Alhaji Divisional Police Headquarters at 12:33 a.m. on October 19, 2024

Mummy Ehis was unlawfully arrested in place of her son, despite legal provisions prohibiting such practices.

What began as a threat to compel her to produce Ehis (her son) escalated into her arrest, court proceedings, and eventual imprisonment.

She was charged with conspiracy and stealing. She spent six months in prison before she was granted bail, enduring two years of trial for a crime she did not commit.

Our Probono lawyer, Emmanuel Okorie represented her, pursued the case to full trial, and ultimately secured a judgment in her favour.





A cross-section of lawyers from Hope Behind Bars Africa's legal team, Falana & Falana Chambers, and Deji Adeyanju & Partners after the hearing of the case of some #EndBadGovernance protesters at the Federal High Court, Abuja.

Gender and the Death Penalty

Women on death row face distinct vulnerabilities, often shaped by histories of gender-based violence, economic hardship, and systemic bias in sentencing.

At Hope Behind Bars Africa, we are committed to challenging these injustices through providing legal representation, advocating for gender-sensitive legal reforms, and ensuring that women's lived realities are considered in capital punishment cases.

Our Executive Director and Head of the Capital Defense Team, Funke Adeoye, recently facilitated a session on defending women on death row at the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty workshop in Philadelphia, reinforcing our commitment to global conversations on justice, gender, and capital punishment.





Rethinking the Death Penalty

The finality of the death penalty is dangerously incompatible with the flaws and arbitrariness of Nigeria's criminal justice system.

Wrongful convictions fueled by poor investigations, coerced confessions, and a lack of forensic evidence highlight the disturbing reality that innocent individuals may be sentenced to death. In a system that frequently fails to uphold fair trial rights, the risk of executing the innocent is not just possible, it is inevitable.

Our work here involves representing persons facing capital trials and engaging local and international systems.

In 2024, we represented 127 persons whose charges carried the capital punishment.





Studies have shown that the death penalty does not address the underlying issues related to drug crime and may divert resources from more effective strategies such as harm reduction and rehabilitation.

On World Drug Day, we hosted a press conference to raise awareness about the proposed amendment to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency Act, 2004, by the Nigerian Senate. If passed, this amendment would introduce the death penalty as the maximum punishment for drug offences.

Incarceration alone is not the best panacea to drug abuse and we have over time represented individuals who were stuck in prison for holding less than 100 grams of drugs like marijuana.

Our team in Edo state engaged with stakeholders and community leaders in Edo State to devise solutions to combat substance abuse, promote reformation, and strengthen existing institutions to reduce drug abuse. Key participants included members of the judiciary, the Ministry of Health, and prosecutors from the Nigerian Police Force.













The Hope Behind Bars Africa in partnership with Forvis Mazars in Nigeria, visits the Special Children Correctional Center for Girls, Idi-Araba, Lagos state.

The Inside-Out Hub

The Inside Out Program is a comprehensive initiative aimed at addressing the rehabilitation, reformation, and reintegration of justice-impacted individuals in Nigeria. This program recognizes that meaningful change in prison goes beyond punitive measures and requires a holistic approach that empowers individuals INSIDE Prison to successfully reintegrate OUTSIDE prison. By combining targeted interventions with system changing efforts, the Inside Out Program seeks to transform lives while addressing the root causes of crime.

Through various projects, the program provides skills acquisition, vocational training, and educational opportunities, equipping participants with tools to rebuild their lives and become productive members of society. It also incorporates mental health support, leadership development, and spiritual guidance to address the specific challenges faced by justice-impacted persons.





Empowering Female Inmates

In March 2024, we renovated and re-equipped, and relaunched the women's skill centre at Suleja Correctional Facility, transforming it into a hub for economic empowerment and rehabilitation.

This intervention challenges the traditional punitive approach to incarceration by integrating rehabilitation and economic reintegration into the correctional system.

Following a robust monitoring and evaluation process, we have observed increased participation, improved skill proficiency, and heightened morale among the women in the facility.

Some participants have already started producing garments for sale, demonstrating the transformative potential of skill-based rehabilitation.





The Female Inmates are been taught skills in diverse segments of fashion design: Tote bag making, garment making, suitcase jacket making, embroidery among others.

We also adopt a pay-it-forward method as some of the inmates are already skilled & thus can transfer the skills.

100
Total Totes produced

8
Women earning income



Ultimately the women are able to earn in prison, other results will be measured as we scale.





Empowering simple offenders at Dukpa Farm Centre

Dukpa Farm Centre is a custodial facility in Nigeria, managed by the Nigerian Correctional Service, with a focus on agricultural and vocational training for inmates. Located in Gwagwalada, Abuja, it is designed to serve as both a correctional and rehabilitation center, providing justice-impacted individuals with the opportunity to acquire farming and other practical skills that can aid their reintegration into society after their release.







Hope Behind Bars Africa completed a Tailoring Facility at the Dukpa Correctional Farm Facility by supporting the centre with **6 butterfly sewing machines , 1 industrial sewing machine, 2 wall fans, 5 stools, 1 large table, 1 cupboard.** The hub now provides incarcerated men with up to three years or less remaining on their sentences with the opportunity to learn tailoring skills and earn an income while serving their terms.

HopeKart

HopeKart is an innovative platform that connects products made by inmates in correctional facilities to buyers through both online and physical outlets, creating a bridge between these facilities and the marketplace.

This initiative not only provides a source of income for inmates but also ensures their skills and labor are valued fairly. Proceeds from sales are reinvested into the program, paying fair wages to inmates, sustaining ongoing training programs, and expanding the initiative to reach more correctional facilities across Nigeria.







Learning Behind Bars

Education is a powerful tool for transforming lives, especially within the context of rehabilitation and reformation for justice-impacted individuals. For inmates, access to education goes beyond academic learning—it becomes a lifeline to self-improvement, empowerment, and a future beyond incarceration.





in **8 days**, we successfully raised Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Naira (**₦2,500,000 approximately $1, 608**) for the #LearningBehindBars Campaign, **63 inmates** who passed mock exams were registered for the West African Senior School Certificate Examination as well as its Nigerian version.

Agape Care Project

With a significant shortage of psychologists and counselors in the correctional system, many reformatory efforts rely heavily on faith-based interventions. This project focuses on fostering emotional healing, restitution, and restorative justice for justice-impacted individuals. Alongside a non-denominational group, we trained chaplains to serve as lay counselors, equipping them to provide much-needed emotional and spiritual support.

Our ongoing partnership resulted in the successful hosting of four events across four correctional facilities: Suleja Correctional Centre, Old Keffi Correctional Centre, Dukpa Correctional Centre, and Kuje Correctional Centre. These events provided opportunities for reflection, healing, and connection, underscoring the transformative power of faith and community in the reformation process.









Welfare & Reentry Support

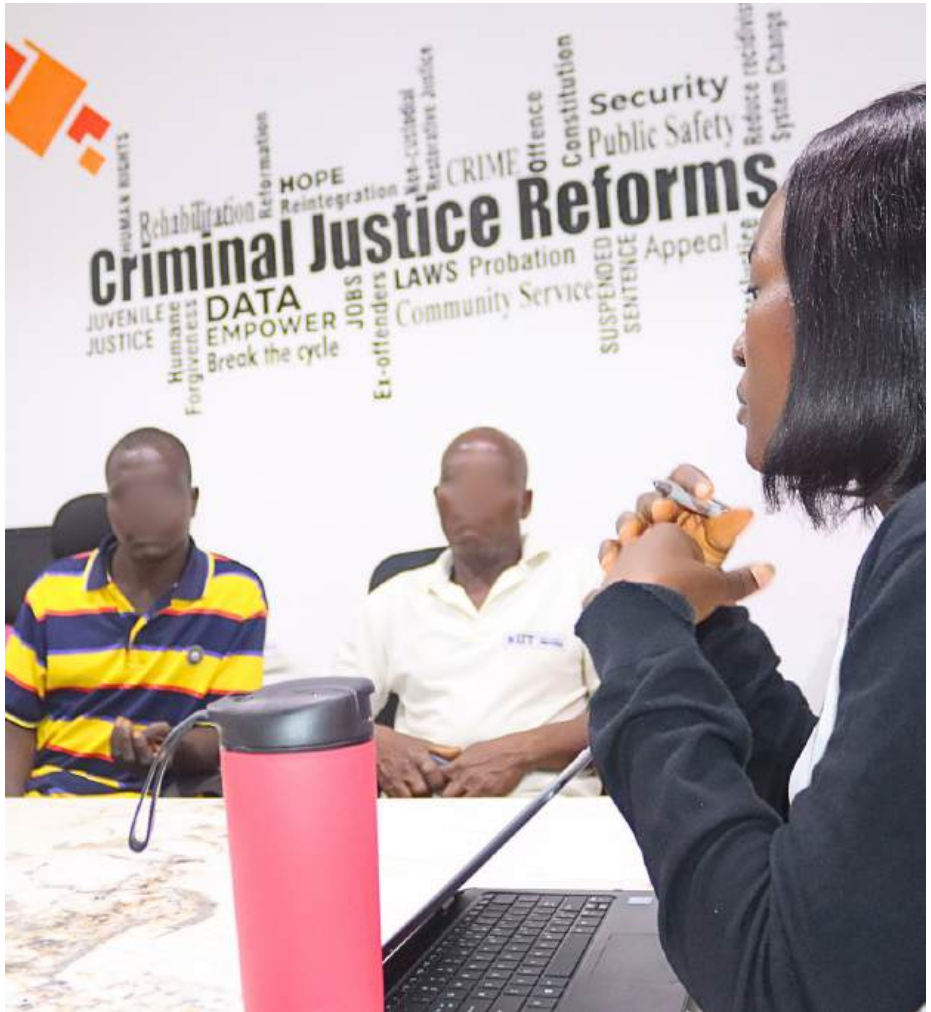
There is an alarming pattern of poor living conditions in detention facilities, marked by overcrowding, insufficient access to clean water, inadequate healthcare, and unsanitary environments. These conditions not only violate basic human rights but also hinder the prospects for rehabilitation and reintegration of justice-impacted individuals.

Recognizing these challenges, we, with the support of our partners, provided welfare support aimed at alleviating these harsh realities and restoring dignity to inmates.

Our interventions included the provision of essential items such as hygiene kits, clothing, and food supplies.



Our re-entry program offered vital support to people behind bars transitioning back into society. This included providing start-up kits, seed grants, and other resources to help them rebuild their lives and achieve sustainable reintegration.



Stakeholder Engagements

Meeting in Georgia

We were represented at the CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation Global Partners Meeting in Georgia. We engaged with global civil society leaders, sharing insights on the challenges faced in Nigeria regarding the misuse of the criminal justice system to suppress civic freedoms. This platform reinforced our commitment to safeguarding fundamental freedoms and building alliances to address global and regional threats to peaceful assembly.



Engagement with UN Special Sub-Committee on Torture

We engaged with the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT) to contribute to the global and national dialogue on eradicating torture. We provided actionable recommendations to strengthen oversight mechanisms, improve accountability, and ensure the humane treatment of individuals in detention facilities

Discussion with Special Rapporteur on FOPA

Hope Behind Bars Africa was part of the WeRise delegation that met with the Special Rapporteur to the UN on Freedom of Assembly and Association to share her vision, priorities, and plans for advancing Freedom of Assembly and Association across the globe.

We also shared our expectations, concerns, and recommendations with the UN Special Rapporteur during the dialogue.



Meeting in Gambia

We attended the 81st Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) in Banjul, The Gambia.

We participated as a panel speaker on the side event titled 'From Hashtag to Handcuffs,' where he shared the work of Hope Behind Bars Africa on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and our efforts in advocating for this fundamental right.



Engagement in Kenya

Our Programs Manager, Nurudeen Hassan, participated in the CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation We Rise! Harvest Week, where he discussed strategies to promote Freedom of Peaceful Assembly in Society in Nigeria.





OHCHR - Resolution on the treatment of women and girls in detention

We submitted our input to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the theme 'Accelerating Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls: Preventing and Responding to Violence in Criminal Justice Detention.

Our submission was based on our work in Nigeria, offering insights into the challenges faced by women and girls in detention and providing recommendations to improve prevention and response mechanisms.

The Hope Behind Bars Africa team actively engaged with key stakeholders and state actors throughout the year to advance our mission of bridging the justice gap in Nigeria. These efforts were focused on building strong alliances and fostering collaboration to drive meaningful reforms and systemic change within the justice sector.

With the Ministry of Interior on Vocational skills

Hope Behind Bars Africa is working with the Ministry of Interior on its Rrformatory & Reentry mandate to improve the capacity of inmates through vocational skills acquisition.



With Ministry of Youth Development

Young people make up **approximately 49% of Nigeria's prison population**. Recognising this, we engaged with the Ministry of Youth Development to explore strategies for reducing high reoffending rates among young inmates.

Our interventions focuses on the critical role of the government in introducing and enhancing more avenues for vocational and formal education programs across correctional facilities to empower young offenders and foster long-term system change.



We had several engagements with the Ministry of Interior to explore collaborative efforts aimed at making correctional centres self-sustaining through food production.

This initiative would not only reduce reliance on external resources but also equip inmates with valuable agricultural skills, fostering rehabilitation and long-term self-reliance.

With the Office of the SSA on Citizenship & Leadership

Hope behind bars Africa was represented by the Executive Director at the Access to Justice Roundtable hosted and convened by the Senior Special Assistant to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu on Citizenship & Leadership. The roundtable conversation provided us with the opportunity to discuss challenges faced by young people in the criminal justice system and we made some recommendations.





With Ministry of Mines Development

Hope Behind Bars Africa has initiated strategic engagements with the Ministry of Steel Development to explore collaborative opportunities focused on equipping inmates with technical skills in welding, industrial foundry, and instrumentation, leveraging existing training programs under the Ministry's purview.

In the Media

In 2024, Hope Behind Bars Africa as a leading voice and advocate for Criminal Justice Systems reforms across Africa, was featured in **107 Print Media, 15 television programs, 3 radio broadcasts, 3 Twitter Spaces, and 3 podcasts** focused on human rights, peaceful protests, and unlawful detention.

1260
Informational Posts delivered

107
News mentions

1.6m
Impressions across social media platforms

70,396
Social Engagements

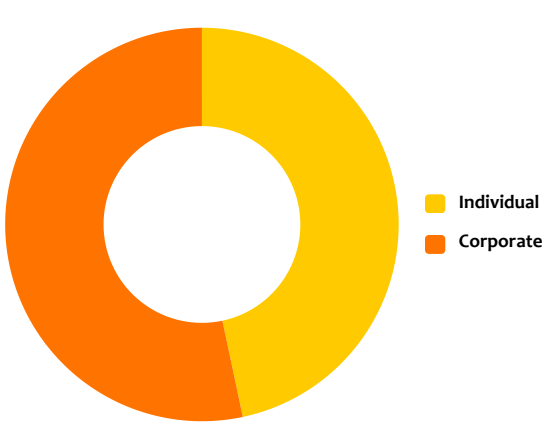
128
Media Appearances

112%
Percentage Follower Increase across all Social platforms

Media Mentions

Our Finance

2024 Inflows		
	Naira Inflow	*GBP Inflow*
Corporate	100,646,649.81	12,500.00
Individual	57,302,375.36	
Total	**157,949,025.17**	**12,500.00**





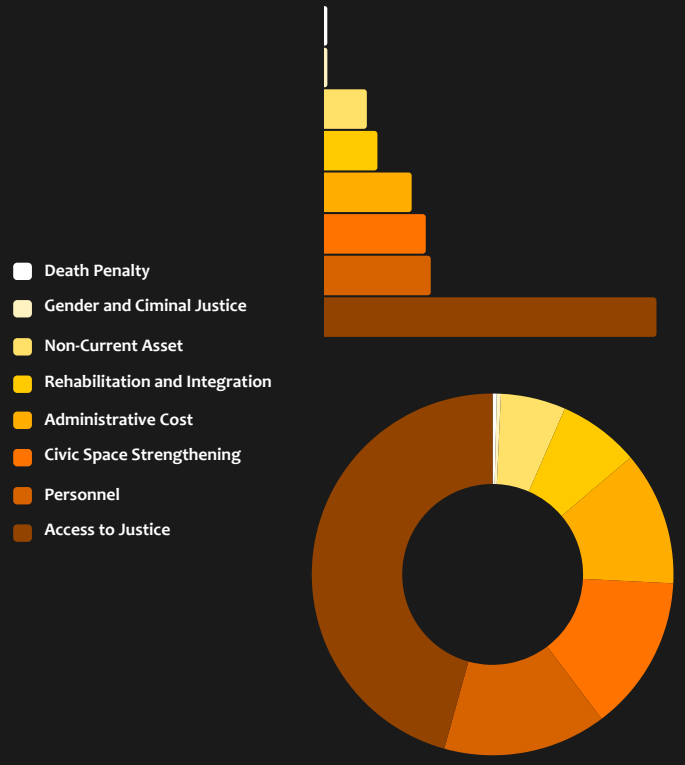
**Unaudited figures from January to December 2024. For all audited statements since 2019 visit www.hopebehindbarsafrica.org*

Corporate Donations: This includes funds contributed by corporate partners, with some initially received in USD and later converted to Naira.

Individual Donations: This represents the total contributions from individuals, including the value of unpaid volunteer hours provided to the organization as in-kind support.

Our Outflows

	2024 Outflows
	Naira
Access to Justice	57,832,174.43
Rehabilitation and Integration	9,186,350.00
Civic Space Strengthening	17,613,443.00
Gender and Criminal Justice	472,100.00
Death Penalty	457,690.00
Personnel	18,490,955.00
Administrative Cost	16,178,817.00
Non-Current Asset	6,477,170.00
Total	**127,854,181.19**



***Access to Justice:** This amount covers stipends for pro bono lawyers, filing fees, and transportation expenses to courts and prisons, for pre-trial detainees including peaceful protesters, women, and individuals facing capital charges.*
***Rehabilitation and Integration:** Funds spent on everything relating to rehabilitation, reformation and reintegration of justice-impacted individuals.*
***Civic Space Strengthening:** These efforts include campaigns, stakeholder engagements, policy advocacy, and public awareness activities to safeguard fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association.*
***Gender and Criminal Justice:** Expenses associated with advocacy efforts focused on addressing the conditions of justice-impacted women and girls.*
***Death Penalty:** This covers the costs associated with advocacy on the abolishment of mandatory death penalty.*
***Personnel:** This represents salaries paid to full-time staff members.*
Administrative Costs: This includes expenses for logistics across Nigeria and the FCT, subscription fees, rent, office equipment, and office supplies.

Our Partners

Financial Partners

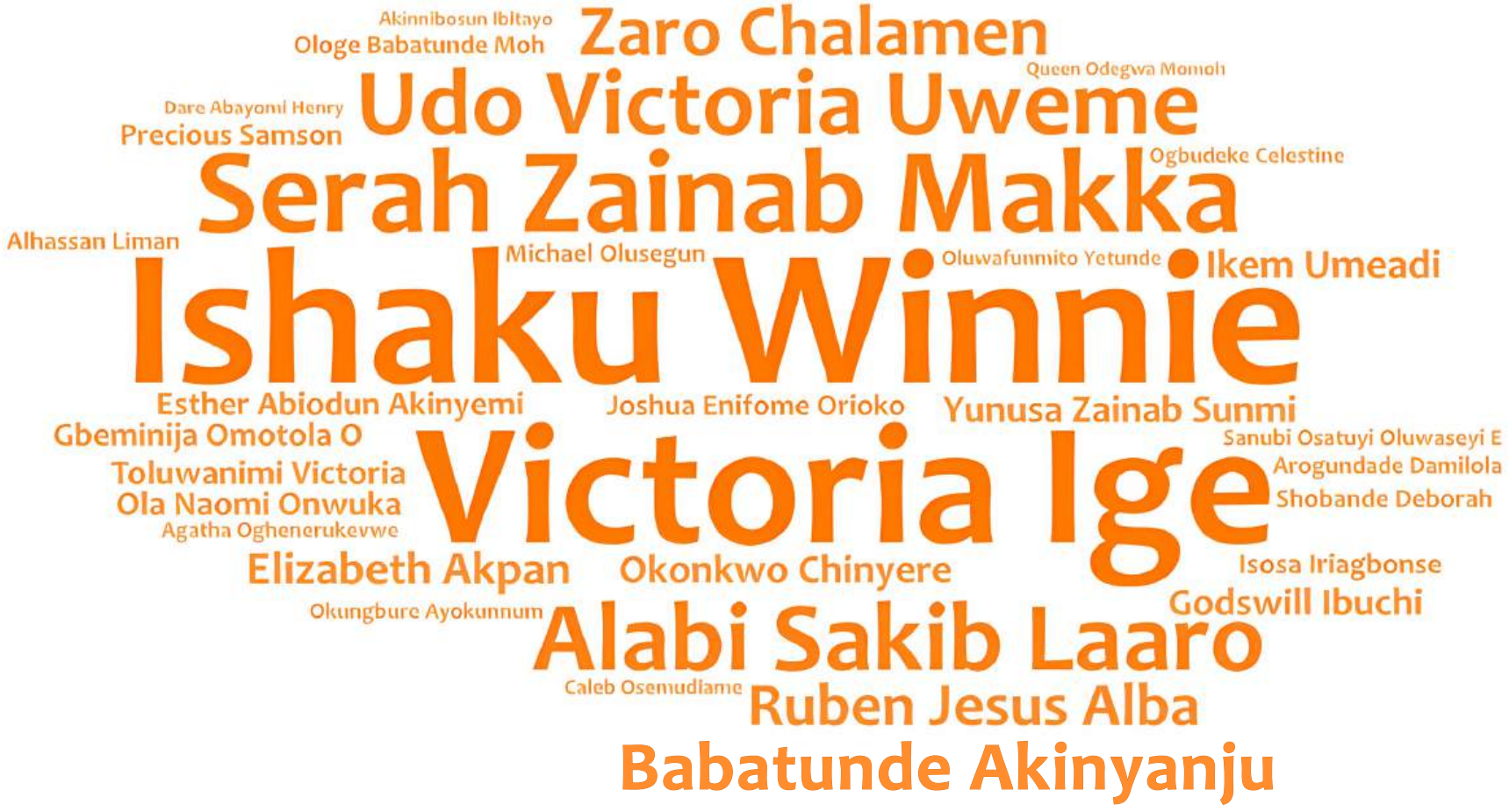
Corporate Partners

Memberships

Status Granted

Government Stakeholders

Our Individual Donors



Our Volunteers

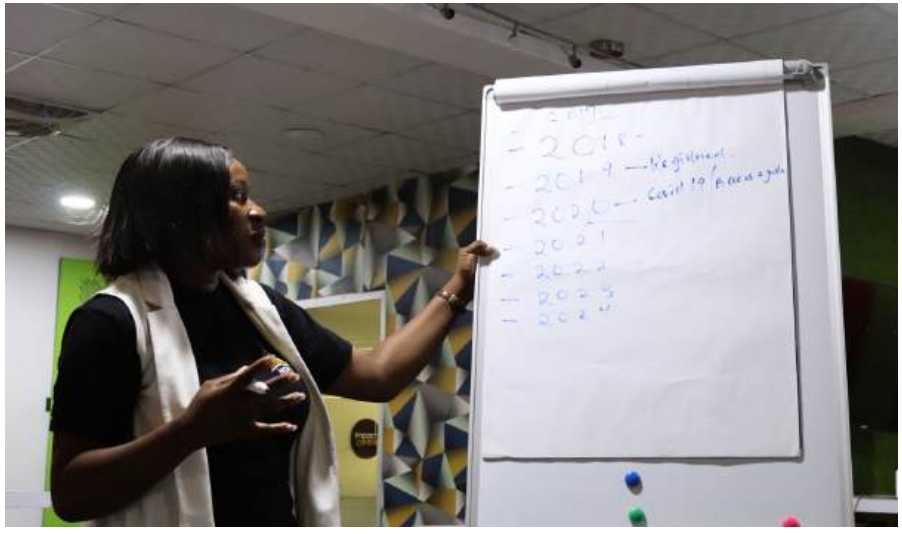
Our Volunteers and pro bono lawyers are the backbone of our efforts to bridge the justice gap for marginalized individuals. Their selfless contributions of time, expertise, and resources ensure that those who cannot afford legal representation still have access to justice.



People & Talent Management

At Hope Behind Bars Africa, we recognize that while talent wins games, teamwork and intelligence win championships. Our success is built on a strong, motivated team that continuously learns, grows, and supports one another.

We kicked off 2024 with a dynamic staff retreat, fostering learning, collaboration, and team bonding. Throughout the year, our Humans of HBBA community celebrated milestones, including birthdays and a childbirth. As with any evolving organization, we experienced two staff departures and welcomed new team members in our Abuja and Edo offices. Additionally, 87 new volunteers joined our mission.







Investing in our people remains a priority. Seven team members benefited from external capacity-building opportunities, while all staff engaged in regular knowledge-sharing sessions to enhance their skills.

Recognizing the economic realities, HBBA adjusted salaries and introduced a health insurance scheme in September. We also encouraged the team to utilize their 20-day paid leave reinforcing our commitment to staff well-being.

During the #EndBadGovernance protests, our team worked tirelessly & overtime, responding to arrests and detentions. Their dedication was acknowledged with double salary payments for the period. To close the year, our team took a well-deserved annual offsite retreat from December 18, 2024, to January 6, 2025.

With 2025 already in motion, we remain committed to fostering a workplace where talent thrives and collective success is inevitable.

Our Team



Funke Adeoye
Executive Director



Hassan Nurudeen
Program Manager



Grace Okeke Eche
Operations Manager



Obinna Ejiogu
Senior Communications Officer



Caroline Iyiola
Finance Officer



Sylvester Ogaji
Information Technology Officer



Dorcas Anaja
Communications Assistant



Samuel Olukade
Legal Consultant



Peace Adewuyi
Programs Intern



Esther Chiemeka
Programs Intern



Emmanuel Okorie
Legal Officer - Edo state



Ogechi Ogwuma
Communications Intern



Chidera Nwokike
Executive Assistant



Victor Chapi
Legal Consultant

Our Board



Funke Adeoye



Gabriel Okeowo



Nguemo Uja



Stanley Ibe



Winnie Ishaku

2024 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

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