EFFECTIVE FOOD POLICY IS FOOD JUSTICE

2023 ANNUAL REPORT
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What a remarkable, dizzying year 2023 was for us! While punctuated by challenges, our journey was ultimately defined by incredibly proud moments, huge milestones and impacts across the different campaigns we champion. As an organisation, we experienced growth in size and reach, together with various individual accomplishments.

In the past year, our commitment to environmental justice and accountability took tangible form as we stood shoulder-to-shoulder with frontline communities across Kenya, Cameroon, Uganda, The Gambia, Ghana, and Nigeria. Through our documentary spotlight on Africa’s environmental challenges—captured in “Climate Change: Africa’s Cooked and Sinking Communities”—we illuminated the dire impacts of climate change in Africa, exacerbated by the activities of transnational corporations and extractive industries. Our efforts did not stop at documentation; we escalated our findings to national and global platforms, ensuring that the voices of those impacted were heard in decision-making arenas.

Equally significant was our advocacy in public health, marked by the gazetting of Nigeria’s “Fats and Oils Regulations 2022” and “Fats and Oils Pre-packaged Food Labeling Regulations 2022.” This major achievement in the fight against trans-fat consumption represents a vital step forward in our campaign to safeguard public health. Building on this success, we have revved up pressure on our campaign for a sustainable tax regime for sugar-sweetened beverages and taken up yet another task in confronting the issue of excessive salt consumption. We are quite optimistic that more victory lies ahead in securing robust policy frameworks that will enhance Nigeria’s food environment.
On the education front, our advocacy on promoting access to public education led us to organise a critical stakeholder forum and conduct an in-depth analysis of a new student loan policy aimed at expanding access to tertiary education in the country. Our loud opposition to the restrictive provisions of the scheme prompted the government to respond and commit to rescinding contentious aspects of the loan initiative.

As for our achievements on the water justice front, we killed the controversial National Water Resources Bill. In a resounding victory for peoples' power, Nigerian legislators, in June 2023, laid to rest the contentious Bill, which had been debated since its introduction in 2020. After three years of heated debates and strong opposition from civil society, the Bill, replete with anti-people provisions that threatened to commodify and further restrict access to water for citizens, was thrashed. United with an army of local communities and campaigners, we made this possible. We mounted a formidable opposition, leaving lawmakers with no option but to discard the Bill.

Throughout the past year, we produced knowledge materials and statements that broadened public discourse and provided deeper insights into fundamental conversations regarding the environment, climate change, and public health, among other issues. In the pages that follow, you will see more of our work and outreach distilled into four thematic areas: Public Health, Climate and Environment, Democracy Outreach, and Public Services.

However, the narrative of our journey is a shared one, co-authored by a strong network of communities, partners, interns, volunteers, staff, media allies, friends, policymakers, and donors, all of whom have been and continue to be integral to our achievements and resilience. The task is formidable, yet we are fortunate and thankful to run on the fuel of an inspirational network of people who tirelessly support and cheer us every step of the way.

We say thank you!

Akinbode Oluwafemi
Executive Director, CAPPA
PUBLIC HEALTH

Effective Food Policy is Food Justice
More and more people worldwide are pushing for equitable access to healthy and nutritious foods. In Nigeria, the most populous black nation, CAPPA is leading the charge and driving this critical discourse via targeted policy advocacy, strategic engagements with communities and stakeholders, and media sensitisation. Our food justice campaign is deeply rooted in the knowledge that effective food policies in Africa predetermine healthier diets and fewer nutrition-related diseases, promoting a more resilient continent.

Last year, we celebrated a big victory with the gazetting of Nigeria’s “Fats and Oils Regulations” and the “Fats and Oils Pre-packaged Food Labeling Regulations 2022”. These policies will greatly help reduce the consumption of trans-fatty acids in food across the country. Trans fatty acids (TFA) constitute a significant risk factor for non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Despite this, they are consumed in large quantities in low-and middle-income countries like Nigeria, where they are used to produce commonly eaten and low-cost processed foods.

Securing the promulgation of critical policies that exclusively tackle the removal of transfat from the diets of over 200 million people in Nigeria marks significant progress in our campaign to reduce diseases associated with TFAs and improve public health. Building on this momentum, we are now firmly confronting other harmful dietary trends in Nigeria, such as the excessive intake of sugar sweetened beverages (SSBs) and salt, both linked to chronic diseases.

Substantial evidence abounds linking the consumption of SSBs to an increased risk of developing several non-communicable diseases despite powerful corporate marketing portraying them as harmless indulgences and essential dietary staples. Unfortunately, the consumption of SSBs in Nigeria has exponentially increased over time, with an estimated annual intake of 40 million litres – one of the highest rates globally.
Excessive salt intake is another serious concern. Elevated salt or sodium intake leads to a dangerous rise in blood pressure, otherwise known as hypertension, a health challenge that accounts for a staggering 12% of deaths in Nigeria.

Presently, Nigeria records a disturbing daily salt consumption of up to 5.8 grams, surpassing the World Health Organization’s (WHO) recommended limit of 2 grams of sodium per day, or less than 5 grams of salt per day – equivalent to just one teaspoon of salt daily.

Meanwhile, the increasing westernisation of population diets, changing consumption habits, and prevalence of a high sodium level in processed foods and seasonings have been observed as some of the critical drivers of excessive salt intake in Nigeria.

During the past year, CAPPA’s policy advocacy efforts to address the excessive consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) and salt leveraged strategic engagements with policymakers, communities, public health experts, the media, and a dedicated pool of volunteers.

**Increasing the SIN Tax for SSBs**

Across the world, ‘sin taxes’ are increasingly recognised as effective policy tools. These taxes imposed on products like SSBs, alcohol, and tobacco aim to curb their excessive consumption due to associated health risks. In 2021, Nigeria introduced a N10 per litre excise tax on all non-alcoholic sugar-sweetened beverages. Capitalising on this entry point, we have
continued to exert pressure on the Nigerian government to raise the tax rate to reflect a 20% increase in the final retail prices of sugary drinks—in line with recommendations by global health experts—and develop a comprehensive legislative framework that ensures the sustainable enforcement of the SSB tax.

**Galvanising Public Support Across Regions**

Recognising that effective and impactful advocacy thrives heavily on community support, last year, we concentrated efforts on rallying a diverse array of stakeholders. We built a multidisciplinary advocacy network that includes policymakers, public health advocates, parents, religious leaders, media representatives, and a National Sugar-sweetened Beverages Tax Coalition—all united in advocating for a sustainable SSB tax regime.

CAPPA organised four stakeholder forums in Nigeria’s South-West, North-West, South-South, and South-East regions. These regional forums successfully engaged a dynamic community of over 180 public health champions committed to influencing and improving public health policies for better outcomes.

Furthermore, we hosted an inaugural National Conference on SSB Tax in Abuja on October 25, 2023. This landmark event, hosted by the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, CAPPA, and the National Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Tax Coalition, attracted 240 in-person attendees and 40 virtual participants. Attendees included public health experts, members of the legislature, critical government ministries and departments, religious institutions, academia, research-focused institutions, civil society organisations, and media representatives.

The conference provided a vital platform for dialogue on the SSB tax issue and allowed stakeholders to exchange views on viable policy approaches for innovative healthcare financing. These efforts led to the release of a strong communiqué endorsed by various stakeholders who affirmed their support for an adequate legislative framework to bolster the SSB tax regime in Nigeria.
Curating the Healthy Diet Narrative

Understanding the media’s pivotal role in disseminating information, shaping public opinion, and influencing policymaking, CAPPA maintained a strategic partnership with the media to enhance public awareness of the risks of SSBs, as well as the importance of the SSB tax. In the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, and Lagos State, we organised interactive hybrid workshop sessions for journalists from over 42 media houses. These workshops aimed to enhance their abilities in investigative journalism, data analysis, industry monitoring, and impactful storytelling, explicitly focusing on SSBs.

Our initiatives extended beyond traditional media interactions, incorporating wide-ranging digital campaign. This included webinars, press engagements, social media advocacy, and the distribution of advocacy resources to engage a broader audience on different social channels. Our notable hashtags, such as #SSBTaxSaves, generated over 20 million organic impressions on Twitter, while the #SSBTaxConference, created to promote our national conference on the SSB tax, garnered more than 5 million impressions in just three days. CAPPA promoted
awareness in local communities and developed health-positive activities tied to international health days relevant to our campaign, including the World Hypertension Day, World Food Day, World Diabetes Day, World Obesity Day, World Heart Day, and the 2023 Global Week of Action on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

**What is a Campaign without Pushbacks?**

When narratives began to flood the media with doomsday warnings about the dangers of increasing the SSB tax and even singled us out as opponents of Nigeria’s SSB industry, we knew our advocacy was gaining ground. Last year, our campaign for a sustainable SSB tax regime earned us strong and increasing resistance from industry players. Yet, these challenges only strengthened our convictions on the immense public health benefits that can be gained from an effective policy framework for Nigeria’s SSB tax.

**Armed with Facts**

Confronting opposition narratives often riddled with inconsistencies, outright falsehoods, and myths spread by well-financed detractors, we stood firm in our obligation to counter such stories with solid facts, figures, and scientifically sound data. Our commitment to evidence-based advocacy for the SSB tax campaign took a big step forward with the completion of a comprehensive study on the “Health and Economic Benefits of a Sugar-Sweetened Beverages (SSB) Tax in Nigeria.” This vital research, conducted in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Economies of Africa (CSEA) and other experts, provides insightful data on the impacts of SSBs on public health and the economic and health benefits of a sustainable SSB tax regime for Nigeria.

**Together with Policymakers, Towards a Sustainable Policy Pathway**

In a significant effort to embed the SSB tax in the national health agenda, we successfully facilitated the formation and inauguration of an Interministerial Ad-hoc Committee on the SSB Tax. This pivotal committee comprises representatives from relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs).
It will function as an advisory body to the Risk Factor Sub-committee of the National Committee on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) under the National Multisectoral Action Plan on Non-Communicable Diseases.

Following the successful formation of the Interministerial Ad-hoc Committee on the SSB Tax, CAPPA presented its case for a legislative framework for the SSB tax at the 64th National Council on Health (NCH), Nigeria’s highest decision-making body on health. At the NCH meeting, held from November 13th to 17th, 2023, CAPPA engaged in fruitful dialogues with 19 Health Commissioners from different states across the country.

A key moment from this event was the visit to our SSB tax booth by a high-level delegation led by Ekiti State’s Health Commissioner, Dr. Oyebanji Filani. Interactions held with these state officials, including the Ekiti State Governor Biodun Abayomi Oyebanji, and Nigeria’s Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Ali Pate, underscored the growing recognition and support for the SSB tax campaign among vital political figures, boosting our political outreach and laying a foundation for future partnerships.

Amid Nigeria’s general elections last year, the inevitable changes in the political landscape required us to reintroduce the SSB tax conversation to existing and new policymakers. Considering this, we also submitted a detailed memorandum to the Presidential Committee on Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform on behalf of the National Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Tax Coalition. Our submission, backed by concrete research and data, offered pragmatic recommendations for effectively implementing the SSB tax.

**Less Salt**

Kick-starting the campaign to reduce excessive sodium consumption in food, we played a pivotal role in supporting the Food and Drug Services Department of the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to review the National Policy on Food Safety and Implementation Strategy. The revision sought to engender a broader scope of policy action and plans for food regulatory systems, such as outlining protocols for effectively
surveillance on sodium levels in processed foods sold by companies, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and street vendors nationwide. On December 1, 2023, Nigeria’s Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare officially endorsed the updated policy document following its thorough validation by critical stakeholders.

We also focused on building public awareness about the dangers of high sodium intake. Employing a multi-faceted approach, we engaged the media, conducted webinars, published opinion articles, deployed digital assets, and organised stakeholder capacity-building sessions. Over the past year, our public health advocacy yielded achievements on various campaign fronts. We are thus fired to press forward the cause for greater access to healthier foods across Nigeria.

**Industry Monitoring**

Over the past year, we intensively monitored the food and SSB industry’s, tactics to undermine healthy food policies in Nigeria. We work with a strong network of public health watchdogs to identify industry trends, misinformation, and harmful corporate practices that undermine public health and national food policies.

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Members of the Inter-ministerial Adhoc Committee on SSB Tax inaugurated by Prof. Ali Pate, Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare
TOBACCO CONTROL

FCCPC’s $110 Fine on BATN
The year 2023 ended with a big bang for tobacco control in Nigeria. On December 27, 2023, the Federal Competition Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC), announced a $110 million fine on British American Tobacco Nigeria (BATN) and its subsidiaries. The penalty followed a probe in which the Commission found BATN guilty of violating competition laws, public health and tobacco control rules and regulations in the country.

In reaction to the news, CAPPA applauded the FCCPC for the precedent-setting action and described the fine as a milestone in making corporations accountable for their flagrant violations of the nation’s laws and statutes.

CAPPA continues to advocate for BAT and its ilk to be held accountable by the government and made to pay for their disregard of national tobacco control efforts, as well as for the promotion of addictive, carcinogenic products that harm young people and compromise societal well-being.

Shortly before the FCCPC’s statement, we had requested the federal government to include tobacco companies in its planned probe of questionable tax waivers and insidious benefits unduly awarded to corporations since 2015.

We specifically asked state authorities to investigate the Export Expansion Grant (EEG) extended to the tobacco industry in Nigeria despite the multifaceted adverse impacts of their activities on the environment and human health.

Still on tobacco control, CAPPA engaged in a wide-reaching media campaign over the past year. We published several news articles challenging misconceptions linking smoking to creativity and participated in media interviews where we urged state authorities to take more decisive actions to safeguard public health.
**Tobacco Industry Interference**

The tobacco industry is always up to no good. This much was established in our report on the Tobacco Industry Interference in Nigeria, which showed a marked deterioration in the country's ratings from 53 points in 2021 to 60 points in 2023. Our findings exposed how tobacco companies use a slew of tactics to overwhelm national health measures, including preying on interactions with state officials and loopholes in government regulations to masquerade as responsible entities.

At a press conference where we unveiled the report to over 25 journalists from leading TV, radio, and newspaper outlets in the country, we testified that the tobacco industry in Nigeria maintains significant presence and participation in critical government interagency/multi-sectoral committee meetings, where supposedly classified resolutions on public health standards are discussed and agreed upon. These unhealthy allowances empower the industry to manipulate public health and tobacco control efforts to their benefit.

To counter the challenges identified, we asked media practitioners to publicise the issues and stand up for public health by demanding greater transparency in the government’s dealings with tobacco corporations. We also urged state officials to sever ties with the tobacco industry, which...
helps to burnish its image and called for stricter enforcement of the National Tobacco Control Act and its regulations against the industry’s manipulative tactics.

**A SmokeFree Nollywood is Almost Here**
Since launching the campaign to eradicate tobacco imagery and advertising in Nollywood—the largest film industry in Africa and the second largest globally—we have actively engaged film professionals to address the pervasive and unnecessary depiction of smoking in movies.

Our #SmokeFreeNollywood initiative recognises the significant influence movies have on viewers, including the potential for such visual narratives to be hijacked and manipulated by the tobacco industry to promote its harmful products. Through this campaign, we aim to sanitise public screens of tobacco imagery and foster filmmakers’ compliance with Nigeria’s tobacco control laws, which prohibit tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS).

Building on previous engagements, in July 2023, CAPPA took a step forward by organising a technical session with key stakeholders in Nollywood to secure their buy-in for developing a Code of Practice to minimise scenes in films. The pivotal meeting, attended by influential movie figures such as Zeb Ejiro, Fred Amata, Olawale Elesho, and Hilda Dokubo, concluded with a consensus on crafting this Code of Practice. In December 2023, we finalised a working draft, which we will subsequently share with stakeholders in the film industry for validation and adoption.

**Countering False Narratives of Safe Alternatives**
Tobacco hurts, tobacco kills! There is no safe form of smoking, yet recent times have borne witness to a rising surge of deceptive narratives aggressively sponsored by the industry to market new and emerging products and lead the public to embrace them as safe alternatives. In 2023, CAPPA’s industry monitoring activities tracked and kept abreast of the multifarious strategies employed by tobacco corporations to expand their product offerings.

We flagged their attempts to deodorise new products such as e-cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, flavoured nicotine, and other so-called harm reduction products, positioning them as quit aids for their many victims suffering immensely from an addiction to smoking. This insidious
agenda also extends to portraying them as safer and fashionable, especially for young people. CAPPA also documented and called out their manipulative efforts to infiltrate tobacco control initiatives, and tactics of cultivating relationships with policymakers, academia, and other strategic groups to prop up narratives of being on the side of public health even while serving their interests.

The industry continues to distort the truth and misrepresent geo-realities and local experiences as global success stories, falsely advertising these alternatives as effective interventions for decreasing smoking rates and boosting public health. Yet, the question we continue to ask remains: why is the tobacco industry keen on selling alternatives to a new generation of young people and non-smokers in Nigeria and Africa, thereby undermining decades of tobacco control efforts aimed at ending nicotine addiction? We say it is paradoxical that the industry advises smokers to try these products, which, despite their admissions of not being “risk-free” and only “less harmful,” are presented as solutions to escape the harms of traditional smoking.
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

The Cooked and Sinking Communities of Africa

Our world is grappling with a climate emergency primarily fueled by the reckless and profit-driven exploitation of nature's resources. Much like other parts of the globe, Africa is not exempted from the harsh impacts of climate change and suffers even more from it despite the continent's negligible contributions to the changing climate.

Under our Make Big Polluters Pay (MBPP) campaign in Africa, and amid mounting pressure on global climate governance for a Loss and Damage Fund—which recognises the irreparable climate-incurred losses borne by vulnerable nations and the responsibility of major historical emitters to make reparations—CAPPA embarked on an environmental accountability project in 2023.

CAPPA presents copies of its reports to the Director General of the National Council on Climate Change, Dr. Salisu Dahiru during a courtesy visit.
We profiled and documented evidence-based visuals of the ecological damage in frontline communities in Kenya, Nigeria, and Cameroon directly resulting from the extractive activities of big multinational corporations.

Our efforts culminated in a powerful documentary titled: *Climate Change: Africa’s Cooked and Sinking Communities*, which showcases the raw impacts of these activities on the environment and local communities.

In Nigeria, we visited Ayetoro, a riverine town and oil-rich community nestled against the backdrop of the Atlantic coast and a rich line of mangrove swamp forests. Once known by its epithet, *The Happy City,* the community thrived until it began to crumble under the relentless onslaught of devastating ocean surges, floods, and spillages linked to crude oil exploration activities of multinational corporations.

CAPPA gathered firsthand accounts from the locals and explored the extent of the ongoing devastation. The persistent incursion of the sea has transformed the once-vibrant town into a gloomy landscape. Across the town stood squalid wooden shanties connected by networks of frail, choppy boardwalks, all supported by stilts dug into the swamps. Remnants of historical buildings in the community bore scars from the sharp bites of unyielding ocean waves, while others lay submerged beneath dark, oil-coated waters.

Ayetoro was so popular and pretty during her heydays and attracted the visits of tourists and notable figures. However, the town began to decline in the later part of the 1980s following the onset of oil exploration operations in the area. His Royal Highness (HRH) Oba Ojagbohunmi, Oluwambe, the traditional ruler of Ayetoro, shared with CAPPA that the community observed the sea increasingly encroaching on their land at an alarming rate with the advent of extractive ventures. Additionally, the women of Ayetoro, many of whom rely on fishing, reported that the frequent oil spillages have not only crippled their livelihoods but also negatively impacted marine life.

Our investigation in Taita Taveta, Kenya, revealed devastating environmental and social impacts due to mining activities driven mainly by multinational corporations. Focus group discussions with locals reflected how the interplay of environmental and economic factors such
as deforestation, soil erosion, and arid weather conditions have disrupted traditional farming livelihoods and driven many to become emergency miners. These environmental challenges have become further compounded by the unregulated and polarised character of mining activities in the region, causing even more ecological injury.

The story is the same in Kambele, a mining community in East Cameroon, where foreign companies have proliferated the mining sector and shown a blatant disregard for the environment and its interconnected ecosystems. CAPPA’s documentary exposed the often-hidden realities of the impacts of climate change in Africa.

Our findings reinforced the calls for a Loss and Damage Fund to support vulnerable communities. Holding hands in solidarity with affected communities, we pledged to amplify their stories. We also sought to build community power among them to organise against corporate impunity and demand accountability and effective oversight from state authorities.
People’s Tribunal for Justice and Reconciliation, Uganda
Still on the mission to ensure that those primarily responsible for the climate crisis are held accountable, the Make Big Polluters Pay campaign members in Africa held a retreat in Uganda from the 15th – to the 17th of May 2023. During this retreat, we interrogated the activities of TotalEnergies in the Bulisa District of Uganda, engaging in community visits, dialogues with locals, and constituting a mock trial – also referred to as the People’s Tribunal for Justice and Reconciliation.

The mock tribunal empowered community members to speak freely and provided a platform to share evidence of environmental and human rights infractions against them by the oil corporation. Since the tribunal’s conclusion, we have been deploying the evidential reports gathered to demand accountability from TotalEnergies and further advocate for the rights of affected communities to justice.

The Second National Conference on Climate Change
The imperative for CAPPA’s second National Conference on Climate Change stemmed from our commitment to continually place the stark experiences of frontline and local communities on the front burner. The meeting brought together 150 participants, including community members, civil society representatives, scholars, and state officials.

Discussions centered on sustainable climate finance for Nigeria, examining the Nigerian Agenda for COP28, the African Climate Summit and false solutions of carbon markets, including pressing environmental issues like the plight of the Ayetoro community and pollution in the Niger Delta. The conference concluded with a communiqué for action and engagement at local and global levels.

We Made a Case for Impacted Communities at COP28
With a solid determination to represent frontline communities and indigenous voices in conversations determining their fate, CAPPA marked its presence at COP28 in Dubai with activities and events before and during the conference aimed at amplifying the voices of frontline communities. Leading up to the global climate conference, we convened an African Regional Dialogue on Loss and Damage Fund. At the meeting, 53 climate activists from different African countries rejected the Fund being warehoused at the World Bank.
They criticised attempts by big emitters to frame the mechanism as charity instead of acknowledging it as reparations for their climate sins.

Our pre-COP28 activities also rallied climate justice CSOs in Africa to articulate a joint position paper discussing the Loss and Damage Fund at COP28. Additionally, we conducted an Afro-COP media training for journalists on November 22, 2023. The training empowered over 20 African journalists with the education required to report on climate issues effectively and in ways that entrench African perspectives and realities within the global climate conversation.

“Climate Change: Africa’s Cooked and Sinking Communities” Screened at COP28

Determined to amplify the plights of vulnerable communities at the conference, we screened our documentary on the impact of climate change in frontline communities of Kenya, Nigeria, and Cameroon at high-level events at COP28. At the Development and Climate Days forum, organised on the sidelines of the climate summit to discuss issues of climate finance and adaptation, among other concerns, over 200 stakeholders, including policymakers, negotiators, and grassroots representatives, watched the documentary.

The documentary was also featured at the “Don’t Be a Climate Con Artist” event on December 5, 2023. At yet another screening at the Civil Society Climate Justice Hub (CSCJ Hub) on December 6, 2023, panel discussions interrogated the issues captured in the documentary and provided a platform for indigenous people and other campaigners from Small Islands to share their interconnected experiences.

Denouncing the Presence of Fossil Fuel Lobbyists at COP28

2,456 fossil fuel lobbyists attended the climate conference in Dubai, influencing crucial climate talks by delegates. At a press conference held on December 5, 2023, we joined other members of the Kick Big Polluters Campaign to expose the fossil fuel industry’s presence and call for the UN climate body and governments across the world to resist attempts by big polluters to derail accountability talks.
Leafletting, Engaging Pavilions and African Delegates
Throughout our time in Dubai, we actively utilised our research reports and knowledge materials to engage with delegates, pushing for pro-people climate solutions. Our strategy also focused on handing out our perspective documents and pamphlets to African delegates and political leaders, emphasising the importance of a comprehensive, community-driven approach to climate issues.

We visited the pavilions and secretariats of the African Union, African Group of Negotiators, Least Developed Countries, and 15 African countries, including Mali, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Gabon, Togo, and Liberia. There, we facilitated dialogues on climate accountability and disseminated copies of our report on Transnational Corporations and Their Destructive Operations in Africa. The report reveals the negative impacts of the activities of transnational corporations on the life, health, and environment of resource-rich and host communities.

Providing Real-time Analysis and On-Spot Reporting for the News
During the COP, we took on the vital role of informing the public by participating in media interviews and offering live updates on developments. We provided incisive analyses and fresh insights into daily events at the conference, effectively serving as the eyes and ears for local media unable to attend. Our on-the-spot reporting ensured that crucial information and perspectives from the COP were communicated back to local audiences, keeping them connected and informed about the ongoing climate discussions and decisions.

Make Big Polluters Pay
As is our culture, we took a stand many times at the COP, defending the rights of communities to livable environments. We joined forces with our MBPP and KBPO partners to challenge the role of polluting oil companies responsible for climate disasters in defining healthy solutions for climate change. During protests such as “End Fossil Fuel,” “Just Transition Now,” and “Ceasefire in Gaza,” CAPPA spoke truth to power and demanded that negotiators urgently adopt just and fair decarbonisation pathways.
We critiqued the proposals of false solutions like carbon markets as the way out of Africa’s climate problem and highlighted the need for solutions based on fairness, equity, and justice.
PUBLIC SERVICES

Much Ado about the Students Loans Policy
When President Bola Ahmed Tinubu ratified the Students Loans Act on June 12, 2023, his action seemingly aimed to increase access to higher education by providing tuition-free loans for indigent Nigerian students. However, the policy’s restrictive and discriminatory provisions sparked widespread controversy, challenging the program’s intended objective, and provoking a storm of mixed reactions from the public.

To provide a compass for public dialogue and engagement, CAPPA conducted a line-by-line analysis of the legislation, providing deep insights into the workability of the loan scheme. Our study found the loan requirements for expected beneficiaries very restrictive and unfit for purpose. The loan scheme also reflects a strong potential to exacerbate Nigeria’s growing commercialisation and lack of access to education. Following our analysis, we convened a multistakeholder forum symposium on July 21st, 2023.
The meeting assembled an eclectic mix of over sixty (60) key players in Nigeria’s education sector, including representatives from the National Parents Teachers Association of Nigeria (NAPTAN), National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Education Writers Association of Nigeria (EWAN), Lagos State Scholarship Board, the media, and other education-focused civic groups.

Is the Student Loans Act a Valid Solution?
While the students’ loans policy appears to be a commendable step towards addressing access to tertiary education in Nigeria, stakeholders at CAPPA’s symposium expressed skepticism about the policy’s potential effectiveness. They cited various drawbacks that will paradoxically exclude the demographic it seeks to assist, thereby worsening existing societal inequalities.

Under the Act’s provisions, prospective loan applicants must secure at least two guarantors. The guarantors must be civil servants (minimum grade 12), lawyers with at least ten (10) years post-call experience, judicial officers, or justices of peace. Given their limited access to such professional networks, this prerequisite raises the question of how many low-income families can meet this requirement.

Moreover, the policy only provides loans for tuition fees. A loan limited to tuition fees is largely inadequate, considering the broader costs of tertiary education. Amid an economic downturn and a sharp decline in living standards, many potential beneficiaries lack the financial means to meet the diverse costs associated with tertiary education. Only a few weeks before the passage of the loan policy, Nigeria’s President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, announced the removal of the fuel subsidy during his inauguration. The unprecedented move sent the economy into a tailspin, drastically inflating living costs and adding further pressure on strained households.

Will the Loan Solve Existing Issues?
Chronic issues, including inadequate budgetary allocations for education, deficient educational infrastructure and learning facilities, limited research facilities, corruption at administrative levels, and inconsistent or non-existent staff remuneration, have historically plagued public university education in Nigeria. These challenges have inevitably
led to a concerning brain drain in the sector and continuous labour strikes, contributing to a decline in educational standards. These fundamental problems cannot be addressed or resolved within the scope of the student loan program's mandate.
Way Forward
Emerging from the meeting, stakeholders urged the government to repeal the students’ loans policy and convert it into a special intervention vehicle for dispensing grants and bursaries to indigent yet high-performing students in public tertiary institutions.

They proposed that these grants could also be allocated towards supporting prospective undergraduates pursuing studies in fields with a significant shortage of professionals in the country. Stakeholders also recommended that the government utilise funds from various economic purses to increase educational budgetary allocation and ensure greater accountability and efficient utilisation of existing interventionist programmes such as the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND).

Government Responds to the Buzz of our Symposium
Days following our symposium and the buzz it generated in the media, the federal government released a public statement reaffirming the tuition-free mandate of federal universities. The government also cautioned against the reckless hike of sundry charges across various public tertiary institutions.

Subsequently, the presidency announced a decision to review the restrictive provisions of the policy through the Nigerian House of Representatives’ Ad-hoc Committee on Students’ Loans and Access to Higher Education. The Committee hosted a one-day legislative summit to solicit stakeholder feedback. CAPPA presented its memorandum at this event, urgeing policymakers to repeal the students’ loans policy due to its contentious provisions.
WATER JUSTICE

African Communities in Solidarity Against Water Privatisation

Never was the threat of a country-wide water privatisation more imminent than when the undemocratic National Water Resources Bill appeared in Nigeria’s legislative deliberations on June 29, 2022, after it had been rebuffed in previous instances.

The Bill, formally titled “A Bill for an Act to Establish a Regulatory Framework for Trans Boundary Water Resources in Nigeria, Provide for the Equitable and Sustainable Development, Management, Use and Conservation of Nigeria’s Inter-State Surface Water and Groundwater Resources; and For Related Matters, 2022,” featured anti-public provisions. These provisions threatened to further restrict access to water in the country and privatise water bodies in communities for profit.

In response, we mobilised a formidable opposition to the likely commodification of water and nature’s resources. Rallying an army of local communities and campaigners, we pushed back, highlighting the bill’s oppressive nature, prevailing on lawmakers, and effectively building a campaign of resistance too loud to be shut down. Our efforts paid off when, in June 2023, legislators discarded the contentious bill.

But as we revelled in this huge triumph on the national front, a looming challenge in Lagos State signalled that the fight against the corporate takeover of local water was far from over. This was clear from the abrupt sacking of 450 Lagos State Water Corporation
(LSWC) casual workers in December. Investigations revealed that the workers were laid off due to claims of a restructuring and repositioning process within the corporation, even amid a staffing shortage.

Further dialogue with the LSWC’s management by the Amalgamated Union of Public Corporations, Civil Service Technical and Recreation Services Employees (AUPCTRE) exposed more plans by the government to disengage even permanent staff in the days ahead. Based on this outlook, CAPPA participated in a workers’ mobilisation meeting convened by AUPCTRE, uniting efforts to address these challenges strategically.

Our support extended to amplifying workers’ voices and publicising the issue extensively in the media, which drew sufficient attention to halt the LSWC’s plans for further layoffs. This collaborative resistance also caught the eye of the Lagos State House of Assembly, leading the lawmakers to invite workers to the House to discuss the matter. Not yet “Uhuru,” we remain vigilant, working alongside other campaigners and the labour union to actively ward off attempts to privatise water access in the state.

**Africa Week of Action Against Water Privatisation**

The third Africa Week of Action Against Water Privatisation, held last year from the 9th – 13th of October. The weeklong campaign themed, “Holding Hands to Protect Africa’s Water from Corporate Capture,” which coincided with the World Bank Group–IMF Annual Meetings in Marrakech,
saw a coalition of African civil society and labour activists under the umbrella of the Our Water Our Right Coalition, mobilise to campaign against water privatisation on the continent.

Kicking off the week, the Our Water Our Right Coalition hosted a press conference in Lagos, Nigeria, on October 10, 2023. At the conference, they emphasised water as a human right and opposed its commodification. They also urged African leaders to be the bulwark against a rising tide of threats to communities’ access to water, with particular attention to the insidious threats that water privatisation and corporate capture pose to the human right to water.

In Cameroon, the African Centre for Advocacy (ACA) commemorated the week by organising an outreach at the Champions International Bilingual Secondary and High School, Nkolfoulo, Soa, Yaounde. During this event, ACA educated more than 100 teachers and students about the importance of resisting water privatisation and prevailing on the government to embrace policies and programmes supporting democratic and public ownership of water infrastructure. The outreach concluded with the ACA team donating ten (10) specially adapted drinking buckets to help the school provide safe drinking water for its staff and students.

Other activities observed during the week of action featured podcast sessions and discussions with labour leaders and water campaigners in Ghana, Senegal, and Kenya, among others. The Our Water Our Right Coalition also dispatched appeal and advocacy letters to African regional blocs, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, and the Economic Community of Western African States.

**Water Parliaments and Community Power Building**
Empowering communities to engage state authorities to ensure governance reflects citizens’ aspirations is central to our campaign. Last year, CAPPA further strengthened its resolve to build community power by equipping residents of Poka and Odo communities in Epe, Lagos State, with the knowledge needed to effectively engage government and parliamentarians on critical social issues such as water access. We
conducted special water parliaments, delivering hands-on education on how communities can work together to uphold the right to water. The sessions offered insights on organising successful campaigns to promote water rights and empowered community members with the necessary skills for collective action, building supportive networks, and fostering resistance against threats to their water access.

Similarly, in Ibadan, Oyo State, CAPPA worked with the Ecumenical Water Network to organise a Training the Trainers workshop for civil society organisations, gender specialists, people living with disabilities, the media, and researchers. The workshop focused on bolstering participants’ capacity to effectively strategise and mobilise members of the public for a solid campaign and advocacy against water privatisation.
DEMOCRACY OUTREACH

Using the Media to Promote Violence-Free Elections

As Nigerians went to the polls in 2023, we prepared the ground for a peaceful and non-violent election by organising comprehensive training sessions for media practitioners and journalists nationwide.

These sessions sought to deepen their understanding of the electoral process and enhance their capacity to report stories and interrogate them in ways that provide a balanced perspective and solutions to challenges, promote public peace, and contribute to nation-building.

Media presentation of the report 2023 General Elections: Challenges and Threats to Consolidating Democracy
Across different regions of the country, including Oyo, Kaduna, Imo, and Rivers State, we worked closely with veteran journalists, media experts, publishers, senior correspondents, news editors, and station heads. We used a meticulously developed training module to educate over 100 media professionals on the country’s electoral laws and their responsibilities during elections.

We also engaged local communities and created content for radio programmes that encouraged voters to exercise their rights peacefully. These initiatives, interactions with media outlets and appearances on radio programs offered vital opportunities to address critical governance issues and foster citizen participation in the electoral process.
Beyond our offline engagements, the online landscape afforded us unique opportunities to reach a wider audience, particularly young individuals keenly interested in the electoral process and those who had just reached voting age. We utilised social media platforms such as Twitter (now X), Facebook, and Instagram to sensitise members of the public on the electoral process.

We also leveraged digital media assets to promote peaceful elections, including videos, graphics, text, URLs, and alternative media materials. Notably, our #ElectionNobeWar campaign achieved a remarkable reach, exceeding 6,000,000 views on Twitter.

Still on our election-related efforts, we co-organised a first-ever presidential town hall meeting focused on interrogating presidential candidates’ programmes on climate and environmental issues.
The forum attracted over 150 participants and provided a crucial opportunity for aspiring leaders from four political parties in the country to present their visions and strategies for addressing environmental issues and climate change.

Presidential candidates in attendance at the meeting included Omoyele Sowore of the African Action Congress (AAC), Dumebi Kachikwu of the African Democratic Congress (ADC), Adewole Adebayo of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and the Chairman of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP), Prof. Rufai Ahmed Alkali who represented the party’s presidential candidate, Rabiu Kwankwaso.

We actively engaged in thorough appraisals of the political environment and electoral issues before and after the general elections. Our work yielded form in comprehensive reports, including *2023 General Elections - Challenges and Threats to Consolidating Democracy, and Unpacking Nigeria's 2023 General Elections*. These resources broadened public discourse and enriched political analyses of the period.
Konncected Africans Media Radio is Born

There is a new sound on the dial—Konncected Africans Media (KAM) Radio! Launched in 2023, we officially entered the broadcasting arena following the debut of our development podcast, *Africa Speaks*, in 2022.

KAM radio was created as an extension of our deep-seated mission to build community power, foster black connectedness, and showcase Africa through development-oriented content. With a clear-eyed understanding of the intersections of experiences that shape Africa and the black diaspora, we aim to address the root causes of inequality and oppression by shining light on critical development issues across Africa and black communities, leveraging the power of radio as a mass communication tool.
Our programming sets out to educate, inspire, mobilise, entertain, and build a sense of solidarity and action among our listener community. We promise a mix of uplifting and conscious music, news across the continent, incisive analyses, engaging interviews, community experiences, and listener contributions. Currently, we are streaming on www.kamradio.org while actively developing and refining our branding, scheduling, news coverage, content, and broadcaster team. We are committed to developing this project and establishing our reach and impact in the coming months.

Africa Speaks Podcast

Our podcast explored various issues throughout the continent over the past year. We examined the political upheavals and coups in Mali and Niger and engaged in raw discussions that presented firsthand accounts and direct insights into human trafficking in Africa. We also analysed Sierra Leone’s general elections, among other contemporary issues facing the continent.

Notably, our podcast episode on the eviction of local communities in Kenya for carbon markets was utilised and cited in the Philippine Indigenous Peoples’ and Community Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCA) Appeal to State Parties of the UNFCCC COP28 to Protect Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and Biodiversity.
RECHARGING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE

We continued to produce insightful content, broadening perspectives and discussions at national, regional, and global levels. Our in-depth reports covered a range of critical issues: *Unpacking Nigeria’s 2023 Elections*, *The People’s Tribunal for Environmental Justice and Reconciliation in Uganda*, *Transnational Corporations and their Destructive Operations in Africa*, *The Tobacco Industry’s Interference in Nigeria’s Public Health Environment*, and *Nigeria’s Students’ Loans Policy*. 

Books and Reports Available for Download

www.cappaafrica.org
**Statement of Functional Income and Expenses for the Year Ended 31st December, 2023**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Naira (₦)</th>
<th>USD $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants, Contribution &amp; Foundations</td>
<td>539,729,936.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>126,212.16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Support &amp; Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>539,856,149.14</strong></td>
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**Expenses**

**PROGRAM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Naira (₦)</th>
<th>USD $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grassroot organizing</td>
<td>116,649,905.12</td>
<td>194,416.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>International organizing</td>
<td>105,162,823.63</td>
<td>175,271.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program communication</td>
<td>33,661,019.88</td>
<td>56,101.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership development</td>
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<td>60,319.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media organizing</td>
<td>50,865,867.43</td>
<td>84,776.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research, development &amp; training</td>
<td>39,725,116.67</td>
<td>66,208.53</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Program expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>382,256,431.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>637,094.05</strong></td>
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**SUPPORTING SERVICES**

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Naira (₦)</th>
<th>USD $</th>
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<tr>
<td>Management &amp; general operations</td>
<td>108,325,683.95</td>
<td>180,542.81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indirect expenses</td>
<td>23,781,261.05</td>
<td>39,635.44</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal supporting services</strong></td>
<td><strong>132,106,945.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>220,178.24</strong></td>
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</table>

**Total Expenses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Naira (₦)</th>
<th>USD $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>514,363,376.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>857,272.29</strong></td>
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**Net Assets**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Naira (₦)</th>
<th>USD $</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changes In Net Assets</td>
<td>219,477,871.41</td>
<td>365,796.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restricted Cash/ Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>132,353,004.00</td>
<td>220,588.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Cash/ Cash Equivalents</td>
<td>2,606,892.00</td>
<td>4,344.82</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>End of the year</strong></td>
<td><strong>354,437,767.41</strong></td>
<td><strong>590,729.61</strong></td>
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ABOUT CAPPA

Corporate Accountability and Public Participation Africa (CAPPA) is a pan-African nongovernmental organisation that advances human rights, challenges corporate abuse of natural resources, and builds community power for inclusive development and participatory governance.

CAPPA is passionately devoted to nurturing movements of African communities and a new generation of leaders working shoulder to shoulder to demand democratic management and governance of natural resources, accountability from power structures, inclusive participation in development processes, and an end to all forms of corporate and state abuses.

CAPPA envisions a continent whose development path is designed, modelled, and executed by Africans—respecting and guaranteeing human rights, enabling social justice, and ensuring harmony with the environment. CAPPA works across four thematic areas: Public Services, Environment and Climate, Democracy Outreach, and Public Health.
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