

WHO WE ARE

Citizens First: Inclusivity in Diversity Initiatives is a citizen-driven platform focused on making sure every voice counts, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, ability, age, or background.

Our Mission: Put citizens at the center of public life by promoting fair participation, mutual respect, and shared problem-solving.

Our Vision: A Nigeria where diversity is treated as strength, not division, and where inclusion is built into how decisions are made.

2. CORE PRINCIPLES

These guide everything we do:

1. **DIGNITY FIRST:** Every person has equal worth. No one is reduced to a stereotype.
2. **PARTICIPATION OVER TOKENISM:** Inclusion means real input in decisions, not just being in the room.
3. **LISTEN BEFORE YOU SPEAK:** Seek to understand different lived experiences before judging.
4. **COMMON GROUND, HONEST DIFFERENCE:** We can disagree without dehumanizing. Focus on problems, not people.
5. **TRANSPARENCY:** Processes, decisions, and funding are open to scrutiny.
6. **LOCAL ACTION, NATIONAL IMPACT:** Start where you are. Small inclusive actions scale.

3. What Citizens Can Do

You don't need a title to make this work. Here's how you participate:

A. In Your Community

- Host or attend dialogue circles that mix different groups to discuss local issues.

- Identify exclusion in schools, markets, religious spaces, and call it out respectfully.
- Mentor young people from underrepresented groups.

B. In Public Life

- Demand accessible town halls: venue, language, time, format that works for people with disabilities, women, youth.
- Track how public projects affect different groups. Ask “Who is missing from this?”
- Use data and stories, not just opinions, when advocating.

C. Online

- Push back on hate speech and divisive content without mirroring it.
- Amplify voices that are usually ignored.
- Share the manual and training materials.

4. Standards of Engagement

When working under the Citizens First banner, we agree to:

Do	Don't
Listen actively, even when uncomfortable	Interrupt or speak over others
Address ideas, not identities	Use slurs, stereotypes, or dehumanizing language
Acknowledge mistakes and correct course	Defend wrongdoing for loyalty
Share space and speaking time	Dominate discussions
Protect the safety of vulnerable participants	Share personal details without consent

Violating these standards means you may be asked to step back until trust is rebuilt.

5. Process for Raising Issues

If you experience or witness exclusion in a Citizens First program:

1. **Speak Up:** Talk to the facilitator or program lead directly if safe.
2. **Document:** Note date, location, what happened, who was involved.
3. **Report:** Email `info@citizensfirstinitiatives.org.ng` or use the feedback form on the website.
4. **Review:** A 3-person panel reviews within 14 days and proposes resolution.
5. **Follow-up:** You'll receive feedback on what was done.

Retaliation for reporting is not tolerated.

6. Projects & Focus Areas

Current initiative areas:

1. **Inclusive Civic Education:** Training for youth and women on how local government works.
2. **Community Dialogue Labs:** Structured conversations in mixed communities to reduce tension.
3. **Access Audit:** Checking public services for physical, economic, and informational barriers.
4. **Diversity in Leadership:** Mentorship and shadowing programs for underrepresented groups.

Check the website for ongoing projects and volunteer slots.

7. How Decisions Get Made

We use **consensus-building**, not majority rule, for program design:

- Propose → Discuss → Revise → Test → Review
- Minority views are recorded and revisited if the main approach fails.
- Decisions are posted publicly within 7 days.

8. Your Rights as a Participant

- To be treated with respect regardless of background.
- To access information about programs in clear language.
- To opt out of any activity you're uncomfortable with.
- To receive feedback on your input.
- To appeal decisions you believe are unfair.

9. Getting Started

1. **Register:** Sign up at <http://CitizensFirstInitiatives.org.ng/volunteer>
2. **Onboard:** Complete the 30-min "Inclusivity 101" orientation online or in-person.
3. **Join a Team:** Pick a project based on your skills and interest.
4. **Act & Reflect:** Do the work, meet monthly to assess what's working.

Contact:

Citizens First: Inclusivity in Diversity Initiatives

Email: info@citizensfirstinitiatives.org.ng

Website: <http://CitizensFirstInitiatives.org.ng>

CITIZENS CODE FOR CITIZENS FIRST: INCLUSIVITY IN DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

Short, practical commitments for every member, volunteer, and partner

1. Respect Dignity

I will treat every person as having equal worth. I will not use slurs, stereotypes, or dehumanizing language, online or offline.

2. Listen First

I will seek to understand before I speak. I will give space for views different from mine, especially from people with less power in the room.

3. Participate Fairly

I will share speaking time and create space for others. I will not dominate meetings or make decisions for people without their input.

4. Act Transparently

I will share information openly and explain decisions. If I make a mistake, I will acknowledge it and correct course.

5. Protect Safety

I will not share anyone's personal details without consent. I will not tolerate harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against anyone who raises concerns.

6. Focus on Problems, Not People

I will criticize ideas and actions, not identities. Disagreement is expected; dehumanizing is not.

7. Be Inclusive by Design

In every activity I help organize, I will ask: Who is missing? Is the venue, time, language, and format accessible to women, youth, persons with disabilities, and minorities?

8. Use Truth and Evidence

I will avoid spreading unverified claims or hate content. I will use data and lived experience when advocating for change.

9. Own My Role

I will do the work I commit to, show up on time, and communicate if I can't. I will not use Citizens First for personal gain or political self-promotion.

10. Uphold Accountability

If I see a breach of this code, I will raise it respectfully to the facilitator or report it to info@citizensfirstinitiatives.org.ng. I will accept the outcome of the review process.

Breach of Code: First breach = conversation and corrective action. Repeated or severe breach = suspension from programs until trust is rebuilt.

Commitment: By participating in Citizens First programs, I agree to live by this code.