

19 HUMAN RIGHT PRINCIPLES



THE HUMAN RIGHT PRINCIPLES

These Nineteen (19) human rights principles were developed by the Tostan which is an African based organization working directly with rural communities leading their own development. These rights are rights which every human being is entitled to without discrimination regardless of ethnic origin, residence, race, color, language, gender, religion, ethnicity or any other status.



THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO LIFE

This right discusses the entitlement of everyone to life. The right to life is the basic and one of the most important human rights. The other rights are based on the fact that one lives. Without the right to life, all other rights would become illusory (Korff, 2006). The highlight of this right is that, no one deserves or should be killed by any entity including those holding political powers. Instead, government is to make appropriate means in safeguarding lives by making laws to protect the lives of people and a closer watch on those whose lives are at risk.

A person has the right to investigate the death of a family member if it involves the state. This can happen only, if the right wasn't breached as a result of riot, escape from unlawful detainment or carrying out unlawful violence. Furthermore, no one is to be deprived life intentionally except execution of a sentence by the court of law, following conviction of crime which penalty is already available by the law.

According to the Nigerian Constitution, "Every person has a right to life, and no one shall be deprived intentionally of his life, save in execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offence of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria". A person shall not be regarded as having been deprived of his life in contravention of this section, if he dies as a result of the use, to such extent and in such circumstances as are permitted by law, of such force as is reasonably necessary -

- For the defense of any person from unlawful violence or for the defense of property
- In order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;
- or
- For the purpose of suppressing a riot, insurrection or mutiny."

It is important to note that the life of every human is important. How careful or otherwise we treat them will determine how much they'll enjoy this right. We should be intentional about how we treat others.

The Right to be Free from all Forms of Violence

Freedom from violence is a human right found in many international agreements and conventions. Freedom from domestic and family violence, security operative violence on persons as well as school related violence is also implicit in other human rights including the right to life, and the right to be free from torture and other cruel and unusual punishment.

The impact of violence can be seen in various forms in all parts of the world. Each year, more than a million people lose their lives making it the leading causes of death. While no country is untouched by violence, the vast majority of its resultant death occur in low to middle income countries, many of which are stricken with internal conflicts.

The World Health Organization defines violence as "the use of physical force or power threatened or actual against oneself, another person or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, or deprivation.

Categories of violence:

1. Self-directed violence
2. Interpersonal violence
3. Collective violence.

These categories of violence can be further divided into more specific types of violence.


1. Physical violence
2. Sexual violence
3. Psychological violence
4. Neglect

Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force, used with the potential for causing harm, injury, disability or death. This includes: scratching, pushing, shoving, grabbing, biting, choking, shaking, slapping, punching, hitting, burning, use of a weapon, and use of restraint or one's body against another. This kind of violence does not just end at physical harm but can result to psychological harm. For example, if a child is frequently a victim of physical harm, he or she can suffer mental problems and be traumatized as a consequence of victimization.

Sexual violence involves a sexual act being committed or attempted against a victim who had not freely given consent or who is unable to consent or refuse. This includes forced, alcohol /drug facilitated or unwanted penetration, sexual touching or non-contact acts of a sexual nature. A perpetrator forcing or coercing a victim to engage in sexual acts with a 3rd party also qualifies as sexual violence. This type of violence also has physical and psychological effects too.

Psychological violence includes verbal and non-verbal communication used with the intent to harm another person mentally or emotionally or to exert control over another person. This includes expressive aggression e.g. humiliating or degrading, coercive control e.g. limiting access to things or people and excessive monitoring of a person's whereabouts or communications, threats of physical or sexual violence, control or reproductive or sexual health and exploitation of a person's vulnerability.

Neglect or deprivation is a type of abuse which occurs when a person has the responsibility to provide care for an individual who is unable to care for him or herself but fails to do so, therefore depriving them of adequate care. This may also include the failure to provide sufficient supervision, nourishment or medical care or the failure to fulfil other needs for which the victim cannot provide for them. Neglect can lead to many long term side effects such as physical injuries, low self-esteem, attention disorders, violent behaviors, physical and psychological illness and even death.



Conclusively, violence is a prima facie wrong. It must be curtailed and more people should be aware of what amounts to violence, its risks and its effects. Every person has the right to be free from any form of violence to enable them function properly in the society.



RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination refers to the treatment of a person or person(s) unfairly due some existing biases which can be religious, social, mental, financial or physical. If you have been treated differently from others because of some of these biases, you may have been discriminated against.

Discrimination is likely to occur in two different ways:

- * Direct Discrimination
- * Indirect Discrimination.

Direct discrimination refers to a situation where a person is treated less favorably than others. For example, where a person has experience and qualifications necessary for a job but their application is turned down because of gender, age, religion, culture or marital status.

Indirect discrimination refers to a situation where there is a rule or policy in the workplace that puts you at a disadvantage as compared to others.

The general notion is that people are usually discriminated against based on the following: Age, Gender, Race, Disability, Religion, Pregnancy and maternity, Sexual orientation, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnerships.

The right to freedom from discrimination is an internationally recognized human right and is recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enshrined in international human rights law through its inclusion in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.



The right to freedom from discrimination is particularly relevant for groups that have been historically discriminated against and "vulnerable" groups. In this respect, the right to freedom from discrimination has been elaborated upon in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Section 42 of the Nigerian constitution, explicitly spells out that a citizen of Nigeria should not be discriminated against on grounds of belonging to a particular ethnic group, place of origin, sex (gender), religion or political opinion.

Conclusively, we must consciously examine ourselves and be sure that we are not discriminating against persons because they belong to a certain category or treat them less favorably. We must do all we can embrace all persons and live in harmony with each other.

THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

The right to health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.

The right to health means that every person should have access to health services they need, when and where they need them without suffering financial hardship. A person should not get sick and die as a result of their inability to access health services they need.

Good health is also determined by other basic human rights including access to safe drinking water and sanitation, sexual and reproductive health, nutritious foods, adequate housing, education and safe working conditions.

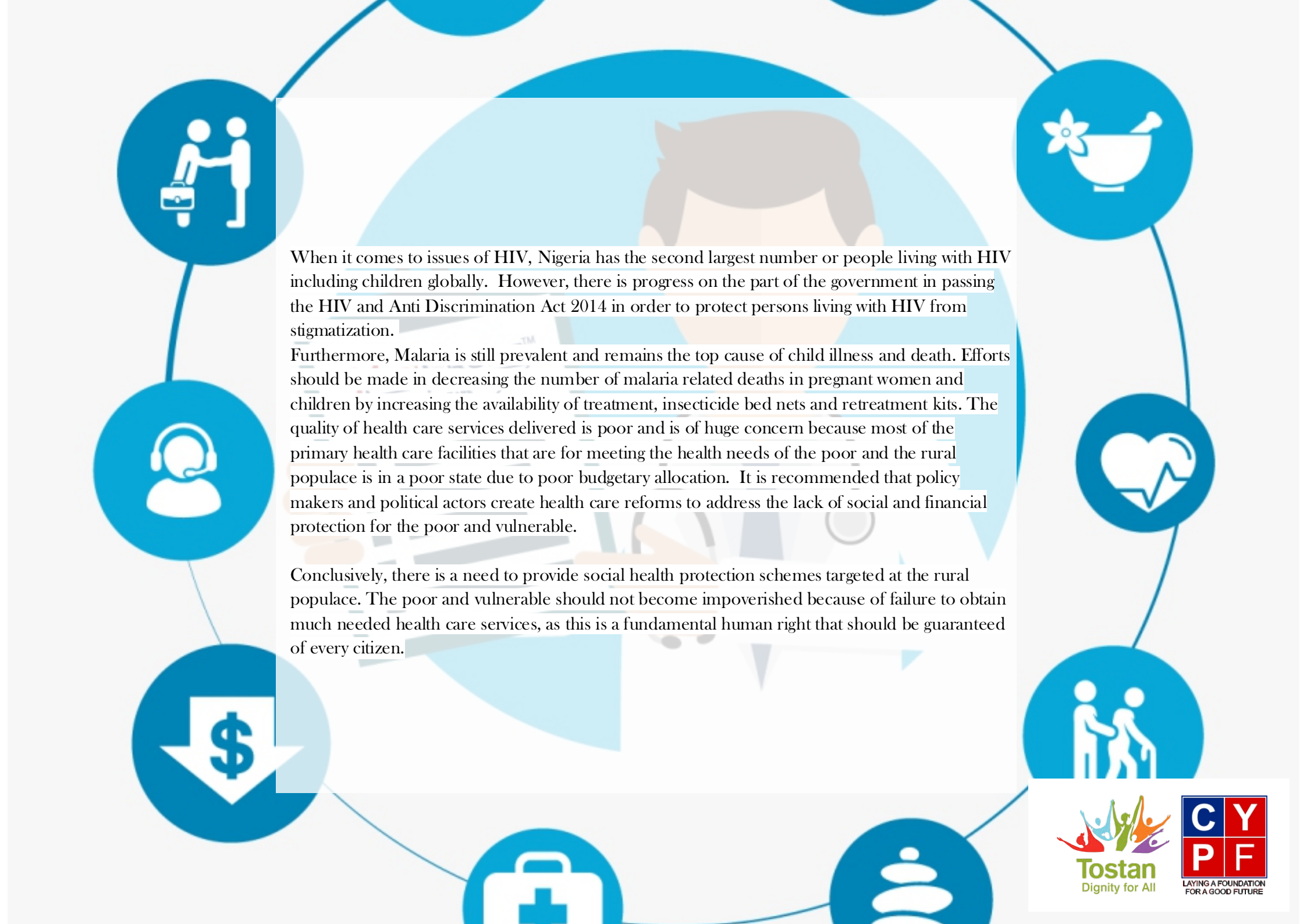
Furthermore, everyone has a right to privacy and to be treated with respect and dignity, nobody should be subject to medical experimentation, forced medical examination or given treatment without informed consent.

When people are marginalized or face stigma or discrimination, their physical and mental health suffers. Discrimination in health care is unacceptable and is a major barrier to development.

SDG Goal 3 that seeks to ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages to reduce the global maternal mortality ratio. It also seeks to end preventable deaths of newborn's and children, to end the epidemics of aids, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases. It also aims to strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse. It also seeks to reduce the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents to ensure universal health coverage and to reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and pollution.

Currently, the health indicators in Nigeria are some of the worst in Africa. Nigeria has one of the fastest growing populations in the world and in other to address its high mortality rates. There should be increased access to quality family planning and reproductive health services, immunizations, polio eradication, malaria prevention and maternal health services. The budget expenditure for health needs to be increased.





When it comes to issues of HIV, Nigeria has the second largest number of people living with HIV including children globally. However, there is progress on the part of the government in passing the HIV and Anti Discrimination Act 2014 in order to protect persons living with HIV from stigmatization.

Furthermore, Malaria is still prevalent and remains the top cause of child illness and death. Efforts should be made in decreasing the number of malaria related deaths in pregnant women and children by increasing the availability of treatment, insecticide bed nets and retreatment kits. The quality of health care services delivered is poor and is of huge concern because most of the primary health care facilities that are for meeting the health needs of the poor and the rural populace is in a poor state due to poor budgetary allocation. It is recommended that policy makers and political actors create health care reforms to address the lack of social and financial protection for the poor and vulnerable.

Conclusively, there is a need to provide social health protection schemes targeted at the rural populace. The poor and vulnerable should not become impoverished because of failure to obtain much needed health care services, as this is a fundamental human right that should be guaranteed of every citizen.



HUMAN RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Education is not a privilege. It is a human right.


What are human rights? Human rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of nationality, sex, ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. They cannot be given or taken away. These rights are the foundation for freedom, justice and peace in the world.

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights, adopted in 1948, proclaims in Article 26: 'everyone has the right to education'. Since then, the right to education has been widely recognized and developed by a number of international normative instruments elaborated by the United Nations.

Why is the right to education fundamental? Both individuals and society benefit from the right to education. It is fundamental for human, social, and economic development and a key element to achieving lasting peace and sustainable development. It is a powerful tool in developing the full potential of everyone and ensuring human dignity, and in promoting individual and collective wellbeing.

What can you do to help realize the right to education?

- Raise awareness on the right to education. If individuals know their rights they are empowered to claim them.
- Monitor the implementation of the right to education and report regularly on deprivations and violations.
- Advocate and campaign for the full implementation of the right to education, holding the state accountable.
- Seek remedies when there are violations of the right to education.



According to UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Katarina Tomaševski, adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its General Comment 13 on the right to education (1999, para.6), to be a meaningful right, education in all its forms and at all levels shall exhibit these interrelated and essential features:

Available- Education is free and there is adequate infrastructure and trained teachers able to support the delivery of education.

Accessible- The education system is non-discriminatory and accessible to all, and positive steps are taken to include the most marginalized.

Acceptable- The content of education is relevant, non-discriminatory and culturally appropriate, and of quality; schools are safe and teachers are professional.

Adaptable- Education evolves with the changing needs of society and challenges inequalities, such as gender discrimination; education adapts to suit locally specific needs and contexts.

HUMAN RIGHT TO PORTABLE WATER, FOOD, DECENT HOUSING AND CLOTHING

Introduction

These are the basic and necessary needs of Man in the society, they are to be made available for all and sundry by the government, no Man should struggle for any before having them. I will say they are the first problem in the life of everyone, but to be solved by the government.

Lack of access to portable water, food, decent housing and clothing is now a big problem to many families in our country today and has contributed to reasons why we are witnessing great increase in Child labour, trafficked cases involving children and young Girls and exploitation of Children and young Girls.

Water: Water is life. Adequate supply of water is central to life and civilization. Of the five basic human needs water is a common factor to the other four. International human rights law demand specific obligations require states to ensure everyone has access to a sufficient amount of safe drinking water for personal and domestic uses, personal sanitation, washing of clothes, food preparation, and personal and household hygiene. Access to water therefore is considered a human right and not a privilege. No government should deny her people access to portable water, a government that fails to do so is denying her people right to life and not only the access to water. The human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity. It is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights.

Food: The human right to food, and its variations, is a human right protecting the right for people to feed themselves in dignity, implying that sufficient food is available, that people have the means to access it, and that it adequately meets the individual's dietary needs (Wikipedia). The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has the physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.





Decent Housing: The right to housing is recognized in a number of international human rights instruments. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the right to housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living. Article 11 (1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights also guarantees the right to housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living. Nigeria government also recognizes the human right to a decent housing, but in Nigeria today we still have a lot of Nigerians that do not have a shelter, many have been forced away from their homes as a result of insurgents, poverty, disaster and others that has render many homeless.

Clothing: The right to clothing is similarly recognized under Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right to clothing forms an aspect of the right to an adequate standard of living, and as such, is regarded as something that needs to be ensured to prevent people from living below the poverty line. Indeed, being ill clothed is a symbol of acute poverty.

Conclusively, the realization of the right to portable water, food, decent housing and clothing is not merely a promise to be met through charity. It is a human right of every woman, man and child that is to be fulfilled through appropriate actions by government and non-state actors.

HUMAN RIGHT TO A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

What is the Right to a Clean Environment? The right to a clean environment is fundamental. It is both dependent upon and a precondition to a number of other human rights, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. For example, the preservation, conservation, and restoration of the environment are necessary for the enjoyment of the rights to health, to food, and to a decent, dignified life. The right to a clean environment is not a purely individual right. Rather, it has a collective facet, belonging equally to such groups as future generations and indigenous peoples whose cultures depend on the environment for their existence and perpetuation.

Does Nigeria Law Recognize Human Right To A Clean Environment? The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 does not expressly provide for the right to a clean environment, but indicates a duty under section 20 on government to 'protect and improve the environment and safeguard the water, air and land, forest and wild life of Nigeria.' The constitution does not bestow any direct right on the citizens to a 'clean environment'.

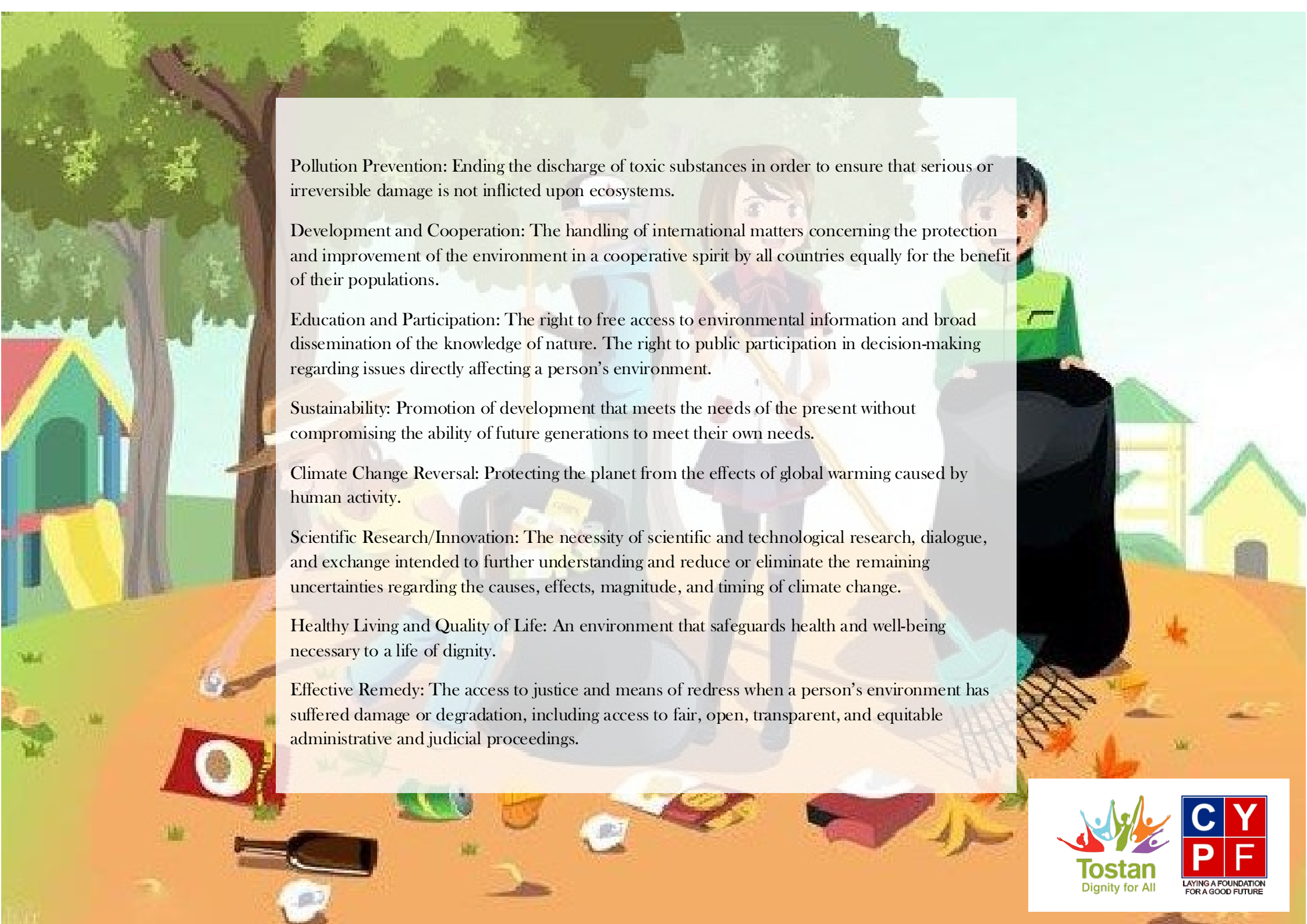
Another provision which the courts in Nigeria could rely on to protect the right to a clean environment is Article 24 of the African Charter. The Article provides that "All peoples shall have the right to a general satisfactory environment favourable to their development".

The Right To A Clean Environment Includes:

Clean Air: Protection of humans and their environment against air pollution.

Clean Water: The availability of quality drinking water, sufficient to meet human need for improved health and sustainable development.

Wildlife and Habitat: The safeguarding and wise management of wildlife and its habitat in order to maintain population levels necessary for the survival of all life forms.



Pollution Prevention: Ending the discharge of toxic substances in order to ensure that serious or irreversible damage is not inflicted upon ecosystems.

Development and Cooperation: The handling of international matters concerning the protection and improvement of the environment in a cooperative spirit by all countries equally for the benefit of their populations.

Education and Participation: The right to free access to environmental information and broad dissemination of the knowledge of nature. The right to public participation in decision-making regarding issues directly affecting a person's environment.


Sustainability: Promotion of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Climate Change Reversal: Protecting the planet from the effects of global warming caused by human activity.

Scientific Research/Innovation: The necessity of scientific and technological research, dialogue, and exchange intended to further understanding and reduce or eliminate the remaining uncertainties regarding the causes, effects, magnitude, and timing of climate change.

Healthy Living and Quality of Life: An environment that safeguards health and well-being necessary to a life of dignity.

Effective Remedy: The access to justice and means of redress when a person's environment has suffered damage or degradation, including access to fair, open, transparent, and equitable administrative and judicial proceedings.


The background is a colorful illustration of a park scene. In the foreground, there is a large pile of trash on the ground, including a broken glass bottle, a red box, a white cup, and various pieces of litter. In the middle ground, three children are visible: a boy in a green shirt and a girl in a purple shirt are standing, while another child is partially visible behind them. They appear to be looking at the trash. In the background, there are green trees, a yellow house with a green roof, and a blue sky. The overall scene suggests a polluted environment where children are playing.

Right To A Clean Environment Could Be Linked To:

Human Right to health: When the environment is harmed, our basic human right to health is compromised. Cancer, heart disease, asthma, birth defects, behavioral disorders, and infertility are all either caused or exacerbated by environmental hazards. The negative health impacts of environmental pollution and degradation fall most heavily on poor and minority communities.

Human Right to Life: Ecological abuse from oil industry operations in the Niger Delta in some respects is more serious than physical abuse such as violence, torture or inhuman and degrading treatment. Ecological abuse takes a more sinister outlook when carried out directly, sustained or tacitly condoned by the State, which has the obligation to protect its citizens against such abuses. Therefore, human rights are intended not only to protect life, but also people's means of livelihood as any threat to the environment on which they depend for their livelihood impinges directly on their right to life. Pollution of land and rivers for a community whose primary occupation is farming and fishing, or of fresh water courses, will inevitably threaten their means of livelihood (and therefore, life) as there would be no food to eat or water to drink, just as their health and life will be imperiled, and property rights violated.

Human Right to own Property: Breach of the right to property may also be interpreted as a breach of the right to a clean environment where land is damaged by oil pollution or affects adversely the enjoyment of the right to property. Oil pollution which affects property or makes the enjoyment of the property rights of the people of the Niger Delta is a clear violation of their right to property, which is guaranteed by the constitution.




Right to Privacy of Citizens and their homes: An extension of the right to property is the right to respect the privacy of citizens and their home: that is to say, the peaceful enjoyment of one's privacy, family life and home. This right is essentially to guard against arbitrary interference with private and family home by public authorities. Section 37 of the constitution provides that "the privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications is hereby guaranteed and protected," and secures to Nigerians a sphere encompassing life, physical well-being, including their homes and workplace. The Niger Delta area of Nigeria is severely exposed to all kinds of noise, air, water and pollution from oil industry and industrial area activities and others which may interfere with the enjoyment of their lives and homes. Noise from machinery and equipment is common place; so is nuisance from oil spills and waste, which may give rise to health problems by exposure to them.

Challenges to a Clean Environment in Nigeria

Attention to the issue of open defecation has often focused on India, which is home to by far the largest population of people who practice it. In October 2014, the country embarked on an [ambitious five-year mission](#) to eliminate open defecation nationwide, building millions of toilets and aiming to change the habits of hundreds of millions of its citizens. But as India approaches its target deadline for eliminating the practice, attention is turning to [the country next in line](#) — Nigeria.

[One in four](#) Nigerians — about [47 million](#) people — practice open defecation, according to the [World Health Organization](#) and [UNICEF's](#) joint monitoring report, particularly in the north of the country where there is less access to good toilets. [Fewer than half of households](#) in Nigeria have their own toilet. The practice brings with it significant health risks, linked to deaths from diarrhea, cholera, and typhoid. It is also a risk factor for [violence against women and girls](#) who, for example, may need to leave home in the dark to find somewhere to defecate.

The background is a colorful illustration of a park scene. In the foreground, there is a pile of trash including a brown bottle, a red box, and some food waste. A child in a blue shirt is crouching down, possibly picking up the trash. In the middle ground, a girl in a purple shirt and a boy in a green shirt are standing and smiling. In the background, there are green trees, a yellow house, and a blue sky. A large black trash bag is being held by a child on the right side of the image.

In 2011, Nigeria commissioned a report from the United Nations on the impact of oil extraction in the delta area of 'Ogoniland'. The report found severe soil ground and tap water contamination, destruction of mangroves, and "that institutional control measures in place both in the oil industry and the Government were not implemented adequately. The UN concluded it would take over 30 years to reverse the damage. Based on those recommendations, in August 2017 Nigeria launched a \$1 billion clean up and restoration program. In January 2019 engineers first arrived to begin the cleanup.

In conclusion, according to statistic, 87,000 young children in Nigeria die each year from illnesses linked to open defecation, poor sanitation and hygiene. To enjoy a clean environment in our society we should all take it as individual responsibility and not only government work. A dirty environment is hazardous to the life of people in the society.

THE HUMAN RIGHT TO WORK AND NOT BE EXPLOITED

The Human Right to work is the human right of all women, men, youth and children to dignified, creative and productive labour, free from discrimination and exploitation, enabling all persons to live in peace, security, justice and dignity. All workers have human rights to basic labour protections. Engagement in any kind of production should be fruitful and rewarding.

Labour rights or workers' rights are a group of legal and human rights relating to labour relations between workers and employers, codified in national and international labour and employment law. In general, these rights influence working conditions in relations of employment. One of the most central is the right to freedom of association, otherwise known as the right to organize.

(Wikipedia)

Labour Rights

- Freedom of association
- Collective bargaining
- Unforced labour
- Equal pay
- Non-discrimination
- Minimum wage
- Annual leave
- Occupational safety and health
- Employment protection or job security

Work based rights are expected to encompass all issues concerned with the protection and respect of human life in the workplace and the right to work itself. Some components of workers' rights include the rights to job safety, good terms and conditions of work, participation /consultation especially on matters that affect them directly, Freedom of association, non-discrimination in employment, collective bargaining etc. With labor rights, come labour laws which are primarily meant to regulate, control and guide the activities of labour in the country. In doing these, they are expected to promote public interest, strengthen the rights of workplace parties, safeguard people at work from all forms of dangers, regulate tendencies that may be injurious to public good and promote the creation and distribution of wealth. In Nigeria, most work-based rights are guaranteed by the Labor Act Cap 198 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990 now Labor Act Cap L1 Laws of The Federation of Nigeria 2004

chapter IV, section 34 of Nigerian Constitution recognized the Human Right to work and not be exploited where it stated that every individual is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person, and accordingly -

- a) no person shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment
- b) no person shall be held in slavery or servitude; and
- c) no person shall be required to perform forced or compulsory labour

International laws that guarantees Human Right to work and not be exploited

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Articles 4, 20, 23, 24, and 25
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Articles 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Articles 11, 13, 14
- ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), Articles 2 and 3
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 8, 21, and 22
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 5
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 15, 27, 32, and 34
- ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), Article 2
- ILO Employment Policy Convention (No. 122), Article 1

Conclusion

Work based rights are intended to ensure that all categories of employees regardless of social, sexual, age, racial, economic political, religious, cultural and ethnic status are treated equally, they are not discriminated against, have equal opportunities and access to these opportunities. In essence, nobody is excluded from optimizing or accessing any of these rights either in the work environment or in the outer society. This aside, they guarantee that no worker or individual is disqualified from enjoying social services, maltreated, denied justice, prevented from health care facilities or barred from a variety of activities on any basis of differences.



HUMAN RIGHT TO A NAME, FAMILY AND NATIONALITY

Introduction

Right to a name, family and nationality is the right to identity. From birth, each individual has the right to have an identity. The identity of an individual is the assertion of his or her existence in a society. It is also a matter of recognition of their individuality and what differentiates them from their peers. Having an identity is a fundamental human right, which allows each individual the ability to enjoy all of their rights. Identity encompasses the family name, surname, date of birth, gender and nationality of the individual.

The right to a Name and Surname

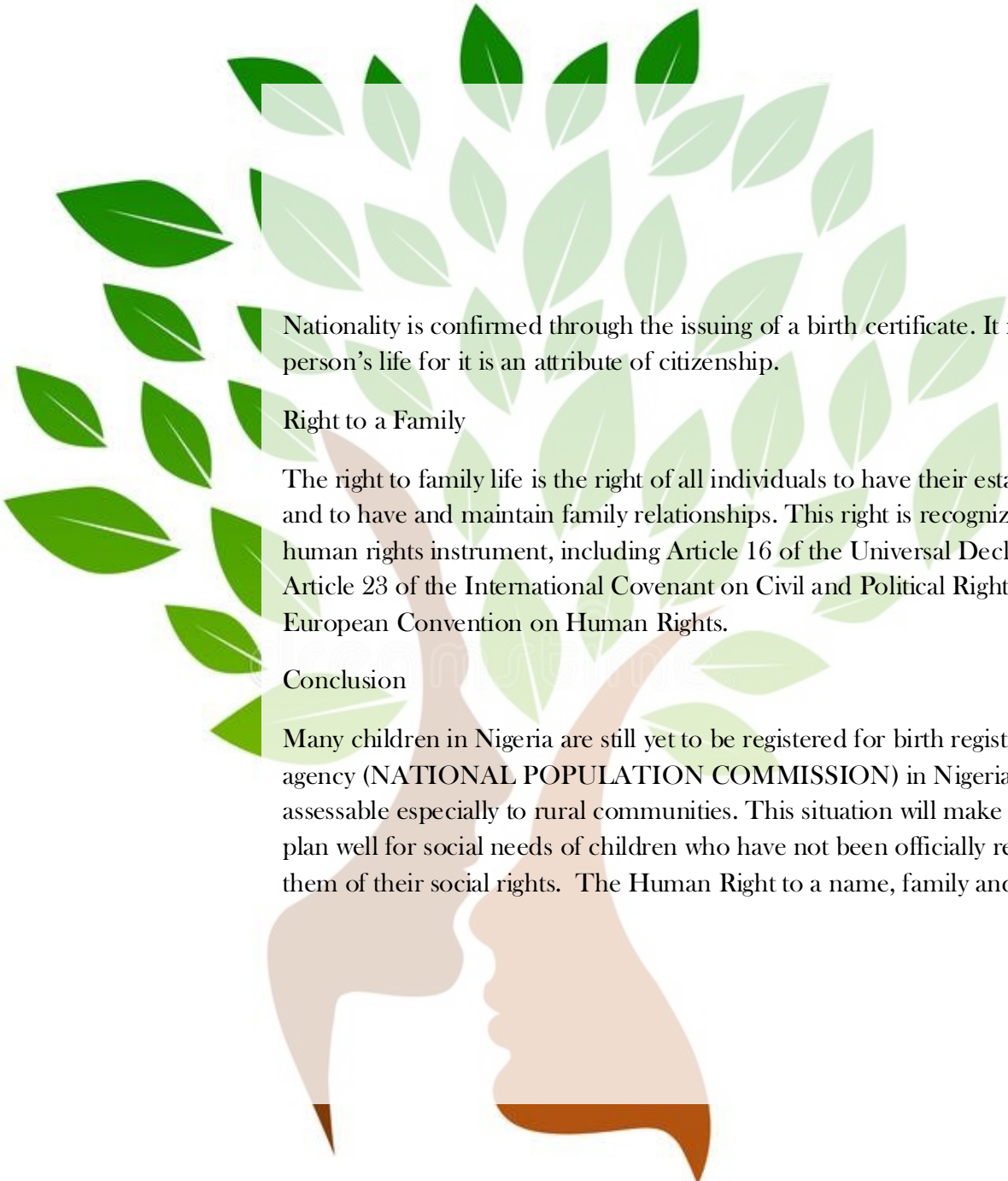
From birth, each individual has the right to have a name and a surname to differentiate him or her from others. Parents have the duty to declare the name, the surname and date of birth of a newborn baby to authorities in charge (**NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION**). The official recording of a child's birth makes the government to officially recognize the existence of the child, make provision for his or her social needs as the child develops. It is also making the child to establish filiations.

Right to a Nationality

From birth, the child also has the right to a nationality. Nationality can be obtained in two different ways:

By blood: the child will have the same nationality as his parents

By birth: the child will have the nationality of the territory on which he was born, even if his parents have a different nationality.



Nationality is confirmed through the issuing of a birth certificate. It is an important aspect of a person's life for it is an attribute of citizenship.

Right to a Family

The right to family life is the right of all individuals to have their established family life respected and to have and maintain family relationships. This right is recognized in a variety of international human rights instrument, including Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Conclusion

Many children in Nigeria are still yet to be registered for birth registration through Government agency (NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION) in Nigeria as they are not easily assessable especially to rural communities. This situation will make it difficult for Government to plan well for social needs of children who have not been officially registered and thereby denying them of their social rights. The Human Right to a name, family and Nationality is very important.

THE HUMAN RIGHT TO SPEAK AND VOICE ONE'S OPINION

This right provides that every person has the right to express one's thoughts or feelings in a frank and public manner without censorship or restraint or fear of prosecution through any form of communication and media but without deliberately causing [harm](#) to others' [character](#) and/or [reputation](#) by [false](#) or misleading statements.


The Right to Speak and Voice One's Opinion and the Nigerian Law

In furtherance of this, section 39 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states that every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.

The law however places restriction on this right when it provides that this right shall not affect any law

- created for the purpose of preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of courts or regulating telephony, wireless broadcasting, television or the exhibition of cinematograph films; or
- Imposing restrictions upon persons holding office under the Government of the Federation or of a State, members of the armed forces of the Federation or members of the Nigeria Police Force or other Government security services or agencies established by law.





Right to Speak and Voice Ones Opinion and its Applicability to Women and Girls

In a society that is highly patriarchal, it sometimes becomes difficult in some communities for women to freely speak, voice their opinion or contribute to decision making processes. They are traditionally given roles of home keepers, wives and child bearers. Even in situations where violence has been committed against them, they may have difficulty expressing themselves due to fear of stigmatization or blame from the society.

Thus, it becomes important that we create an environment where women and girls are allowed to freely speak and express themselves on matters that concern them without fear of being put on trial by the society or of breaking social norms

THE HUMAN RIGHT TO VOTE AND BE ELECTED

To vote is a formal indication of a choice between two or more candidates or courses of action, expressed, typically through a ballot. The most critical way a people can influence decision making in the political sector is through voting. The right to vote is worldly recognized as part of the fundamental human right but it is not enforced on the people. The enfranchised group has every reason to vote but may not be able to exercise this right due to illiteracy, intimidation or unfair election processes. For this reason, governments are encouraged to make adequate preparations to fight these limits by presenting electoral or voter's lectures, honest campaigns to urban areas, assurance of free and fair elections, election securities and many more that will assure the safety of the citizens.

However there are categories of persons who cannot exercise this right in Nigeria they are those without a voter's card, the underage, non-citizens, Ad-hoc staffs.

The universal declaration of Human Rights also provides for this right in Article 21 where it states that;

- Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his/her country directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
- The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government, this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedures.

The right to be elected is also linked to many other human rights like right to be free from all forms of discrimination (gender, ethnicity, religion), right to peace and security (threats from other components), right to be free from all forms of violence (road attacks), right to speak and voice one's opinion and right to equality before the law.

It should be noted that the right to vote and be elected is the central part of a democratic government; here, the will of the people matters.




THE HUMAN RIGHT TO EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW AND TO A FAIR TRIAL

The Right to Equality before the law guarantees that everyone brought before a court of law shall be treated equally regardless of race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, disability without privileges, discrimination or bias or favors and that they are all subject to the same laws of justice. Thus everyone must be treated equally.

On the other hand, the right to a fair trial is available to an accused person and contained in section 36(1) & 36(4) of the Nigerian constitution. While Section 36(1) provides that accused person shall be entitled to fair hearing within a reasonable time by a court or other tribunal .Section 36(4) provides that whenever any person is charged with a criminal offence, he shall, be entitled to a fair hearing in public within a reasonable time by a court or tribunal. However, a court or such a tribunal may exclude the public in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, and public morality. The welfare of persons who have not attained the age of eighteen years, the protection of the private lives of the parties or to such extent as it may consider necessary by reason of special circumstances. Here, publicity would be contrary to the interests of justice or when the Minister of the Government of the Federation or a commissioner of the government of a State satisfies the court or tribunal that it would not be in the public interest for any matter to be publicly disclosed.

This right can further be classified into two

- Audi alterem partem meaning the other party shall or must be heard
- Nemo iudex in causa sua meaning a person shall not be a judge in his own case



The first pillar which states that the accused must be heard presupposes that each party to a conflict must be given an opportunity to be heard because judgement can't be given based on one's party's side but on both. It also means that ample opportunities be given to both parties to state their case or defend themselves. The second pillar revolves around absence of likelihood of bias. In this like, a reasonable man after witnessing a trial proceeding of an accused should go home with the impression that justice has been done. Hence a judge is not expected to be interested in the subject matter, the persons or the outcome of the case.

Application to Women and Girls

Women and girls often still face barriers that limit their access to justice like rape myths, gender stereotypes and social norms that are sometimes internalized by judges and lawyers. This may affect their decision making process which could lead to injustice or unfair trials. This invariably means that women and girls who have gone through violence especially rape/sexual assault are exposed to discrimination and inequality before the law, which often leads to lack of confidence in the judicial process.

This right is essential in any democratic system because courts are established to serve justice and impartiality is the key to dispensing such and a gateway towards other fundamental rights as equality is vital for enjoying any right. Fair trials on the other hand are the only way to prevent miscarriages of justice and are an essential part of a just society as without fair trials, victims can have no confidence that justice will be done. Thus, it becomes important that everyone has fair trials and are treated equally before the law. When this occurs, the justice system becomes a safe space where persons can easily turn to and seek justice.


RIGHT TO LAND AND HAVE ACCESS TO CREDIT AND BANK LOANS

The right to land guarantees everyone's ability to freely obtain, use, and possess land. This right is essential for individuals and communities around the world and is a vital source of livelihoods and identity. It may also be crucial for the realization of rights such as right to water, culture and housing. In short, the human rights aspects of land affect a range of issues including poverty reduction and development, peace building, humanitarian assistance, disaster prevention and recovery, urban and rural planning, to name but a few.

The Land Use Act provides that it shall be lawful for the Governor in respect of land, whether or not in urban areas to grant statutory rights of occupancy to any person for all purposes. It shall also be lawful for a Local Government in respect of land not in an urban area to grant customary rights of occupancy to any person or organisation for the use of land in the Local Government areas for agricultural residential and other purposes. However, it shall not be lawful for the Governor to grant a statutory right of occupancy or consent to the assignment or subletting of a statutory right of occupancy to a person under the age of twenty-one years.

However in many Nigerian cultures and traditions there exist barriers to ownership of land, one of which is when it comes to inheritance. Women and female children are being discriminated against as they are usually excluded from inheriting land from their father/ husband as it usually goes to the male members of the family, though they are allowed to benefit from it. This negatively affects women's livelihood, food security, economic independence and physical security.

The right to access credit and bank loans on the other hand grants everyone the access to loan facilities without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status and age. Financial institutions may seek this information, but should not use it when deciding whether to give you credit or when setting the terms of your credit. However there exist various barriers to enjoying this right like Physical access to banks, affordability, and eligibility among others.

An illustration of a woman with brown hair, wearing a grey blazer, sitting at a desk and writing on a document with a pen. On the desk are a calculator, a smartphone, a stack of papers, and a red mug. The background is a light blue wall with various financial and household icons connected by dashed lines: a thought bubble with a dollar sign, a stack of books, a house, a green credit card, a piggy bank, and a cloud with dollar signs. The text is overlaid on the woman's torso.

In many Nigerian communities, women still do not have access to bank accounts or even if they do, they do so under the name of their spouses. This limits their access to economic independence and opportunities to gain bank facilities like credit and bank loans. Furthermore even when they do have access to such loans, financial institutions may as a requirement ask for collateral such as land or houses and because in many cultures, it is men who traditionally own the land or the house, this immediately excludes women.

Conclusively, when women are empowered with skills to collectively save money and develop their business, in turn facilitating their access to affordable loans, and reducing gender based barriers to have access to land and credit and bank loans, this may remove such hindrances to individuals accessing this right.

HUMAN RIGHT TO ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

The branch of knowledge that deals with the creation and use of technical means and their interrelation with life, society, and the environment, drawing upon such subjects as industrial arts, engineering, applied science, and pure science is what technology is.

Appropriate technology is a movement of technological choice and application that is small-scale, affordable by locals, decentralized, labour-intensive, energy-efficient, environmentally sound, and locally autonomous. The economist Ernst Friedrich “Fritz” Schumacher in his work *Small Is Beautiful* originally articulated it as intermediate technology. Both Schumacher and many modern-day proponents of appropriate technology also emphasize the technology as people-centered

Appropriate technology has been used to address issues in a wide range of fields. Well-known examples of appropriate technology applications include bike- and hand-powered water pumps, the universal nut Sheller, self-contained solar lamps and streetlights to mention a few.

Appropriate technology is most commonly discussed in its relationship to economic development and as an alternative to technology transfer of more capital-intensive technology from industrialized nations to developing countries. However, appropriate technology movements can be found in both developing and developed countries. In developed countries, the appropriate technology movement grew out of the energy crisis of the 1970s and focuses mainly on environmental and sustainability issues. Today the idea is multifaceted; in some contexts, appropriate technology can be described as the simplest level of technology that can achieve the intended purpose, whereas in others, it can refer to engineering that takes adequate consideration of social and environmental ramifications. The facets are connected through robustness and sustainable living.

Going by these, we see the need to make appropriate technology available to all, because this would help improve the livelihood of all especially women and children living in the rural communities and equally cause an increase in their productivity, financial status and improved health and living conditions

I would be sharing some experiences of the effect of the availability of appropriate technology and the effect it has had in some communities in Africa.

POT-IN-POT REFRIGERATOR

In 2001, Nigerian Mohammed Bah Abba won the 2001 Rolex Awards for Enterprise with his invention of a simple cooling system to preserve food in rural areas with no electricity. His solution was a Pot-in-Pot refrigerator, which relies on the concept of evaporative cooling. The system works by putting a smaller clay pot inside a larger one, separating the two by constantly moist sand. Evaporation causes a cooling effect in the inner pot. Eggplants are reported to stay fresh for 27 days, nine times their usual expiration date. Tomatoes and peppers can last for up to 21 days (I can't even get that to happen in my own refrigerator!)

Life straw

In 2009, an estimated 5,000 deaths from unsafe drinking water occurred every day. This is down from 6,000 in 2007, and VestergaardFrandsen's Lifestraw played its' part in the decline. The Life straw is a personal, low-cost water purification tool, with a service lifetime of 700 litres, or about one year of water consumption for a single person. Unlike other water purification products, Life straw is intuitive to use, can be worn around the neck, and requires no training, special tools or electricity to operate. The sucking action of the straw pulls the water through a filter that traps 99.999% of waterborne bacteria (such as Salmonella, Shigella, Enterococcus and Staphylococcus) and 98.7% of waterborne viruses. The Life straw has won countless awards, including Time Magazine's "Best Invention of 2005", "Europe's Best Innovation" by Reader's Digest, and "Innovation of the Year" by Esquire.

Corn Sheller

Designing products for developing nations is a unique challenge because inventors are creating technologies for cultures of which they have little, or no, experience. Ignorance of daily life and values in developing countries can pose difficulty envisioning how people might use an invention, or whether said invention fills a need at all. Case in point: Compatible Technology International visited Guatemala and observed women hand-shelling corn. They saw how labour-intensive the manual shelling process was, and, being engineers with a problem in their sights, they quickly developed a corn Sheller out of a piece of wood with a hole in the middle. The women pushed the ear of corn through the hole, shaving the kernels from the cob MUCH more quickly. Therefore, the engineers constructed and donated several of their devices, convinced of their good deed. However, when they returned months later, they found the women still hand-shelling corn. The women told them, 'Thanks for your invention, it is much easier. But this is the time we use to talk about men, school, and kids, and your device makes our work too fast for that.'

I END WITH THIS STORY BECAUSE IT SHOWS THAT NO MATTER HOW GOOD YOU THINK YOUR INTERVENTION IS WITHOUT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IT WOULD GO TO WASTE.

Please note:

In creating access to appropriate technology in communities, we need to access the needs of the community carefully because what works for one community may not work for another.

HUMAN RIGHT TO THE MINIMUM FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING

As humans, our health and the health of those around us is a matter of daily concern. Regardless of our age, gender, socio-economic or ethnic background, we consider our health to be our most basic and essential asset.

Internationally, it was first articulated in the 1946 Constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO), whose preamble defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

The preamble further states, “The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.”

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights also mentioned health as part of the right to an adequate standard of living (art. 25). The right to health was again recognised as a human right in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The right to health is a fundamental part of our human rights and of our understanding of a life in dignity.

Human rights, health and development represent interdependent sets of values, aspirations and disciplines.



What is the Right to Adequate Health?

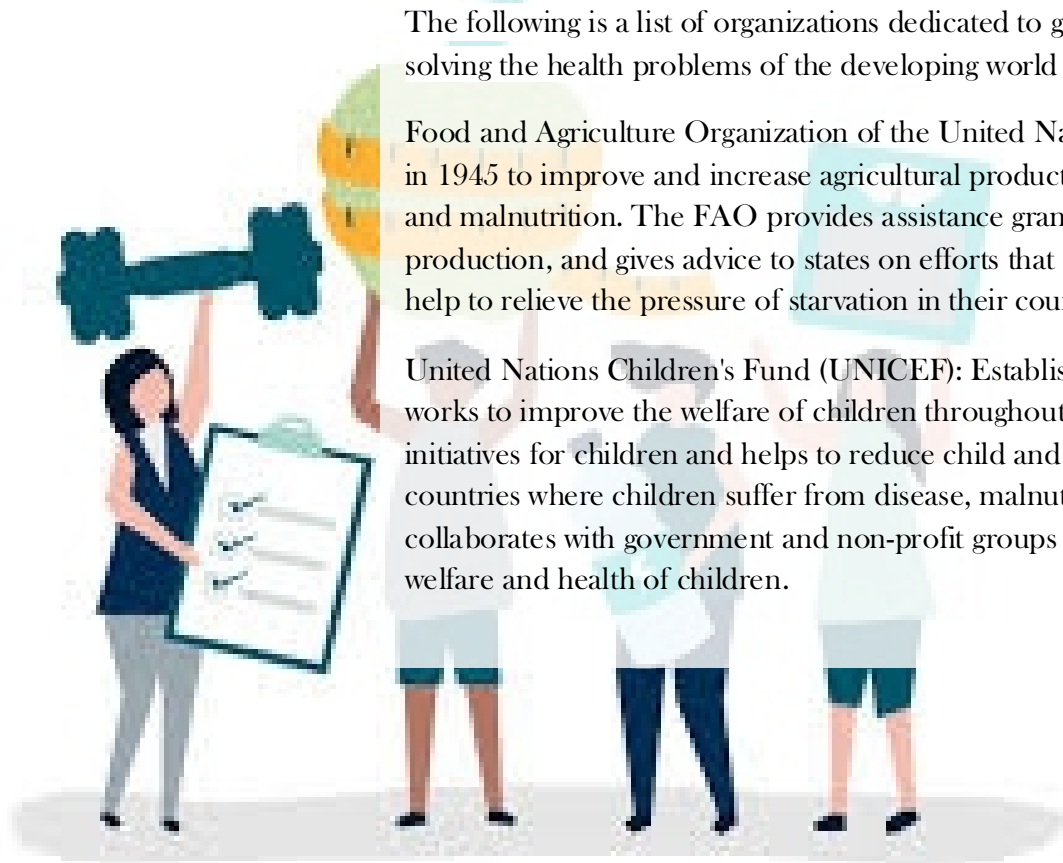
The idea that all people are entitled to have the physical needs of their bodies satisfied is at the heart of the human rights movement. This includes the right to survive and to live free of reasonably preventable suffering. The Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) articulates this right to adequate health in Article 25:

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care...”

The following is a list of organizations dedicated to giving aid to efforts aimed at determining and solving the health problems of the developing world and the poor in the developed world.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): The UN established The FAO in 1945 to improve and increase agricultural production and help alleviate the problems of famine and malnutrition. The FAO provides assistance grants to states to help them increase their food production, and gives advice to states on efforts that can improve the productivity of their land and help to relieve the pressure of starvation in their country.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): Established by mandate of the UN in 1946 UNICEF works to improve the welfare of children throughout the world. UNICEF promotes educational initiatives for children and helps to reduce child and infant mortality through direct intervention in countries where children suffer from disease, malnutrition and war. UNICEF funds and collaborates with government and non-profit groups to shape nations' policies in favor of the welfare and health of children.



World Health Organization (WHO): The WHO was established by UN mandate, in 1948, to ensure “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health.” The WHO defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” To this end, the WHO works to improve methods of health care and to create standards of health care for the international community.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation: The Gates Foundation, established by Bill and Melinda Gates in 2000, provides grants for a diverse array of public service projects, including global health initiatives such as the development of cheap and effective drugs. The foundation also provides grants to organizations, both public and private, for the improvement of health care system infrastructure, development of educational material regarding health, and development of novel and effective disease prevention methods.

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS FOR PROTECTION

International legal instruments take the form of a treaty (also called agreement, convention, and protocol) which may be binding on the contracting states. When negotiations are completed, the text of a treaty is established as authentic and definitive and is “signed” to that effect by the representatives of the states.



Documents ratified by the United Nations and applying to the international community:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1966)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966).
- Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition (1974): This declaration establishes the right of all people to nutrition and sustenance sufficient to ensure their well-being. _“Every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties”_
- The African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1979)
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)
- Etc.

Key aspects of the right to health

- The right to health is an inclusive right
- The right to health contains freedoms
- The right to health contains entitlements
- Health services, goods and facilities must be provided to all without any discrimination.
- All services, goods and facilities must be available, accessible, acceptable and of good quality.



HUMAN RIGHT TO MARRY THE PERSON OF ONE'S CHOICE

This right grants every human being the freedom to determine their marriage partners without fear, physical threats, coercion or manipulation. The infringement of this right may occur to individuals of any gender, age, socio-economic status, ethnic or religious background. Women and girls however are particularly at risk of this right been violated and when they have no say in their marriage, it becomes a form of violence in its own right, even where other forms of harm/ violence are not present. This is because when a woman feels she has no real choice when it comes to marriage, she suffers a loss of power and control over her own life.

Forced marriages are conducted without the valid consent of both parties usually with physical threats, emotional blackmail/coercion, deceit or because parties are incapable of understanding the nature and effect of a marriage ceremony, for reasons including age or mental capacity. Human Beings may have no say in their marriage partner due to religious and social cultural norms, myths about chastity, poverty, ensuring land remains within the family, assisting claims for citizenship, teenage pregnancy, rape, peer group or family pressure, family honor or long standing commitments among others.

When this is the case, there is increased vulnerability to abuse including coerced sexual initiation, rape that may occur throughout the marriage, domestic violence, and reproductive coercion resulting in early and/or multiple pregnancies, femicide, emotional or physiological abuse, depression among others.

It then becomes important that this right is preserved, protected and encouraged, thus all human beings should have a say in their marriage choices and this includes who they get married to and when they get married without manipulation, threat or the fear of harm.

MARRY ME!



THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

The right to culture addresses the fact that cultural activities should be enjoyed and practiced freely without discrimination but with human dignity. Every culture and language is entitled to respect. Some of these cultural rights include food, cosmetics, language, songs, dances, costumes.

Irrespective of the fact that this right is encouraged, it should not violate other rights like the right to life, right to be free from all sorts of violence and right to be free from all sorts of discrimination. Examples are cultures that believe in the killing of twins or burying of a living child with the dead mother, female genital mutilation, sexual violence between the married, child marriages, practices that degrade widows, etc. These practices or rites ideally should not be allowed to run in a nation.

The cultural right, ensures that the different cultural groups are not deprived their national entitlement and it should be recognized at least by local policies since modernization has taken the floor. “Local governments recognize that cultural rights are an integral part of human rights Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)”.

The language right otherwise known as the Linguistics right leaves an individual to make the choice of language he or she wants to communicate with whether in private or in public but for the reason of mutual understanding, a common language is advised or in the case of an official meeting.

One of the reasons why this right is important is to lengthen the life span of language. If not encouraged or in use as much as it should, it is possible that such culture or language will go into extinction.

Conclusion

Cultural and language differences should be acknowledged and tolerated because the differences make it unique; the uniqueness defines the pleasure it gives. Another reason is to strengthen the bond between people. Since culture has been defined to give pleasure either in form of food, music, dance or dressing, people are encouraged to step out of their normal lives to have a taste of what the other culture had to offer.



HUMAN RIGHT TO PRACTICE THE RELIGION OF ONE'S CHOICE

In the 1980s, serious outbreaks between Christians and Muslims occurred in Kafanchan in southern Kaduna State in a border area between the two religions, propagated by extreme leaders who were able to rally young, educated group of individuals who were feared that the nation would not be able to protect their religious group. The leaders were able to polarize their followers through speeches and public demonstrations.

The activities of some of these sects has in recent times led to the loss of lives and properties as they move about destroying government facilities which they see as legacies or replica of western cultures in their various communities.

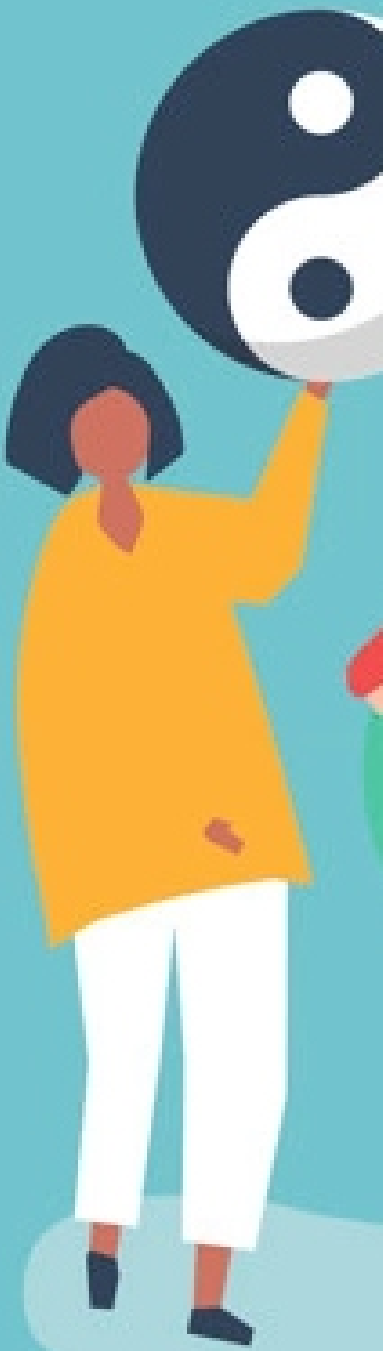
These religious campaigns have seen an increase in gun battles between the members of these sects and security forces with loss of lives witnessed on both sides.

In 1991, the German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke attempted a crusade in Kano, causing a religious riot leading to the deaths of about a dozen people.

Since the restoration of democracy in 1999, Christian governments have dominated the country at the federal level, while the Muslim-dominated Northern Nigerian states have implemented strict Sharia law. Religious conflict between Muslims and Christians has erupted several times since 2000 for various reasons, often causing riots with several thousands of victims on both sides. Since 2009, the Islamist movement Boko Haram has fought an armed rebellion against the Nigerian military, sacking villages and towns and taking thousands of lives in battles and massacres against Christians, students and others deemed enemies of Islam.

Freedom of religion is a principle that supports the freedom of an individual or community, in public or private, to manifest religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance. It also includes the freedom to change one's religion or beliefs.





To this end, 27 October is International Religious Freedom Day, in commemoration of the execution of the Boston martyrs, a group of Quakers executed by the Puritans on Boston Common for their religious beliefs under the legislature of the Massachusetts Bay Colony during 1659-1661.

In its 2011 annual report, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom designated fourteen nations as "countries of particular concern". The commission chairperson commented that these are nations whose conduct marks them as the world's worst religious freedom violators and human rights abusers. The fourteen nations designated were Burma, China, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. Other nations on the commission's watch list include Afghanistan, Belarus, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Laos, Russia, Somalia, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Venezuela.

I canvas that as individuals who are first human beings before religious diversity stepped in, we should act in line with the words of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein: "Our objective is to foster the development of peaceful societies, where diversity is not just tolerated but fully respected and celebrated,".

Child protection and religious diversity.

Just like the words of a famous Child Protection scholar, there are no difficult children, only children in difficulties. We must come to the realization also that no one chose to be born into a particular family/religion, especially children (who do not have a choice of religion). Hence, as a worthy child protector, the scope of your protection should never be determined by the religious standing or believe of that child you are to protect.

Everybody is entitled to his or her choice of religion. Children also have a right to religion plus a right to protection.



The image features a central white oval containing the text "THANK YOU" in a bold, black, serif font. The oval is set against a dark gray background. Radiating from the edges of the oval are eight triangular segments in four colors: yellow, lime green, blue, and dark blue. The segments are arranged in a star-like pattern, with two yellow triangles at the top and bottom, two lime green triangles at the left and right, and two blue triangles at the top-left and bottom-right, and two dark blue triangles at the top-right and bottom-left.

THANK YOU