



Individual Submission Summary

Rethinking the Nigerian Polity in a Post-COVID-19 & #EndSARS Era

In Event: *Education in Emergency, Vulnerability and post conflict in Africa*



Mon, April 26, 8:00 to 9:30am PDT (11:00am to 12:30pm EDT), Zoom Room, 107 Proposal

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the fragility of the Nigerian social and leadership infrastructure. Thousands of people lost their jobs as many businesses were shut down; all public schools were closed and the long-standing entrenched societal inequalities were on full display during attempts to ensure student learning continues. As a result of these historic events, Nigerians, especially the youth, have had to endure untold economic and social hardships.

Interestingly, COVID-19 paved the way for many young Nigerians to reflect on the state of the nation and like never before, there was a critical mass of youth at home that were available for the largest and longest socio-economic protest in the country's history, the #EndSARS protests.

As the protests continue, youths in their thousands across the country are demanding greater accountability from the Nigerian government at all levels (federal, state, and local). Through coordinated efforts, youths across the nation are organizing peaceful and forceful protests to call the attention of leaders across all social institutions, including (but not limited to) political, religious, business, and educational, to the long-standing ills that have crippled the nation, inhibiting all citizen-led efforts at actualizing the Nigerian dream and development agenda. Like no other protest in the history of the country, this protest has no leaders. And youths and Nigerians in diaspora are working in concert through fundraising, political pressure, food, airtime, washroom supplies, etc are being provided to protesters across the country. Youths are volunteering as lawyers to bail out arrested protesters. Funeral expenses for killed protesters are also being covered by Nigerians.

As we speak, the #EndSARS protest is on day 7 and protests have been organized simultaneously across 24 states (out of Nigeria's 36 states), with over 67 million naira (\$191,428.51) raised via the Feminist_Co platform and disbursed across the nation to support the protests. The transparency with funds have been unprecedented - everyday, they report how much they have raised, how much was disbursed, what it was spent on, and where it was disbursed to.

Indeed, the Nigerian civil society and social activism space is changing. In this presentation, we will critically examine the #EndSARS protests, in juxtaposition with the CIES theme of social responsibility within changing contexts, to highlight its implication for actualizing the Nigerian development project.

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