

INDEPENDENCE DAY 2026



NIGERIA AT 66 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

A Message of Unity, Inclusion and Shared
Responsibility from CEYWI

UNITY

INCLUSION

RESPONSIBLE
CITIZENSHIP

NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

ONE NATION. ONE PEOPLE. A SHARED FUTURE.

ceywi.org.ng | @century4development | @21CEYWI

EDITORIAL

Celebrating 66 Years of Nigeria

As Nigeria commemorates its **66th Independence Anniversary on October 1, 2026**, the 21st Century Community Empowerment for Youth and Women Initiative (CEYWI) joins Nigerians across the country and in the diaspora in celebrating this important milestone in the nation's history.

The anniversary is an opportunity to celebrate Nigeria's journey since gaining independence in 1960, reflect on the progress made, acknowledge the challenges that remain, and renew our collective commitment to building a **peaceful, inclusive, resilient and prosperous** nation for present and future generations.

For 66 years, Nigeria has continued to demonstrate the strength and resilience of its people. With its rich cultural heritage, diverse communities, abundant human resources and vibrant young population, the country possesses enormous potential for sustainable development.

This anniversary therefore goes beyond celebration. It is a moment to reflect on the responsibilities that come with nationhood and on the role that individuals, communities, institutions and leaders must play in shaping the future of Nigeria.



1960

Year Nigeria gained independence

66

Years of resilience and nationhood

1 OCT

Independence Anniversary, 2026

OUR STORY

A Journey of Resilience, Diversity and Possibility

Since October 1, 1960, Nigeria has experienced significant changes across political, economic, social, technological and cultural spheres. Through different periods and challenges, Nigerians have continued to demonstrate determination, creativity and resilience.

From entrepreneurs building businesses and farmers sustaining communities, to teachers educating future generations, healthcare workers serving communities, young innovators developing solutions, civil society organizations supporting vulnerable populations and citizens contributing in countless other ways, Nigerians continue to play important roles in the development of the country.

Nigeria's diversity remains one of its defining characteristics, a foundation for dialogue, cooperation, mutual respect and national unity.

PEOPLE FIRST

Development That Centres People

At the heart of national development are the people. Development should create opportunities for individuals and communities to live with dignity, access essential services, acquire knowledge and skills, and participate meaningfully in society. National development must remain people-centred and ensure that vulnerable and underserved populations are not left behind.

01

Empowering Nigeria's Youth

Nigeria's young population represents an important part of the country's present and future. Young Nigerians continue to demonstrate creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship and leadership across technology, education, agriculture, healthcare, creative industries and community development.

Unlocking their full potential requires continued investment in **quality education, skills development, employment opportunities, entrepreneurship, digital literacy and meaningful civic participation**. CEYWI encourages young Nigerians to embrace learning, innovation, responsible citizenship and community service.

02

Advancing the Empowerment of Women

Women are fundamental to the development of families, communities and the Nigerian economy, contributing as entrepreneurs, professionals, farmers, educators, caregivers, community leaders and advocates for social development.

Creating an enabling environment where women can access **education, economic opportunities, information, skills and meaningful participation** is essential to inclusive national development. When women and girls are empowered, families and communities benefit from stronger opportunities for growth and improved well-being.

03

Strengthening Communities

Strong communities are an important foundation for a strong nation. Community members understand many of the challenges affecting them and can play an important role in identifying solutions that respond to local realities.

CEYWI believes development is stronger when communities are not merely recipients of interventions but **active participants** in identifying priorities, implementing solutions and contributing to positive change.

TOGETHER

Promoting Unity and Inclusion

As Nigeria celebrates 66 years of independence, there is a continued need to strengthen the bonds that unite Nigerians. Our ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic differences are part of the country's identity. While these differences may shape individual experiences, they should not prevent citizens from working together towards common goals.

Peaceful coexistence, respect for human dignity, inclusion, dialogue and mutual understanding remain important to building stronger communities. CEYWI encourages Nigerians to promote peace and respectful dialogue in their homes, communities, workplaces and online spaces.

A united Nigeria is one where citizens recognise their shared responsibilities.



INCLUSION

Protecting Vulnerable Populations

A nation's development is also reflected in how it treats people who may face greater barriers to opportunity and participation. The following groups deserve protection, dignity and meaningful opportunities to participate in society:

Children

Women

Young People

Older Persons

Persons with Disabilities

Building an inclusive Nigeria requires systems and communities that recognise the needs and contributions of all people. As we celebrate Independence Day, we must continue to support efforts that promote **social inclusion, access to essential services, human rights and opportunities** for vulnerable and underserved populations.

A prosperous Nigeria is one where no citizen is left behind.

CIVIC DUTY

The Role of Responsible Citizenship

Nation-building is a shared responsibility. While governments and institutions have important responsibilities in providing leadership, policies and services, citizens also have a role to play in the development of the country. **Small acts of responsibility can contribute to larger national progress.**

Responsible citizenship includes:

- Respecting the rights of others
- Contributing positively to communities
- Seeking reliable information
- Supporting initiatives that improve society
- Protecting public resources
- Promoting peace
- Participating constructively in civic life
- Protecting the environment

Every person who teaches a child, supports a neighbour, creates an opportunity, volunteers in a community initiative, promotes peaceful dialogue or contributes positively to society is playing a part in nation-building.

LOOKING AHEAD

Building a Future of Opportunity

Nigeria has significant opportunities ahead. Advances in the following sectors can open new possibilities for economic and social development:

Technology	Entrepreneurship	Education
Agriculture	Healthcare	Renewable Energy

Realizing these opportunities requires collaboration between **government, civil society, the private sector, communities, development partners and citizens**, alongside continued investment in human capital, particularly in young people and women who are significant contributors to Nigeria's future.

CEYWI'S COMMITMENT TO NIGERIA

As Nigeria marks its 66th Independence Anniversary, CEYWI reaffirms its commitment to contributing to the empowerment of young people, women and communities. Through its programmes and partnerships, CEYWI supports initiatives that promote community development, participation, inclusion, knowledge, empowerment and improved well-being, because lasting change is achieved when individuals, communities and institutions work together.

CALL TO ACTION

A Call for Collective Action

On this 66th Independence Anniversary, we call on all Nigerians to reflect on the kind of country we want to leave for future generations. Most importantly, let us recognise that **the responsibility for building a better Nigeria belongs to all of us.**

01

Let us invest in education and skills

02

Let us create opportunities for young people

03

Let us empower women and girls

04

Let us strengthen our communities

05

Let us protect children and vulnerable populations

06

Let us promote peace and inclusion

07

Let us respect one another despite our differences

08

Let us participate responsibly in our communities and nation

09

Let us support initiatives for sustainable development

CONCLUSION

Nigeria at 66: History, Resilience and Possibility

While challenges remain, Nigeria possesses significant human and natural resources, a vibrant population and communities capable of contributing to meaningful progress. The Nigeria we aspire to build will require **unity, responsible citizenship, inclusive development, investment in people, respect for human dignity and collective action.**

As we celebrate 66 years of independence, let us renew our commitment to a Nigeria where every person has the opportunity to learn, participate, contribute and thrive. Let us build bridges across our differences, invest in our people, strengthen our communities, and work together for a peaceful, inclusive and prosperous Nigeria.

HAPPY 66TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY, NIGERIA!

ONE NATION. ONE PEOPLE. A SHARED FUTURE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact:

08027942603

08089266897

CONNECT WITH CEYWI

Website: ceywi.org.ng

Instagram: [@century4development](https://www.instagram.com/century4development)

Facebook: [century4development](https://www.facebook.com/century4development)

X: [@21CEYWI](https://twitter.com/21CEYWI)

About CEYWI. The 21st Century Community Empowerment for Youth and Women Initiative (CEYWI) is committed to empowering young people, women and communities through initiatives that promote inclusive development, participation, knowledge, community well-being and sustainable opportunities.

#NigeriaAt66 #NigeriaIndependenceDay #IndependenceDay2026 #OneNigeria #YouthEmpowerment #WomenEmpowerment #CommunityDevelopment #CEYWI