**Establishing and inaugurating Youth Accountability Forum for the States**

**Introduction**

Youth accountability initiative forum is a platform where the youths (both male and female) are trained and mentored on how to implement the principles of Open Government and hold their government accountable.

In the world today, there are 1.8 billion young women and men globally, of which 90% of them are in the age bracket of between 10-24 years olds living in developing countries e.g. Nigeria.

This group of persons are very fragile because they can be influenced negatively or positively. For instance, in the use as political thugs, militancy, etc; or in the use as young people to monitor development e.g. in the use of social media and other innovative monitoring tools, etc.

Through engaging young people in accountability, there is an opportunity to connect power to youth and youth to power, redefining the relationship between duty bearers and young people.

Working with young people always brings great joy, but it gives us a greater sense of satisfaction when we can empower them to get into spaces where they can actually interact and engage with decision-makers. I believe that youth-led accountability for the Open Government Partnership is important because it will allow young people to be meaningfully engaged in this new development framework.

At pilot scale, JCI Hope Project is leading the accountability project for OGP in the South East sub-national level because we are passionate about development and creating a better world for our youth. The youth led accountability approach combines data-driven accountability with high level advocacy, local campaigns and mobilization. Our experience so far has allowed us to interact with more young boys and girls who are challenged by social norms and are stepping up to get involved with the development of their society. Empower young people with knowledge, skills and networks; connect them to meaningful opportunities to participate, and support them to generate their own data, they will be leaders in exercising accountability.

**What constitutes youth accountability?**

Because youths exercise enormous energy and vibrancy; these energy must be channelled to better development of our nation through engagement of youths to be agents of accountability.

The youth accountability will constitute a platform to mainstream the activities of identified youth groups to implement the open government principles through organizing:

* Town hall meetings at the development centres (youth led multi stakeholder reviews, and monitoring of government activities)
* Youth participation audit (benchmark for tracking improvements in youth development)
* Regular dialogue with government ministries, agencies, departments and private organization about open government partnership to for sustainability of the program.
* Creation of accountability advocates/volunteers in local communities
* Creation of a social media or an online platform for interaction of stakeholders

**Structure**

Youth groups or centres will be identified through the Youth Accountability initiative program in each of the three zones of the states where step down training by those youths already trained will be organized in clusters for the locals. They will be trained and mentored on how to implement the OGP principles and hold their government accountable.