



VOICE OF DISABILITY INITIATIVE

Strategic Plan

2023 - 2027

JANUARY 2023

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This publication is made possible through the support of National Democratic Institute (NDI), United States of America under the project, *Promoting Access to Reproductive Health Rights for Women with Disabilities in Nigeria* being implemented in Enugu State, Nigeria.

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Abuja, Nigeria
January 2023

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ISBN:

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EDEH CATHERINE C.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VDI

About Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI):
Why and How We Were Established
The Beginning: A Response to Marginalization and Silence

Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI) was born out of a deep and urgent need to challenge the persistent marginalization, discrimination, and systemic exclusion faced by persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls, in Nigeria. For far too long, their voices were unheard in policy spaces, their rights ignored in social and development agendas, and their lives misunderstood or overlooked by society at large.

Not being born deaf but life having thrust it on me, I found myself in a totally new, cold and hard world where stigma and discrimination is the order of the day, it was traumatic and profound. It wasn't the disability. It was the stigma, the neglect, nonchallant attitude and coldness from all

sides. On an innocent girl who became deaf at just 9 year old as a result of side effect of chloranphenicol injections. Till date it is still traumatic trying to recount most experience. But I survived, and still standing.

The experience fueled my determination to study law, challenge societal barriers and push for an inclusive society. Not for my sake alone, but for the sake of the women with disabilities, the smart and promising adolescent girls and children with disabilities out there. To fight against the systemic, institutional, attitudinal and structural barriers designed against them from all corners. Initially, it was daunting, but I embraced my identity, pursued my goals with passion, commitment, integrity and grit. And then, VDI was birthed.

People saw the dream, the focus, the burning passion and the zeal to push for a change and connected to this. This has been my greatest motivation and driving force - the support of those who believe in INCLUSION.

Because women and girls with disabilities bear the most brunt of the stigma and discrimination (discriminated on ground of gender and on ground of disability) VDI is very passionate and dedicated to ensuring children, women and girls with disabilities are enabled to be the best they can be and believes firmly that persons with disabilities have so much to offer in changing the world, sharing in Archimedes' very thought and message "give us a lever and a place to stand and we will move the earth; give us a fulcrum, and we shall move the world". I believe in the potential of every individual, regardless of their disabilities.

COMING TO LIFE

The founding members of VDI, comprising passionate women with disabilities and advocates, recognized that beyond physical impairments, the most disabling factor for many was the absence of opportunities, representation, and access. They saw the gap in disability-focused advocacy that genuinely centered the lived realities, voices, and leadership of persons with disabilities—especially those from rural and under-served communities.

Incorporated in **2015**, Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI) was founded with a clear mission: A Nigerian Society where the needs and rights of women, girls and children with disabilities are guaranteed without Discrimination

The organization was envisioned as a **platform led by my humble self Barr. Catherine Chinyere Edeh alongside other women with disabilities**, where they could define their own priorities, lead their own advocacy, and mobilize collective action to transform the systems and attitudes that perpetuate inequality.

How VDI Was Established

The establishment of VDI followed a consultative and community-driven process:

1.Grassroots Consultations: We conducted informal listening sessions with women with disabilities across all disability clusters. These consultations revealed common challenges: lack of access to education, healthcare, employment, and protection from violence.

2.Strategic Planning: Building on these insights, a strategic vision was developed to create an inclusive, rights-based organization focused on advocacy, capacity building, service delivery, and research.

3.Building a Diverse Team: The founding team brought together individuals with lived experience of disability and allies with technical expertise in gender, development, human rights, and organizational management.

4.Early Partnerships and Projects: VDI began modestly implementing community sensitization programs, organizing advocacy campaigns, and engaging stakeholders on disability rights. These early efforts laid the foundation for trust, visibility, and a growing network of partners.

Today: Leading with Purpose: Since establishment, VDI has grown into a respected voice in disability rights advocacy, known for its grassroots engagement, inclusive programming, and evidence-based approach. The organization works across thematic areas including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), access to justice, inclusive education, economic empowerment, and protection from gender-based violence.

At its core, Voice of Disability Initiative remains committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities are not only seen and heard, but also recognized as leaders, change-makers and key players with rights and privileges.

EDEH CATHERINE C.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VDI

PREFACE

The decision to develop **Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI) Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027** is in response to the yearning to reposition the organization's need to scale up and improve service delivery to our core public – persons with disabilities especially women, girls and children in Nigeria, partners and collaborators, donors and funders as well as the ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Spurred by the overriding need to document VDI organizational strategy that incorporates our vision and mission as well as the overarching objective and deliverables, VDI embarked on a process which largely involved distilling nuggets of information and data, resources on the disability and civic spaces, think pieces of conversations as well as meeting notes containing lessons learned, program design and refining field experiences. This process was fashioned in a manner that produced a roadmap that will enable the organization to arrive at the desired destination. The process involved hours of preparation and participation at VDI Strategic Plan Retreat held from December 11 – 15, 2022 at Sawalino Hotel, Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria with Team VDI including members of the Board of Trustees, management and staff, collaborators, the media and subject matter experts participating. Valuable inputs from the plethora of activities at the Retreat culminated into this publication. We believe that the process adopted in producing this Strategic Plan document also offered VDI Team the opportunity to evaluate available resources, external and internal, that could be accessed; identify emerging trends in the disability sector; and design possible programs and interventions for impactful results on the beneficiaries. It is noteworthy to mention that in the past seven years, VDI had implemented several projects and interventions in four thematic areas namely Gender – End Violence Against Women and Girls with Disability (EVAWG), Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights, Inclusive Education and Youth Empowerment. Our deep appreciation goes to everyone, individuals and corporate entities, who contributed towards the design, response to survey, participation at the retreat and final development of the **VDI Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027**

which is aimed at providing a roadmap for our work in the next five years. It is, therefore, with profound pleasure that we present the Five Years **VDI Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027** that will guide the organization's programs and activities in delivering services on behalf of our core constituency – Persons with disabilities (PWDs) especially women, girls and children with disabilities. We are hopeful that you will find this publication useful in learning about our work as well as the disability ecosystem in Nigeria.

Daniel Chike Uwaezuoke, Esq.
Vice Chairman, Board of Trustees,
Voice of Disability Initiative
Abuja, Nigeria
January 13, 2023



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI) wishes to express appreciation to everyone that contributed towards design, response to survey, participation at the retreat and final development of the **VDI Strategic Plan 2023-2027** aimed at providing a roadmap for our work for the next Five years.

Firstly, VDI owes gratitude to our funder, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) as this publication is made possible under the Promoting Access to Reproductive Health Rights for Women with Disabilities in Nigeria.

We also acknowledge the contributions of VDI partners, most especially participants at the VDI Strategic Plan Retreat held from December 11-15, 2022 at Sawalino Hotel, Keffi, Nasarawa State. The insightful contributions received during plenary sessions, group break sessions, and individual responses to questionnaires and surveys at various components of the process were helpful. These series of efforts and their invaluable inputs made this publication possible

Our gratitude goes to indefatigable support from our Board of Trustees (BoT) led by the Chairperson, Ms. Nkechi Bianze, ably

represented by Barr. Daniel Chike Uwaezuoke, (the Vice Chairman), Mazi Chijioke Josiah Nwafor, and Mrs. Obieze Nkem, under whose leadership and guidance, VDI continues to strengthen its internal processes, collate lessons learnt and grow into more responsive organization delivering impactful results for our core constituency, Persons with Disability especially Women, Girls and Children.

Of particular note, appreciation to members of disability community in Nigeria represented by the Joint National Association of Persons with Disability (JONAPWD), for partnership and support we shared over the years, as in reposition for better impact.

In the same vein, we thank our donors, Disability Rights Fund (DRF), Amplify Change United Kingdom, (AC), NDI, and Embassy of United States in Nigeria, European Union, United Nations (USAID), and UN Women for their support. And VDI team, wonderful partners, and beneficiary especially Women, Girls and Children with Disabilities in Nigeria.

Finally, we thank our consultants, Mr Solomon, Nweke and Mr Emmanuel Ozoemena for their dedication and painstaking effort in facilitating the drafting and collating output of the entire process culminating into this strategic plan.



1.1 OVERVIEW

Voice of Disability Initiative Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027, in a nutshell, contain indicative programs and interventions, operational procedure, stakeholders landscape, funding streams, resource mobilization to operationalizing VDI's vision and mission and overarching objective of delivering services to our constituency: women, girls and children with disabilities in Nigeria, whose rights are likely violated, due to weak institutional and structural challenges. It is important to note that weak social safety net in Nigeria, predisposes women, particularly, persons with disabilities including women, girls, and children to such dangers.

It is a common practice for forward looking organizations including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public and private entities, aiming to scale up impacts and scope of outreach, to design and adopt have-year Strategic Plan that supports it in navigating through the space in achieving its goals.

“ It is important to note that weak social safety net in Nigeria, predisposes women, particularly, persons with disabilities including women, girls, and children to such dangers.”

VDI Strategic Plan, is a compass which enables her to achieve the overarching objective to wit:

- Advancing rights of women, girls and children with disabilities in Nigeria, and mainstreaming provisions of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018.
- Advocating for the advancement of inclusive education in Nigeria
- Capacity building and empowerment of youth with disability

VDI Strategic Plan 2023-2027 covering a five-year period with focus on the following: organizational and operational guidelines for programs and interventions; operational procedures; governance structure and team on-boarding, training, and capacity building; advocacy opportunities; public awareness and knowledge management; partnership and stakeholders' management; etc.

The Strategic Plan will be a reference material for all VDI's activities and programs. To make the publication a '*living document*', yearly and/or periodic reviews will be conducted to align it with emerging trends in the disability sector, funding opportunities, unexpected political and social changes, and volatility in host country's political economy. Hence, several iterations of the Plan may be possible within five years, though the core information, data and ideas remain constant.



*To make the publication a '*living document*', yearly and/or periodic reviews will be conducted to align it with emerging trends in the disability sector, funding opportunities, unexpected political and social changes, and volatility in host country's political economy.”*

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 OUTLOOK ON DISABILITY SECTOR IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) are in the forefront of emergent robust civic engagement expressed via policy advocacy, civic actions, litigation, and active political participation aimed at expanding spaces for inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in public and private life at local and national levels.

The past two decades witnessed remarkable increase in OPDs led civic actions focused on inclusion of disability rights in policy framework and its operationalization in daily grind of life globally, including Nigeria and Africa.

This development was spurred by adoption of historic United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) by UN General Assembly of Heads of States and Government on 13 December 2006 at United Nations Headquarters in New York and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007. The convention came into force in 3 May 2007.

The aftermath was effort on domestication of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by each country, which the Nigeria's National Assembly ratified in May 2007 and its optional protocol in 2010. The corollary effect of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability set in motion framework for adopting disability issues as fundamental human rights.

Since then, the quest for an inclusive society has been on a positive trajectory as countries domesticate and/or domesticating the UN Conventions on the rights of PWDs within its legal jurisdiction to give veneer to the rights, ensure compliance as well as fast-track full inclusion of PWDs in all strata of public and private spaces.

“ The aftermath was effort on domestication of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by each country, which the Nigeria's National Assembly ratified in May 2007 and its optional protocol in 2010. ”

2.2 Crunching the Numbers on Disability

Conversely, available data on Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Nigeria presents both Challenges and Opportunities as Nigeria strives to create an inclusive environment that supports National Development Objectives.

While the World Health Organization (WHO), indicates that “an estimated 1.3 billion people or 16% of the global population experience a significant disability today.” Disability therefore has been identified as a global challenge given the number of persons with disabilities today.

Nigeria has a large number of persons with disabilities of estimated 29 million population based on 2018 data collated during the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey by National Population Commission, Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Health in collaboration with other partners.

The World "According to the World Health Organization, in 2018, noted that about 29 million of the 195 million people who comprise Nigeria's national population were living with a disability. Data from the 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey reveal that an estimated 7 percent of household members above the age of five (as well as 9 percent of those 60 or older) have some level of difficulty in at least one functional domain, seeing, hearing, communication, cognition, walking, or self-care; and 1 percent either have a lot of difficulty or cannot function at all in at least one domain.



VDI team during a visit to school for Children with Disability in Abuja

With 16% of Nigeria's population being persons with disability, invariably, disability is a development challenge that requires a concerted response; prioritization and mainstreaming of inclusion policy embedded in the political economy; across public and private sector landscape, institutions and organizations.

2.3 Pathways to an Inclusive Environment in Nigeria

Given this huge population of estimated 29 million persons with disabilities in Nigeria, the Federal Government took a bold initiative aimed at integrating PWDs into the daily grid of economy, political, social, and cultural endeavors, with enactment of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018.

Though, this took nearly two decades of civic engagements and advocacy by OPDs and civil society to achieve, the historic legislation is a beacon of hope for PWDs and every Nigerians that inclusive environment is possible.

Premium Times, a Nigerian media outlet, succinctly summarized it in a report, *Ten things to know about Nigeria's new disability law*. "President Muhammadu Buhari on Wednesday (January 23, 2019) signed into law, the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018.

“ With 16% of Nigeria's population being persons with disability, invariably, disability is a development challenge that requires a concerted response; prioritization and mainstreaming of inclusion policy embedded in the political economy; across public and private sector landscape, institutions and organizations.”

“The bill which has lingered in the National Assembly for 18 years, seeks to criminalize discrimination against persons with disabilities. “This bill was passed by the 8th Senate on March 28, 2018. In December, it was transmitted to the president for assent for the 4th time since 1999.”

Conversely, the establishment of National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), the key regulatory agency on the disability sector in Nigeria, further strengthens coordinated mechanism for addressing in practical terms, disability inclusion in Nigeria within a universal context.

This posits a bright future for an inclusive society in the country, though more efforts will be required to ensure effective operationalization of the Disability Act at the national level; strengthening institutional framework and effective monitoring of its implementation within public and private spaces for maximum benefits to PWDs community.

Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI), aware of the positive outlook for inclusion sector in Nigeria, seeks to align the programmatic and operational activities, resource mobilization and allocation, advocacy strategy, and engaging government as duty bearers; NCPWD as the regulator on oversight responsibilities; public and private sectors; the civil society including OPDs as rightholders that leads the way to an inclusive environment in Nigeria.

With the Commission now in place, the engagement shifts to the State level towards domestication of Disability Inclusion legislation for increased adoption of disability rights, full participation, and increased livelihood for PWDs.



“ Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI), aware of the positive outlook for inclusion sector in Nigeria, seeks to align the programmatic and operational activities, resource mobilization and allocation, advocacy strategy, and engaging government as duty bearers; NCPWD as the regulator on oversight responsibilities; public and private sectors; the civil society including OPDs as right holders that leads the way to an inclusive environment in Nigeria.

2.4 Domesticating Disability Legislation at State Level

VDI brings to bear thoughtful leadership aimed at expanding inclusive spaces, especially for women, girls and children with disabilities impacted by triple challenges of exclusion: Gender discrimination as women; suffer stigmatization and Poverty.

VDI engaged the Enugu State Government, in Nigeria’s South East zone on domesticating the Disability Act at state with a proposal for A Bill titled: Enugu State Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Bill (2022).

The Private Member Bill sponsored by Hon. Mrs. Onyinye Ugwu was signed into law in 2023 by the former Governor of Enugu State, Rt. Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi. VDI is currently working with JONAPWD, OPDs and other stakeholders in Enugu State to push for the establishment of Enugu State Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

Available data indicates that about 16 states out of 36 states domesticated and enacted the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities Act into law.

Also, strengthening institutional capacity and advocacy strategies will be required towards accelerated full implementation of the Disability legislation as well as fast track inclusion and setting irreducible minimum for inclusion in Nigeria.

With the overall impact of the National Disability Act 2018 being full inclusion of PWDs in public and private space, which is now justiciable under the Nigerian jurisprudence.

“ VDI engaged the Enugu State Government, in Nigeria’s South East zone on domesticating the Disability Act at state with a proposal for A Bill titled: Enugu State Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Bill (2022).”



VDI sensitization event in Enugu.

3.0 OUR VISION



3.1 OUR VISION

A Nigerian society where the needs and rights of women, girls, and children with disabilities are guaranteed without discrimination.



4.0 OUR MISSION



4.1 OUR MISSION

To advocate for the protection of rights of women, girls, and children with disabilities, and mainstreaming of disability-Inclusive programs into government policy Framework in Nigeria



VDI ED with other OPDs partners at 2022 International Women's Day celebration



5.0 OUR CORE VALUES

- **COMMITMENT:** Solid Commitment to Beneficiaries, Partners, and Donors.
- **TRUST:** Trust with Beneficiaries, Partners, and Donors.
- **PARTNERSHIP:** Foster Partnerships with Beneficiaries, other OPDs, NGOs, Institutions, Government, and Donors.
- **PASSION:** Access to justice, commitment to inclusive growth, gender equity and safeguarding of right.

5.1 Our Work, Results and Impacts.

- **OUR WORK** focuses on Persons with disability (especially women, girls, and children Donors willing to support us to reach the most vulnerable in the disability community; and the partnership that we build along the way.
- **OUR RESULTS** are inclusive and sustainable empowering women, girls, and children with disabilities to become change agents in their communities.
- **OUR IMPACT** is evident in the disability ecosystem and can be replicated by others.



6.1 HISTORY AND PROFILE

Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI) is a women-led, wholly Nigerian Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) that undertakes advocacy and civic actions including direct litigations on behalf of women, girls, and children with disabilities.

VDI is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-political organization formed by and for Women, Girls, and Children with disabilities from various disability clusters. VDI advocates for the safeguarding of the rights of persons with disabilities and the inclusion/mainstreaming of disability-friendly issues into government strategy for the purpose of accommodating and providing for the social security, welfare, and empowerment of women, girls, and children with disabilities

VDI was founded in March 2014 and incorporated in Nigeria under the Companies and Allied matters Act in April 2015 as an incorporated trusteeship organization.

VDI collaboratively work with OPDs, civil society organizations (CSOs), disability champions in the public and private sector, and institutions to build and nurture result-centered coalitions and consortium aimed at influencing the policy environment in Nigeria and beyond.

Additionally, work with donors and development partners in the design, implementation, and monitoring of disability inclusion-focused projects and interventions that deliver meaningful change at community levels for thousands of women, girls, and children with disabilities.

“ VDI collaboratively work with OPDs, civil society organizations (CSOs), disability champions in the public and private sector, and institutions to build and nurture result-centered coalitions and consortium aimed at influencing the policy environment in Nigeria and beyond.”

VDI's approaches to project and intervention delivery include but are not limited to:

- **Delivering sustainable change in the policy space.**
- **Design and implement stakeholders' led implementation process.**
- **Open and transparent tracking of resources that result in inclusive political, economic, social, and cultural space in Nigeria.**
- **Adaptive innovation, creativity, technology, and coalitions supporting persons with disabilities especially women, girls, and children with disabilities**

VDI works to promote the dignity and rights of persons with disabilities especially, women, girls, and children with disability, and encourage greater respect.

To advance its overarching objectives and adopts a four-pronged approach that delivers the most valuable impact



6.2 How We Work with the Government

Hence, it works collaboratively with all arms of Government at national and subnational levels. VDI has undertaken advocacy with Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary to advance the design and implementation of disability rights legislation, access to social justice, and expansion of access to persons with disabilities.

In nine years of its existence, VDI has implemented projects and interventions funded by international donors and organizations including Embassy of the United States of America in Nigeria through the U.S Ambassador Small Grants Program, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through National Democratic Institute (NDI), Amplified Change (AC) Grant from London, United Kingdom, Disability Rights Fund (DRF) from the United States; the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative grant, The IGNITE Consortium through Urgent Action Fund (UAF-Africa) among others.

Furthermore to increase public awareness, deepen outreach, create partnership to integrate Nigerian 29 million citizens living with disability into cultural, economic, social sphere, and identify key champions as advocates and ambassadors.



7.1 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Globally, it has been noted that organizations that thrive, making huge impacts across key sectors share a commonality of being women-led, adopting the principle of inclusion, technology savvy as well as responsive to the needs of its core publics.

VDI falls into the category of a women-led organization with four women and two men; representing 67% female members in the Board of Trustees (BoTs); with over 50% of staff being persons with disabilities and also organization of persons with disabilities (OPDs).

Given that the four thematic areas seek to create a sustainable pathway for women, girls, and children with disabilities, VDI governance strategy hinges on partnership and collaboration that focuses on the needs of our members, providing support for the most

Vulnerable and overall benefits of stakeholders. The under listed approaches provide support towards achieving the goals of the thematic areas.

- Advocates for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities (PWDs), especially women, girls, and children with disabilities;
- Delivering sustainable interventions that improve the livelihoods of women, girls, and children with disabilities;
- Collaboration with donors, OPDs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private entities, and government at national and state levels pushing for the mainstreaming of the constitutionally guaranteed rights of persons with disabilities, and provisions of the Discrimination against Persons with Disability (Prohibition) Act 2018.

“ VDI governance strategy hinges on partnership and collaboration that focuses on the needs, people with disability, providing support for the most vulnerable and overall benefits of stakeholders.”

The VDI Governance Organogram includes,



8.1 WHAT WE DO

VDI's work revolves around these thematic areas with the acronym

RIGHT-LR

- Ø **Right of Persons with Disabilities**
- Ø **Inclusive Education**
- Ø **Gender**
- Ø **Health**
- Ø **Technology**
 - **Livelihood**
 - **Research**

8.2 HOW WE WORK/IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- Ø **Partnership and Collaboration**
- Ø **Ownership**
- Ø **Institutional Process and Growth**
- Ø **Accountability**

1. **Partnership and Collaboration** - We work with multiple partners to deliver services to the underserved especially women, girls, and children with disabilities.
2. **Ownership** - We involve communities of PWDs giving a sense of responsibility as rights holders in the implementation and management of all our interventions.

3. Institutional Process and Growth

VDI recognizes the impact of institutional strengthening in effectively delivering the organization's objectives as a lead anchor within OPDs in Nigeria. With a strong commitment to continuously put in place an internal process that supports maximum delivery of service to its core public - persons with disabilities especially women, girls, and children, donors, partners, and other stakeholders. Given the correlation between effective institutional process and organizational growth, VDI demonstrates a strong commitment to mainstream inclusion across all components of programs design and implementation, resource mobilization and allocation, team on-boarding,

Monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management, and advocacy, among others.

Capacity building

Following lessons learned over time, VDI designs and delivers capacity building process as an integral component of organizational development aimed at improving service delivery to our constituency, women, girls, and children with disabilities in Nigeria. The quarterly and annual training programs and sessions will hold regularly to improve the capacity of team members in delivering their job functions; and improved efficiency and results.

These efforts will include formal training programs and informal sessions through mentoring and on-field knowledge sharing by line managers across the organization. VDI will rigorously implement capacity building across the VDI Team including the BoT members, management, staff, volunteers, and VDI members in understanding their core functions as OPDs based organization that supports women, girls, and children with disabilities in Nigeria.

Resource Mobilization

Resource mobilization is an important component of any organization that prioritize needs assessment, fund raising via responses to Request for proposals (RFPs) and/or Request for Information (RFF), and resource allocations to all components of the organization.

“ VDI demonstrates a strong commitment to mainstream inclusion across all components of programs design and implementation, resource mobilization and allocation, team on-boarding, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management, and advocacy, among others.”

8.3 Human Resource

VDI intend to focus on mobilizing human capital with core competencies in core areas of their work to lead each of the department. Additionally, staff with learning ability would be recruited to work under the Line manager to encourage learning on the job and sustainability plan for VDI. Staff retention plan prioritize incentives including capacity building, welfare package and remuneration commensurable to level of efforts, at par with similar organizations.

The tools and report include but not limited to;

1. Organizational Budget
2. Project Proposals and Budget
3. Project Implementation Plan
4. After Action Review (AAR)
5. Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Financial Reports
6. Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Program Reports

8.4 Internal process and procedure

VDI Procedure Manual, currently in process of being developed, contains details of each process including timeline for request and approvals as well as trip reporting process, etc. This will further enhance coordination, efficiency and timely delivery within the organization, Donors relations, partners and collaborators.

8.5 Internal Process and Control

The strength and weakness of VDI lies heavily on the management of its internal process and control which makes this a key aspect of "how we work" at VDI. To provide reasonable assurance that information is reliable, accurate and timely and in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, contracts, policies and procedures, VDI designed and adopted these procedures in its operation

1. Separation of duties.
2. Periodic reconciliations.
3. Delegated authority.
4. Approval authority.
5. Access control.
6. Physical audit.
7. Standardized financial documents.

4. Accountability

VDI is an open and transparent organization that ensure accuracy of reports, accuracy of Monitoring and Evaluation tools deployed to track impacts, results and output of our work. We are accountable to Donors, partners, beneficiaries and Nigerians in all our undertakings.



9.1 WHERE WE WORK

VDI is currently working across nine (9) major states (Adamawa, Benue, Bayelsa, Enugu, FCT, Kwara, Nasarawa and Oyo) in Nigeria, with desk offices in each of these states. VDI will leverage on the existing network of Joint National Association of Personswith Disabilities (JONAPWD) across the 774 LGAs in the 36 states and FCT to extend its intervention for PWDs to all corners of the nation in the coming years.

- National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD)

Potential funding and implementing partners will be attracted to VDI with intense intervention plan for the community of PWDs.



Nasarawa State Liaison officer, National Agency for the prohibition of Trafficking in Person (NAPTIP) and Executive Director, Voice of Disability Initiative display the MoU at Partnership Agreement signing event in Lafia, Nasarawa State.

10.1 OUR PARTNERS

Existing Donors of VDI

- National Democratic Institute (NDI)
- Disability Right Fund (DRF)
- Amplified Change (AC)
- European Union (EU)
- The Embassy of United States of America, Abuja Nigeria
- United Nations Women (UN Women)
- Urgent Action Fund in Africa (UAF)
- Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD)
- Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)

11.1 OUR OBJECTIVES

- To Influence Implementation of the Discrimination against Persons with Disability (Prohibitions) Act 2018.
- To enhance public awareness on the provisions of the Disability Act across public and private sectors.

- To support sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls with disabilities.
- Promote inclusive education in both public and private school

Achieving these strategic directions entails following concrete steps in order to provide a substantive framework for leadership, members and staff.

12.1 OUR ACTION PLAN

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK:

Below is the logical framework of substantive objectives for advocacy, services, and organizational development that Voice of Disability Initiative (VDI) will target progressively over the next 4 years (2024 - 2027). The pillars are subdivided into Key Result Areas (KRAs).

KEY RESULT AREA: Rights of Persons with Disabilities						
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: To advance enactment and/or implementation of laws and policies that protect the rights of persons with disabilities in Nigeria						
S/No	Activities	Key performance Indicators (KPI)	Performance Target	Timeline	Means of Verification	Collaborating partners
1.1	Create Awareness on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Number of awareness activities conducted	25	1-year	Activity Report	JONAPWDs/ CSOs
1.2	Mobilization of women and girls with disabilities to join the existing community association	Number of social mobilization activities conducted	20	1-year	Activity Report	JONAPWDs/ CSOs
1.3	Hold stakeholders consultation on the rights of persons with disabilities	Number of stakeholder meetings conducted	15	1-year	Activity Report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.4	Conduct Desk Review of existing legal framework on rights of persons with disabilities	Number of legal framework review	5	1-year	Activity Report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.5	Training on the imperative of Disability Laws on national development	Number of persons trained	10	1-years	Activity Report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.6	Training on Mainstreaming Disability Inclusion and Gender into development programs	Number of persons trained	10	1-year	Activity Report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.7	Capacity Building Training on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for Judicial Officers	Number of judicial officers trained	10	1-year	Activity Report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.8	Conduct Special Events - Award/Recognition on Disability Inclusion	Number of Special Events conducted	2	1-year	Activity Report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
KEY RESULT AREA: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights						
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: To Increase access to sexual and reproductive health services for women and girls with disabilities in Nigeria						
S/No	Activities	Key performance Indicators (KPI)	Performance Target	Timeline	Means of Verification	Collaborating partners
1.1	Training of Trainers on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	No of persons trained as Trainer	100	1-year	Training report Online links	JONAPWD Women, SHMB, FMOH, NCPWD
1.2	Sensitization of women and girls with disabilities on sexual and reproductive health and rights	Number of WWDs sensitized on their SRHR	1,200	1-year	Training report Online links	JONAPWD Women, SHMB, FMOH, NCPWD
1.3	Training of Women and Girls with disabilities on Menstrual Health Hygiene	Number of persons trained on Menstrual Health Hygiene	400	1-year	Training report Online links	JONAPWD Women, SHMB, FMOH, NCPWD
1.4	Sensitization of Students in Special Schools on Water, Sanitation and Health (WASH)	Number of students trained on WASH	2,000	1-year	Training report Online links	School Principals, NCPWDs, FMOH/SMOH
1.5	Procurement and distribution of Sanitary Pads and other Hygiene materials to women and girls with disabilities	Number and types of items procured and distributed	600	1-year	Training report Online links	BPP, FMOH, NCPWD, JONAPWD Women
1.6	Training of Healthcare Providers on the strategies and method to reach women and girls with disabilities with SRH services	Number of healthcare providers trained	90	1-year	Training report Online links	SHMB, FMOH, NCPWD
1.7	Sensitization of community members on SRHR of women and girls with Disabilities	Number of community members sensitized	240	1-year	Training report Online links	Traditional Institutions, FMOH/SMOH
1.8	Advocacy meetings on access to SRH services for WWDs in selected healthcare facilities	Number of advocacy meetings health	40	1-year	Report of activity Online links	JONAPWD National/States and other CSO Actors
1.9	Sensitization of Women and Girls with Disabilities on Menstrual Health and Dignity	Number of WWDs sensitized	25	1-year	Report of Activity Online link to activity report	JONAPWD National/States and other CSO Actors
1.10	Sensitization of Teachers and Parents of Children with Disabilities on Menstrual Health and Dignity	Number of WWDs sensitized	25	1-year	Report of Activity Online link to activity report	JONAPWD National/States and other CSO Actors
	Advocacy campaign on access to SRH services on specific issues	Number of advocacy campaign activities conducted	20	1-year	Report of activity Online links	JONAPWD National/States and other CSO Actors
KEY RESULT AREA: Livelihood						
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: To reduce economic dependence among women and girls with disabilities in Nigeria through capacity building, access to credit facilities and linkage to economic empowerment programs						
1.1	Conduct assessment of business status of women with disabilities in selected project states	Number of women with disabilities assessed	20	1-year	Report of Activity	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.2	Advocacy to relevant government authorities on economic empowerment of WWDs	Number of Advocacy meetings/campaign conducted	30	1-year	Report of Activity Online link to activity report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.3	Conduct Focus Group Discussion among WWDs to determine their business preferences	Number of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted	40	1-year	Report of Activity Photos	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.4	Organize vocational skills training on	Number of persons trained	10	1-	Report of Activity	NDE/



12.1 OUR ACTION PLAN

	Thematic Trade Areas for women with disabilities			year	Online links to activity report	Consultants
1.5	Conduct an Online Vocation Training for Women with disabilities on different Thematic Area	Number of persons trained	30	1-year	Report of activity	NDE/ Consultants
1.6	Conduct training on Business Skills Management for Women and Girls with Disabilities	Number of persons trained	150	1-year	Report of activity Online link to activity report	NDE/ Consultants
1.7	Provide Equipment/Business Start Up grants to selected applicants	Number of beneficiaries	50	1-year	Report of activity Online link to activity report	VDI/ Partners
1.8	On-going mentoring program for project beneficiaries	Number of mentoring sessions held	20	1-year	Report of activity Online links to activity report	VDI/ Consultant
KEY RESULT AREA: Inclusive Education						
Strategic Objective: To ensure that government policies on education is inclusive and take into consideration the peculiarities of persons with disabilities						
1.1	Review of existing policy on inclusive education	Number of policies reviewed	10	1-year	Report of activity	JONAPWDs/ Consultants
1.2	Advocacy meetings with key stakeholders on inclusive education	Number of advocacy meetings held	30	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.3	Capacity building training on inclusive education for parents and teachers of children with disabilities	Number of teachers/parents of children with disabilities trained	80	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	FME/ Consultants
1.4	Life Skills Training for Children with disabilities	Number of children with disabilities trained	200	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	FME/ Consultants
1.5	Advocacy campaign for inclusive education in Nigeria	Number of advocacy campaign carried out	10	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	JONAPWDs/ CSOs
1.6	Hold stakeholders meeting on inclusive education in Nigeria	Number of stakeholders meeting held	2	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	JONAPWDs/ CSOs
KEY RESULT AREA: Gender						
Strategic Objective: To ensure gender equity and gender responsive programs						
1.1	Review of Gender Policies in Nigeria	Number of Policies reviewed	5	1-year	Report of activity	JONAPWDs/ CSO/Partner
1.2	Conduct Capacity Building Training on Gender Mainstreaming	Number of people trained	120	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	Consultants
1.3	Training of Disability Rights Advocates on Gender-Based Violence	Number of persons trained	120	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	Consultants
1.4	Sensitization of Women and Girls with Disabilities on Gender-Based Violence	Number of women sensitized	200	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	Consultants
1.5	Gender Inclusion Workshop for Women and Girls with Disabilities	Number of persons trained	120	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	Consultants
KEY RESULT AREA: Institutional Arrangements, Governance and Capacity Strengthening						
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: Improved capacity and governance systems						
1.1	Seek technical support from partners to train and build capacity on good governance, advocacy and resource mobilization	Number of persons trained	50	1-year	Report of activity	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.2	Review organogram and operating documents to reflect any new changes of key members and positions	Number of reviews conducted	2	1-year	Report of activity	JONAPWD/ CSOs
1.3	Conduct Financial Management Training for Finance and Non-Finance Staff	Number of persons trained	15	1-year	Report of activity	Consultants
1.4	Conduct Capacity Building Training for Board Members focusing on Board Statutory Roles and Responsibilities	Number of persons trained	21	1-year	Report of activity	sConsultant
1.5	Build capacity of VDI staff and Board members on fund raising/resource mobilization	Number of staff and board members trained	21	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	Consultants
1.6	Build the capacity of staff and members to strengthen internal and external communication systems	Number of staff trained	12	1-year	Report of activity/Online links to activity report	Consultants
1.7	Develop and Implement a feedback mechanism among VDI project states	Number and type of tools developed	1	1-year	Report of activity	Consultants
1.8	Develop a comprehensive and cost-effective media and communication framework that will improve visibility and raise awareness	Number of communication framework developed	1	1-year	Report of activity	Consultants
1.9	Develop a community monitoring tool using both technology/ICT and manual tools	Number and type of tools developed		1-year	Report of activity	Consultants

13.1 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

We identified activities that possibly support VDI in achieving success: Scale-up programs and implementation; deliver more results and impacts for women, girls and children with disability, as well as ensure that VDI remains on the pathway to fulfilling its vision and mission

- **Partnership and Collaborations**
- **Accountability**
- **Communication**
- **Knowledge Management**
- **Open to learning**
- **Repository of knowledge**

13.2 RISKASSESSMENT

The risks, situations, or events that can happen in the near future and limit the success of our project or achieving its objectives, the likelihood of its occurrence, and the plans to mitigate those potential risks are captured below.

Possible Risk	Likelihood (L-low, M-medium, H-high)	Mitigation Strategy
Policy Inconsistency	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Getting involve in policy making advocacy. ➤ Monitoring the trend of event around legislation. ➤ Leveraging on favorable provisions of existing policies.(5% as mentioned in the Act)
Civil unrest/Security	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staying abreast with local news update. ➤ Engage local community leaders and security outfit. ➤ Sensitizing PWD communities to abstain from such Act.
Funding stream	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Delivering on agreed mandate with donors to beneficiaries ➤ Improvement in innovative and creative ideas for interventions ➤ Prioritizing accountability, transparency and Compliance always.
Intra OPDs rivalries	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Creating a niche and unique operational stream to attract positive partnership.
Inflation	H+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Making reasonable provision for budget flexibility ➤ Receiving fund in foreign currency at the current exchangerate. ➤ Early engagement of vendors for procurement.



13.0 OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

13.1 Context of VDI's Work

VDI's work is embedded in deep understanding of triple challenges (exclusion due to disability, gender, & poverty) faced by Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) especially women, girls and children, mostly invisible, 'left behind' with no voice, no representation, and relegated to the background.

VDI's programs and interventions are evidence based, data driven, verifiable information, engenders trust, and preserves the dignity and respects of women, girls, and children with disabilities; supports the shared vision and promotes sense of community.

13.2 Inclusive Work Environment

Delivering service to the most vulnerable population to persons with disabilities especially women, girls and children. VDI learned the value of demonstrating an inclusive work environment with our team being women-led, PWDs-led, a ratio of 67% women and 50% PWDs.

Additionally, we have nurtured trust-based partnerships, driven by shared goal for an inclusive society that supports women, girls and children.

Over time, VDI have learned that women, girls and children with disabilities as with other PWDs communities experience peculiar challenges that are surmountable through information and knowledge sharing; training and capacity building; nurturing coalitions as well as promoting collective action through partnership.

13.3 Thematic Areas

1. Rights of PWDs - Women, Girls and Children with Disabilities

VDI raises awareness on protection of the rights of women, girls and children with disabilities through community-based education, advocacy campaigns targeted at elected

Officials, key public institutions and regulatory agencies to ensure that offenders are punished as deterrents.

In addition, VDI in collaboration with its partners, which include but not limited to dedicated team of Pro Bono Lawyers and legal based NGOs offering legal services, initiate litigations on behalf of women, girls and children with disabilities susceptible to being victimized and/or denied the rights in the public and private spaces.

“ Over time, VDI have learned that women, girls and children with disabilities as with other PWDs communities experience peculiar challenges that are surmountable through information and knowledge sharing; training and capacity building; nurturing coalitions as well as promoting collective action through partnership.”

To empower women, girls and children with disabilities with adequate knowledge and information on their rights, VDI conducts gender focused trainings and sensitization programs. Highlighting relevant provisions of **the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Amended; the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAP) 2015, and the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act 2018**. These sessions have had impact in preparing participants mostly from the grass-root in the communities on how to prevent, resist and report cases of rape, torture and any other form of victimization against their persons.

2. Inclusive Education - Inclusive education ensures that persons with disabilities have equal access in an accessible learning environment for all clusters of disabilities. This also guarantees that persons with disabilities do not suffer any form of discrimination or stigmatization from other citizens in the course of learning.



3 Gender - Gender Based Violence is a reoccurring challenge among women and girls with disabilities in Nigeria with most incidences unreported due to lack of knowledge, fear of victimization by the offenders, social stigmatization as well as threat of violence on victims.

4 Health - Sexual Reproductive Health - Ensure access to medical facilities by women and girls with Disabilities, mensural and hygiene management; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).

5 Livelihood - Access to improved livelihoods by women, girls, and children with disabilities, mainstreaming market system development (MSD), improved life-skills, knowledge and access to finance and capacity to earn income that sustain them and support their families. Economic empowerment of women especially women and girls with disabilities provide an inclusive economic growth.



VDI team at a sensitization event

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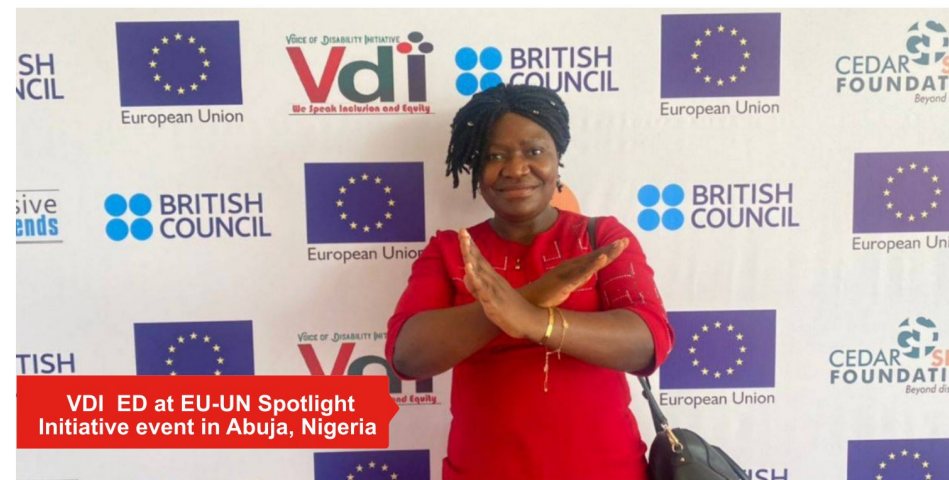
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13.4 VDI Thematic Areas of Focus

Recognizing multiple challenges faced by women, girls and children with disabilities, therefore, VDI decides to focus its work on five thematic areas aimed at addressing underlining factors that drives discrimination and exclusion against PWDs at large.

The five thematic areas, in our view when robustly pursued will engender the enabling environment that supports the following outcomes:

- Protection of the rights of persons with disability particularly, women, girls and children.
- Tackling of core behaviors and cultural inhibitions that fuel exclusion of PWDs particularly women and girls;
- Ameliorate lack of access to public and private facilities due to non-compliance with Building Accessibility Code as contained in the provisions of Discrimination Against Persons with Disability (Prohibition) Act 2018.



VDI ED during sensitization visit to Public sector partners in Nasarawa state.

13.5 VOICE OF DISABILITY FOUR THEMATIC AREAS

THEMATIC AREA	OUR WORK
RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	Respect to provisions of 1999 Constitution as Amended and provisions of Discrimination Against Persons with Disability prohibition Act 2018.
GENDER	Mainstreaming gender for PWDs to address gender based violence; adequate protection of women, girls and children with disability.
HEALTH	Ensure accessibility to medical facilities by women and girls with Disability; adequate mensural and hygiene management to maintain their respects and confidence.
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	Ensure equal access to inclusive educational facilities and learning environment by PWDs.
LIVELIHOOD	Ensure access to improved livelihoods by women and girl with disabilities through improved life-skills, knowledge and access to finance.



14.1 VDI as a Learning Organization

VDI is a learning organization that seeks to improve its internal and operational process as well as collate and curate lessons learned from field experiences, feedback received from members and partners, while implementing Donor funded projects and interventions in several states and the Federal Capital Territory.

VDI knowledge management process supports our team, donors, project consortium partners, other OPDs, public institutions, and development practitioners. This results in efficiency and improvement in programs, operational, resource mobilization and allocation, monitoring evaluation Accountability and learning, as well as impact and output components.

14.2 Competencies, Capacities and Capabilities

Since 2014, we reached over 50,000 women, girls and children with disabilities in Nigeria that benefitted from VDI led interventions and projects funded by 10 donor agencies, Embassies and Non-profit organizations jointly implemented with 3 OPDs, 6 NGOs, and 3 governments - national institutions, Enugu and Nasarawa states. VDI implemented 7 interventions in several states.

VDI deploys innovative strategy, technology, and collaborative partnership in engaging Government, NCPWD, institutions, regulatory agencies, private sector, OPDs, NGOs, on these five thematic areas through:

- **Influencing policy change by robust engagement with state actors and civic groups;**
- **Leading advocacy for behavioral change in communities about for**

women, girls and children with disability.

- **Empowering women, and girls with disabilities on reproductive rights as well as other rights.**
- **Increasing public awareness on the rights of persons with disabilities and how public and private entities can mainstream inclusion.**

14.3 Leveraging Knowledge, Data and Innovations.

VDI continues to collate invaluable information and lessons learned, empowering our team to be on good pedestal of achieving more, and positioned as anchor OPD in Nigeria with experience and reach.

Invariably, the VDI team, from the members of the Board of Trustees (BoT), through the management and staff to the volunteers boast of a combined experience of over 100 years across project implementation cycles.

- § **Thought Leadership**
- § **Policy Design**
- § **Program Design**
- § **Training and Capacity Building**
- § **Resources Mobilization**
- § **Knowledge Learning**
- § **Monitoring and Evaluation**
- § **Advocacy and Public Awareness**



16.1 NURTURING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP)

Given the array of competencies, capacities, capabilities, subject matter knowledge embedded within VDI team delivering impact for projects and interventions in communities, we work seamlessly, lessons learned collated regularly and course correction adopted to improve on work processes.

In addition, VDI facilitates knowledge sharing across the disability ecosystem, enabling the emergence of community of practice (CoP), in furtherance of overall development of the value chain, internal and externally stakeholders, to stimulate actions on inclusion policies, practices in public and private spaces in Nigeria.

After nine years of implementing projects and interventions, VDI can boast of being a repository of knowledge, information and data requirements from all stages of project cycles; access to reproductive health for women with disability in communities in Enugu; engagement and policy advocacy for domestication of the Discrimination Against Persons with Disability (Prohibition) Bill in Enugu state; Providing access to palliatives to 2,500 women, girls and

Children with disabilities in several states of the federation. Among other interventions.

To enhance organizational performance and service delivery and increase impact, VDI being an organization which is disposed to learning leverages on lessons learned. With its dedicated team, VDI is presently delivering results in eight state and FCT with partners, collaborators, members, and donor agencies in advocacy.

Repositioning VDI for improved service delivery women, girls, and children in Nigeria, we developed the five-year Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 as a guide.

This Plan provides both a pathway for delivering and implementation of VDI vision and mission and the objective of improving service to the disability ecosystem.

In addition, it will integrate organizational targets including interventions to drive program design, resource mobilization and allocations, implementation strategy, monitoring and evaluation, communication and knowledge management.



The Governor of Enugu State Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi addressing VDI members during an Advocacy visit.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AC	Amplify Change
ALDIN	Association of Lawyers with Disabilities in Nigeria
BOT	Board of Trustee
COREN	Council for Regulation of Engineers in Nigeria
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DRF	Disability Rights Fund
EU	European Union
EVAWG With Disabilities	End Violence Against Women and Girls with Disabilities
GoN	Government of Nigeria
JONAPWD	Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
NAPTIP	National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and other Related Offences
NASS	National Assembly
NAWOJ	National Association of Women Journalists
NBA	Nigerian Bar Association
NCPWD	National Commission for Persons with Disabilities
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIA	Nigeria Institute of Architects
NOA	National Orientation Agency
NPF	Nigeria Police Force
NUJ	Nigeria Union of Journalists
OPDs	Organization of Persons with Disabilities
PWD	Persons with Disability
UAF	Urgent Action Fund
UN	United Nations
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDI	Voice of Disability Initiative
WHO	World Health Organization





Participants at the VDI Strategic Plan retreat Keffi, Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

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