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Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung - West Africa

NEWSLETTER

20 Winter School of 25 Political Ecology

Newsletter

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Dear readers

We are delighted to present the second edition of our Newsletter 2025. As you are no doubt aware, one of the missions of RLS West Africa is to work with our various partners on issues that are useful and relevant to the West African sub-region, and which can help improve the future of its populations.

This issue looks back at some of the activities carried out in the sub-region, with the collaboration of various partners. These are mainly:

- Concept note "RLS Winter School of Political Ecology 2025 (28-30 July 2025)" by Dr Roland Ngam and Dr Ibrahima Thiam
- CGT-B (Workers of Burkina-Faso) activities with youth and women's forums;
- Carrefours citoyens activities (capacity-building activity)
- A summary of an article on the climate crisis written by Dr. Pape Mamadou Touré;
- Round table discussions by Grains of Peace (Yopougon)
- An interview with PhD student on Indigenous knowledge system (Frank Obanya Halim)
- A summary of the Appel 10 pour cent pour la réduction des dépenses militaires;
- A report on a European Union-funded activity organized by RLS in Nigeria

Enjoy your reading!

Claus-Dieter Koenig
Director RLS West Africa

Political ecology analyses interdependent and complex relationships between political, economic, and social factors and their effects on ecological systems on which we all depend for survival. At its core, it seeks to understand how power dynamics, governance structures, and social institutions influence environmental outcomes. It brings to light how decisions made by individuals, corporations, and governments impact the environment and how ecological challenges can, in turn, reshape social and political structures.

The importance of adopting a political ecology perspective lies in its capacity to reveal underlying injustices and power imbalances in environmental management. All this may sound distant and esoteric, but consider this: the policies and systems that are used to control water in a given country ultimately determine which agricultural ventures succeed and which ones fail. Why do episodes of heatwaves, storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, flash floods, coastal erosion, etc. affect the poor more than the rich? Well, the rich can afford prime properties on secure land while the poor have no choice but to live in disaster-prone areas.

Becoming more conscious about properly managing nature and our place and impact within the general ecosystem is a necessary precondition to successful socioecological transformation. By emphasising that ecological issues are intertwined with social and political factors, political ecology advocates for more holistic and equitable approaches to environmental governance. It prompts policymakers to consider who is affected by environmental decisions and urges them to prioritise sustainability efforts that benefit all stakeholders, especially vulnerable populations.

An increasingly contested space with new dialectical behaviour

For some time now, multilateral processes have been very deterministic in nature, with countries constantly seeking either to kick the can down the road or get someone else to do the heavy lifting. This makes processes like the Conference of the Parties (COP) very frustrating and NGO activity ineffective. The surrender of these contested spaces can only lead to more frustration because real power comes from states working together to enact meaningful legislation.

There is consensus that we need a broad socioecological transformation that brings human activity on the earth system within planetary boundaries. However, both in terms of how we talk about these subjects as well as the terms that we employ, not everybody is always on the same page. To complicate things further, the current state of global geopolitics reveals a lot of realignment and implications for the world that we are going to hand over to future generations. From single issue campaigns like 'banning GMOs', planting more trees' and 'conserving water' a few decades ago, today's struggles have become more technical, with an ever-growing reliance on specialized lawyers and experts, 'technical experts', who spend a lot of time producing highly technical documents in very difficult text.

This summer/winter school of political ecology offers the opportunity for activists and scholars to delve into the vocabulary and priorities of a new era whilst at the same time connecting with like-minded people across the African continent.

The school is organised in partnership with the following schools and organisations:

- § Gaston Berger University, Senegal
- § Université Alioune Diop de Bambey, Senegal
- § OSUN State University
- § Cheick Anta Diop University, UCAD, Senegal
- § CARES Mauritius
- § IFAA South Africa
- § University of Seychelles
- § Health of Mother Earth Foundation



CAPACITY-BUILDING SEMINAR FOR CGT-B WOMEN ACTIVISTS WITH A VIEW TO EMPOWERING THEM IN THE CONFEDERATION'S LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES (MAY 30 AND 31, 2025)



The theme of this seminar revolved around the following question: *Quelles contributions des femmes militantes de la CGT B face à la situation nationale marquée par la crise sécuritaire, la remise en cause des conquêtes sociales et des libertés démocratiques*"; the presentation was made by comrade OUANGRE Norbert; the activity brought together 42 participants.

It began with an analysis of emergency regimes in Burkina-Faso, and looked back at emergency regimes and violations of democratic freedoms. Burkina-Faso has experienced ten or so coups d'état from the time of formal independence to the present day, but these have not brought about any fundamental change. On the contrary, the security and humanitarian situation is worsening, and fundamental freedoms are being increasingly violated: arbitrary arrests, kidnappings, enforced disappearances, the trivialization of human life, high living costs, etc. are all part of the daily life of the Burkinabè people.

The second paper was entitled "Relecture du code des personnes et de la famille: un recul pour les droits des femmes?" presented by KOUANDA ZONGO Habibou; the aim was to assess the living and working conditions of women activists in particular, and of women in general; it would appear that there has been a certain break in equality between men and women with the amendment of the family code on two major points: the possibility for a man married under the monogamous regime to opt for polygamy, with the "consent" of the first wife, and the recognition of customary and religious marriages on the same footing as civil marriage.

The consequences for women are several-fold, including economic dependence: many women are financially dependent on their husbands. Refusing polygamy could mean precariousness or even severe economic withdrawal; another consequence, from the point of view of the influence of traditions and religion: in certain circles, polygamy is legitimized and valued. A woman who rejects this custom runs the risk of being judged negatively by her community and religious authorities.

The activity was also an opportunity to mobilize and exchange in-depth information on women's concerns. During the discussions, a number of recommendations were made concerning the need to perpetuate this activity, but also to extend it to the regions to reach as many women as possible, and to multiply the number of activities aimed at mobilizing women and raising their awareness.



On April 27, 2025, Carrefours citoyens organized an evaluation workshop for the project funded by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, in Bignona; this activity brought together some thirty participants on the central theme of the project, which is: strengthening the resilience of populations and inclusive support for the peaceful coexistence of communities impacted by conflict in the Ziguinchor Region.

The specific objectives of the workshop revolved around the following aspects:

1. Community capacity building on conflict prevention tools, facilitating the return and integration of displaced persons.
2. Assessment of the impact of the management of the weapons deposit agreement and the integration of ex-combatants, particularly on the circulation of weapons.
3. Participatory analysis of activities carried out with project beneficiaries.

METHODOLOGY

- Participatory approach, focus group workshops, plenary feedback.
- Sample: direct beneficiaries, community leaders, local authorities, civil society representatives.
- Discussions with participants representing beneficiaries (women, youth, community leaders, ex-combatants).
- Focus groups to gather collective perceptions on the relevance and impact of activities.
- Participatory evaluation grids used to rate satisfaction, ownership and perceived sustainability.

In the end, the participants thanked FRL for the financial support it had provided for the project, as well as for its ongoing support. The project's beneficiaries also expressed their overall satisfaction and felt that the various training courses organized were useful and adapted to the local context. Indeed, participants acquired skills in early warning mechanisms, community mediation and the non-violent management of tensions. However, they would like to see these actions extended to other areas heavily impacted by the conflict.

RESULTS

The main results of the project and the various activities developed are :

- The involvement of traditional authorities and women mediators, who represent a powerful lever for conflict prevention.
- The residual circulation of weapons requires reinforced community monitoring and partnerships with the security forces.
- Inclusive approach involving women and young people.
- Strengthened community dialogue, particularly around endogenous conflict management mechanisms.
- Visible impact on social cohesion, especially in areas where psychosocial support has been provided.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Inequalities in access to IGAs, particularly for rural women with no land tenure status.
- Inadequate post-training follow-up for some beneficiaries.
- Poor geographical coverage of certain interventions (e.g. psychosocial support limited to a few localities).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen local peace committees with technical and logistical support.
- Include monitoring indicators on the reintegration of ex-combatants in future phases.
- Formalize feedback mechanisms to capitalize on best practices.
- Extend practical training in conflict management to other villages.
- Strengthen economic support for trained women and young people.

Set up a community monitoring mechanism to ensure that the gains made are sustained.

Outlook

- In order to consolidate the dynamics of peace and social cohesion, several needs have been identified, particularly for women and young people:
- Training for women community mediators in conflict prevention, land tenure management and intergenerational mediation.
- Capacity-building for local peace committees on early warning mechanisms, incident documentation and community response.
- Workshops on inclusive governance and women's participation in local decision-making bodies.
- Support for women's entrepreneurship as a lever for economic stabilization and prevention of tensions linked to insecurity.
- Raising awareness of human rights and Resolution 1325 to strengthen women's legitimacy in peace processes.

To ensure the continuity of stabilization efforts, targeted advocacy is recommended:

- Drawing up an advocacy note aimed at local authorities, technical and financial partners, and parliamentarians committed to peace.
- Strengthening alliances with women's CSOs and mediation networks to provide a collective voice on human security issues.
- Integration of project results into local development and community security policies.
- Mobilization of community media to disseminate messages of peace and social cohesion.

DYNAMIC PARTICIPATION OF THE YOUTH OF YOPOUGON AT THE LAUNCH OF THE GRAINS OF PEACE 2025 ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS



Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and ONG Opinion Éclairée (OP-E), launched the 2025 edition of the "Grains of Peace" round-table discussions in Abidjan-Yopougon on Saturday 28 June 2025 with the dynamic participation of young people.

Rallying around the theme of "PEACEFUL ELECTIONS: MYTH OR REALITY IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE", 105 participants from various districts of the town took part in the event.

The high quality speeches enriched this moment of social and political dialogue.

Dr Anne-Nadege Assahon, Doctor of Political and Social Philosophy, and Dr Christophe Kouame, Specialist in Public Policy and Governance, Founder of CIVIS Côte d'Ivoire, spoke to young people under the chairmanship of Christiane Laure Mahilé, Radio Reporter.

The panellists responded to questions and comments from the participants in a good atmosphere, while urging them to spread the message of peace in the various neighbourhoods of the commune.

CLIMATE CRISIS, FINANCIAL RISKS AND THE STRATEGY OF SUBSTITUTING GREEN ENERGY FOR THERMAL ENERGY IN THE ENERGY TRANSITION PHASE

A photograph of a traditional wooden boat, possibly a pirogue, with a colorful painted hull, navigating through rough, white-capped waves. Three people are visible on board. The boat is moving from the background towards the foreground. The sky is overcast.

Pape Mamadou Touré

Aren't we moving too late in the direction of technologies from the past, which in about 30 years' time will require us to adapt our industrial equipment and, in particular, change the nature of fossil-fired power plants, even to natural gas, when gas and oil deposits have been completely exhausted by intensive exploitation over a short period of 30 to 40 years?

Move away from an industrial economy based solely on fossil fuels, and move towards thermal energies to accelerate the development of renewable energies. This is the hypothesis put forward by Dr. Toure in the context of climate change, which is shaking up all the debates of the 21st century. Climate adaptation, the development of renewable energies and the ecological strategies of modern industrial society are the answers to this planetary crisis. The earth has suffered major disruptions, triggering a boomerang effect and prompting in-depth reflection through forums on climate and biodiversity. Fossil fuels (coal, oil) have become a model increasingly criticized by economists, environmental associations and movements around the world.

The discovery and exploitation of oil and gas reserves in Senegal has ushered the country into a new era, that of fossil fuels. The Senegalese government sees this as an opportunity to reduce the country's backwardness in terms of growth, and also to enable its population to enjoy a dignified standard of living. Senegal is counting on the gas project on the border between Senegal and Mauritania, with production of liquefied natural gas (LNG) estimated at 2.5 million tonnes per year, the Kayar project with 1,400 billion cubic meters and the Sangomar project, with expected production of 5 million tonnes per year, to reduce the country's high social demand, create jobs and set up sustainable economic programs.

However, these projects come at a time when the oil market is characterized by three major challenges:

1. The declining profitability of oil investment, linked to the gradual depletion of continental oil reserves, especially offshore, which requires substantial investment due to deep drilling (2,500 meters underwater).
2. The rise of green energies.
3. The arduous constraints of increasingly stringent environmental regulations

There are many arguments in favor of substituting renewable energies for the strategy of exploiting fossil fuels in the Senegalese sedimentary basin. This is the position defended by petroleum expert, economist and researcher Dr Mamadou Touré.

Senegal's economic choices in the energy sector have resulted in a loss of return on investment. Senelec's investments under the 2008 "Takal 127" plan, now at a standstill, cost Senegal 40.5 billion CFA francs from the French Development Agency (Afd) and 40.5 billion CFA francs from the West African Development Bank (BOAD); the 125 MW Sendou coal-fired power plant, costing 196 million euros, is experiencing a decline in profitability due to community environmental protests and the commitment of public authorities to convert it to natural gas; offshore drilling campaigns in 12 blocks of the sedimentary basin have been halted for 5 years for economic and regulatory reasons. These examples are analyzed as stranded assets because they have lost value due to unforeseen changes, often linked to the energy transition, new regulations, or environmental changes.

The advent of electrically-powered mass transport, by road and rail, backed up by solar power plants, as in the case of the "BRT - Bus rapide de Transport" in Dakar and the "TER" (Train Express Régional), will inevitably have an impact on reducing the volume of fossil-based road transport. Added to this are new experiments in solar power plants for self-consumption, such as the Grande Côte Opérations zircon mining operation and the Sabadola Gold Operation (SGO) gold mining operation.

Faced with very high production costs affecting its economic competitiveness, and with the decline or loss of projected oil profitability, any investment in fossil fuels is becoming less attractive, and will face competition from renewable energies.

Finally, Europe's major investment banks and public financial institutions are rebalancing their energy portfolios, limiting their financial exposure by financing fewer fossil fuel projects and more renewable energy assets.

To support the substitution of renewable energies for fossil fuels in Senegal, we need to analyze the concomitant financial opportunities of the renewable energies business model as an alternative financial strategy for offsetting financial losses.

Senegal's economic growth must be driven by the emerging green energy sector, which is set to become the dominant energy source over the next thirty years, ensuring an end to the oil and gas era. The strategy will be to substitute green energy for potential oil deposits in the sedimentary basin. By deliberately abandoning or freezing the program of continental and maritime oil exploration campaigns, Senegal will enter a phase of energy transition that will send a powerful signal of energy and climate voluntarism to the international community. Senegal's energy transition will be supported by the evolving strategy of the ECOWAS and UEMOA community frameworks for the development of renewable energy. This strategy will be seen as a good ecological and financial practice, at the initiative of African countries, especially as they are in no way responsible for the catastrophic situation of Co2 emissions worldwide. This would have combined environmental ethics, energy realism and the financial optimization of sustainable ecological investments in a capital-intensive context.

Africa's renunciation of the exploitation of untapped oil and gas reserves for Senegal and the rest of Africa would give our countries a major new global energy positioning to catch up with the stage of development of renewable energies in developed countries. In this way, a new windfall of green energy financing opportunities could be captured through a “Marshal Plan” of special investments in non-fossil energy infrastructure, in all its diversity.

The approach to this transactional scenario and to Senegal's energy leadership lies in transforming the Senegal JETP into an incentive formula for giving up untapped and unallocated fossil fuels. Senegal will be able to finance its energy transition with an international subsidy, not a loan.

The aim will be to assess the opportunity costs arising from the loss of strategic investment and public revenue due to the abandonment of undeveloped proven fossil resources (e.g. heavy oil in the Dôme Flore off Casamance). To achieve this, it will first be necessary to quantify the volume of natural oil reserves foregone by Senegal, and then to financially value these deposits using standard techniques recognized by the international oil industry. In the case of the Senegalese sedimentary basin, it will be necessary to build a model of these potential deposits.

This would make it possible to establish a transactional framework for abandoning all research in exchange for a clear commitment to funding the development program for various types of renewable energy. Senegal stands to benefit in particular from holding on to its oil and gas assets (drilling permits and exploitation rights for the Senegalese-Mauritanian cross-border oil and gas fields of Grand Tortue Ahmayim operated by BP, and the Senegalese Teranga Yakar field not yet exploited, and the Sangomar field operated by Woodside), with estimated public revenues of US\$30 billion over 30 years, or an annual income of US\$1 billion;

Transformation of the nature of JETP: grant instead of loan

The country will receive financial compensation for the loss of its stranded assets, which we have cited above for thermal power generation plants, changes in road and rail traffic and declining fuel volumes in this segment, as well as for the refining sector following the expansion and modernization of the African Refining Company's refining capacities.

If Africa is responsible for a tiny proportion of global CO2 emissions and pays a heavy price for global warming, in terms of the impacts of desertification, drought, aridity of arable land and loss of fishery resources, the result is a notorious injustice. Consideration is being given to imposing climate and environmental eco-taxes on major countries and oil companies, to be allocated to specialized United Nations funds set up to finance a fair energy transition.

The transformation of JETP loans into international public subsidies is in line with the logic of repairing the damage and losses suffered by the continent. It will provide transactional compensation for the damage suffered by low-carbon developing countries. Carbon sinks need to be restored in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. In addition, JETP compensation enables certain countries to preserve natural carbon sinks that are essential to humanity (the Congo Basin in Central Africa and the Amazon), and those that include carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies that extract CO2 from the air or industrial fumes and store it in geological reservoirs.

To claim a new leadership position in renewable energies in Africa, Senegal needs to define an integrated green economy model, applicable to its industrial, agricultural, road and rail transport sectors, and to develop a framework for structured negotiations within a bilateral and multilateral framework. For Senegal, the aim is to create a positive momentum for multipolar financing of renewable energies, making it a testing ground for major energy transition strategies. As a result, the country will become a magnet for investment in its “green economy”, and a star performer in Africa's energy transition. The ultimate aim of this strategy is to capture major flows of green finance investment for Africa, and Senegal in particular.



Indigenous Knowledge Systems are gaining renewed attention across the country and even the continent. What does it mean for Africa to return to its roots?

It means a great deal. It signifies that we are beginning to think originally. We are now asking African questions to get African answers. It marks the start of a journey — one with a vision, with goals, and with a clear plan.

It means re-examining our Indigenous Knowledge Systems and recognizing their efficacy — from medicine to agriculture, from arts to poetry, and all other traditional endeavors that made our societies unique and resilient. These systems, passed down from our ancestors, have much to offer in today's world.

It also means that we can now take pride in who we are as a people. We should not rely solely on Western epistemologies — or even increasingly influential systems like those from China. We must resurrect and reclaim our own epistemologies to ensure that the solutions we bring to the table are grounded in our values, context, and realities.

Whether the issue is climate change, poverty, hunger, or other critical concerns highlighted in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we need to develop original African solutions — not merely adopt those formed through Western paradigms. Therefore, concisely, we are exploring that path.

Have we taken the wrong path for too long? Are we only now recognizing this, or are we testing new directions?

Let us put it this way: We are the oldest race on Earth, with more experience than any other group. Our ways of perceiving reality, our understanding of time, and our collective memory offer rich case studies and insights. This experience positions us to look at our own challenges and propose solutions that are authentic and relevant.

Some people mention syncretism — the idea of blending our traditions with external influences. After all, the West has left a lasting footprint here. Why not do what the Asians have done — like the Japanese — who have successfully integrated technological progress with their own values? The Chinese are also doing this.

However, we must recognize that we already have the instruments for change within us. One of the most powerful tools is our language — our mother tongues. In many parts of Asia, countries have driven development by using their own languages, proving that science does not require any one “global” language to thrive.

We should begin to embed this thinking into our agricultural practices, our scientific reasoning in chemistry and biology, and into our broader industrial development. This calls for deep thought and for close collaboration between academia and policymakers.

There must be a bridge — a continuous exchange of ideas and values — that drives Africa forward in a knowledgeable, meaningful, and sustainable direction.

PhD and MPhil student at the University GASDI (Osogbo), specializing in Indigenous Knowledge Systems





WHAT IS THE “10% FOR ALL” APPEAL?

The 10% for all. Appeal is a campaign to raise awareness of the need for governments to reduce their military spending by 10%, in order to fund other key sectors, for the well-being of the population. It is also a global movement, a shared vision; “a call to renegotiate our collective future”, working together across borders, exploring collaborative approaches and building mutual trust, enabling us to create a world that prioritizes human life, a healthy and sustainable environment and true and lasting security and peace for all.

The “10% for All” campaign is an initiative of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (RLS), which aims to propose an alternative for improving global security. It is “an international call to reduce military spending”, following in the footsteps of the “Global Call for a Peace Dividend”, initiated in 2021 by some 50 Nobel Prize winners. The campaign coalition aims to raise awareness of the high costs of military spending through an international campaign, with a view to boosting budgets in other key sectors. The organizations behind the campaign believe that if governments manage to reduce their military budgets by 10%, this amount could facilitate the financing of other important sectors such as education, health, electricity, access to drinking water, etc. This initiative comes at a time of global insecurity, which is prompting states to arm themselves to defend their territory and their people. It is therefore legitimate for States to be keen to reinforce security, particularly from a defensive point of view. In the West African context, the Sahel states in particular are affected by the issue of terrorism, and for several years now Burkina-Faso, Niger and Mali have been facing violent terrorist attacks, with thousands of internally displaced persons.

However, we continue to see rising poverty, social inequality, violence, high living costs, etc., with populations living in very difficult conditions, clearly reflecting the negative consequences of war and the use of combat weapons. While a “10% reduction in military budgets would free up around \$271 billion (SIPRI, 2024) in all countries to be used to fight climate change, poverty and hunger, and ensure long-term, genuine security for billions of people around the world” (10 percent for all appeal document). So, for example, if young people and women earn a decent living, they won't be forced to turn to illicit activities that can lead to violence and destruction.

It's also a social justice movement, calling on governments to consider redirecting military spending towards social security. A new, dynamic approach to peace is needed, because the economic consequences of massive military spending to combat new threats to peace and security can have repercussions on priority social and economic investments in developing countries. Reducing military spending would enable states to meet the social needs of their populations. Spending on the military to the detriment of other priorities likely to foster socio-economic development is tantamount to threatening the peace and security of the states concerned. This is because idle people are more likely to be recruited by terrorists and other clandestine armed groups. Reducing military spending in developing countries would enable them to allocate this budget to other expenses, and thus be less dependent on international aid.

It should also be noted that the systematic use of advanced weaponry is not a prerequisite for peace and security. Finally, the 10% for All campaign is a new approach to help governments improve security while taking into account the well-being of their populations. It involves organizing campaigns and advocacy at local, regional and international level, and putting pressure on decision-makers to rethink their military spending, taking into account the real needs of the population. Rethink security in the interests of the people.

The 10% for All campaign was officially launched via the Zoom platform on May 23, 2025, with over eighty participants from thirty countries united by a common goal: to demand that governments reallocate at least 10% of global military spending to fund social, environmental and peacebuilding initiatives. The aim was to put “10% for all, human life at the heart of security issues”.

Finally, the RLS West Africa office was represented by Marie N'guettia, Programme Manager, at the first global ‘10% for All’ meeting, held in San Jose, Costa Rica, from 3 to 6 April 2025. More than 30 participants from different regions of the world attended the meeting to validate the appeal document. The main objective of the meeting was to clarify the 10% appeal document and to harmonise ideas so that all stakeholders are aligned on the project and the action plan.



ROSA LUXEMBURG FOUNDATION NIGERIA AND ITS PARTNERS SOCIAL ACTION AND WE THE PEOPLE KICK START THE INCLUDE NAIJA PROJECT CO FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

In April 2025, Rosa Luxemburg Foundation Nigeria, and its partners Social Action and We the People kick started a 3-year project (2025-2027), titled, INCLUDE NAIJA — Inclusive Democracy and Empowerment Network for Active Youth in Nigeria. The project is co-funded by the European Commission in Nigeria. The project aims to promote the fundamental human rights of Nigerian Youths, enhance their participation in democratic and national development processes.

Four universities were selected for the execution of the project activities led by Rosa Luxemburg Foundation in the next three years, University of Abuja, political science department; Centre for Peace and Development, Veritas University Bwari; Centre for Gender Studies, Nassarawa State University Keffi and Centre for Gender Studies, Bayero University Kano.

Five training activities and advocacy visits to selected stakeholders such as the university administrations, National and state houses of Assembly and Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development are planned annually for selected students of each university.

A democracy capacity-building workshop for 50 students drawn from three universities (20 students from University of Abuja, 15 students from Veritas University and 15 from Nassarawa state University) is to be held each year. The hosting of the democracy capacity-building workshop will be rotated between the three universities.

A mentorship interactive session is to be held in each of the four universities to create a platform for student union leaders and aspiring student union leaders in each institution to interact with two female mentors. The mentors to be selected are women who were active student union members during their university days and had transited to successful actors in various fields of human endeavor as well as politics. Eighty female students are to be trained in each year within the mentorship project.

RLS Project Implementation so far

The democracy capacity-building workshop for 2025 was held on June 24, 2025 at the Political Science Department University of Abuja. The speakers at the workshop were Professor Yusuf Zoaka of the Political Science Department University of Abuja, Dr. Hauwau Mainoma of the Centre for Gender studies Nassarawa state university, Dr. Chibugo Lebechi of the Veritas University Bwari and Dame Ene Edeh of Equity Advocates.

Also, 2 interactive mentorship sessions have so far been organized on the 11th of June 2025 at the Veritas University Bwari and on the 30th of June 2025 at the university of Abuja. At the Veritas University interactive mentorship session, the mentors were Comrade Ene Obi a former student union president at the University of Jos and former Country Director of Action Aid Nigeria. The second mentor was Comrade Hauwa Mustapha a former student union activist at the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and presently a researcher at the Nigeria Labour Congress. Dame Ene Ede made a presentation on the importance of mentorship. The mentors at the mentorship interactive session held at the political science department of the University of Abuja, were Barrister Comfort Idika Ogunye, a former NANs president 1995/1996 session and founder of Female Leadership Forum (FLF). The second mentor was Dr Fatima Hassan a former Vice President University of Jos Student union government and former Director General National Women's Commission.

Upcoming activities

The other two mentorship workshops for 2025, are scheduled for July 17 2025 at the Centre for Gender Studies, Nassarawa State University and 25th of July 2025 at the Centre for Gender Studies Bayero University Kano. We look forward to interactive and impactful sessions with the students in the upcoming events.