



**SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT
ACTION TRUST**



**For a Just &
Inclusive Africa
Where Everyone
Belongs**

About Us

Social Development Action Trust (SDA-Trust)

is a Nigeria-based, Pan-African development and humanitarian organisation committed to building a just and inclusive Africa where people and communities live in dignity, security, and shared leadership in development.

We champion African-led solutions to the continent's most pressing challenges by working closely with communities, civil society, regional institutions, and governments. Envisioned as a catalytic Pan-African institution, SDA-Trust is dedicated to advancing democratic governance, social justice, and effective humanitarian response.

Rooted in African realities and knowledge systems, we strive to advance human dignity and inclusive development by empowering communities, shaping public policy, and strengthening humanitarian and development systems through impactful advocacy, research and training, and transformative partnerships.



We exist to bridge the divide between research and practice, challenge dominant paradigms, and promote community ownership in development and humanitarian contexts.



Our Vision

A just and inclusive Africa where people and communities live in dignity, security, and shared leadership in development.



Our Mission

To advance human dignity and inclusive development across Africa by empowering communities, shaping public policy, and strengthening humanitarian and development systems through impactful advocacy, participatory research, capacity sharing, and transformative partnerships.



Rationale & History

Africa's development narrative continues to be shaped by a complex interplay of structural poverty, inequality, weak governance, climate vulnerability, conflict, and humanitarian crises. Despite decades of intervention by local and international organisations, there remains a significant gap in achieving sustainable, inclusive, and equitable progress across the continent.

At the heart of this challenge lies a need for African-led, community-rooted, and values-driven organisations that can champion people-centred development and humanitarian response, uphold human dignity, and catalyse long-term transformation. The Social Development Action Trust (SDA-Trust) was established in response to this need.

Established in 2019 and registered with Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, SDA-Trust was co-founded by five other Pan-Africanist scholars and seasoned development and humanitarian practitioners.

SDA-Trust is envisioned as a catalytic Pan-African institution committed to promoting democratic governance, advancing social justice, and strengthening humanitarian response. It works in close partnership with communities, civil society, governments, and regional institutions to

co-create locally owned solutions that foster social cohesion, resilience, and transformative change.

Rooted in African knowledge systems and lived realities, SDA-Trust champions sustainable, inclusive, and community-driven approaches. Through its work, SDA-Trust strives to build empowered and resilient societies capable of responding effectively to both existing challenges and emerging opportunities, toward a just, equitable, and self-reliant Africa.

The organisation is mandated to work across Nigeria and the broader African continent.

Key Objectives

1

Promote Inclusive Governance and Democracy

Advance democratic norms, civic engagement, and social accountability across Africa by supporting transparent institutions, empowered citizens, and rights-based governance.

2

Promote Equitable Access to Inclusive Social Services

Advance the right to quality education, healthcare, and social protection by supporting inclusive policies, strengthening public systems, and empowering communities, especially marginalised and underserved populations, to claim and access essential social services and safety nets that uphold human dignity and promote social justice.

3

Strengthen Community Resilience and Humanitarian Action

Build the capacity of local actors to anticipate, respond to, and recover from crises, including conflict, displacement, and climate-related disasters, through locally led and sustainable humanitarian solutions.

4

Advance Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Promote the rights and agency of women, girls, and marginalised groups by driving inclusive policy reforms, strengthening institutional accountability, and challenging harmful social norms and practices, including gender-based violence.

5

Champion Evidence-Based Policy Engagement

Generate and disseminate participatory research, policy analysis, and strategic knowledge to inform inclusive development and influence decision-making at local, national, and regional levels.

6

Foster Pan-African Solidarity and Collaboration

Strengthen inter-African dialogue, learning, and collective action by connecting civil society, academia, regional institutions, such as the African Union, and sub-regional economic communities and institutions towards shared development and humanitarian goals.

7

Promote African-Led Development and Leadership

Support African-driven solutions by investing in transformative leadership, strengthening indigenous institutions, and building the next generation of ethical, visionary, and accountable African leaders.

What We Do



Development Programming

We design and support initiatives on inclusive human development, specifically in education, health, women's rights, livelihoods, governance, and social protection.



Humanitarian Action

We deliver context-specific, locally led humanitarian responses prioritising human dignity, agency, and long-term resilience.



Training & Capacity Strengthening

Through our affiliate, the **Pan-African Institute for Development and Humanitarian Studies**, we build the capacity of researchers, practitioners, and communities.



Research & Policy Engagement

We challenge conventional development and humanitarian thinking, provide critical, evidence-based insights rooted in African realities, and engage policymakers and stakeholders to reshape practice.



Climate Justice & Environmental Sustainability

We advance climate justice by supporting adaptation and resilience efforts, promoting sustainable environmental practices, and advocating for policies grounded in equity, intergenerational responsibility, and ecological integrity.



Peacebuilding & Conflict Transformation

We foster peaceful and inclusive societies by promoting dialogue, strengthening community-based early warning systems, and enabling locally led initiatives for conflict prevention, resolution, and long-term reconciliation.



Advance the Rights of the Excluded and Marginalised

We champion the rights of excluded and marginalised groups by confronting systemic inequalities and creating spaces for their voices to be heard. Women's rights are central to our mission and cut across all areas of our work. We also prioritise the inclusion of children, young people, and persons with disabilities, working closely with them to articulate their concerns, amplify their voices, and ensure their full participation in shaping the policies and programmes that affect their lives.

Our Flagship Initiatives



Pan-African Democracy Lab (PADL)

The Pan-African Democracy Lab is a continental innovation hub advancing civic technology, citizen engagement, and accountability tools tailored to African realities. It brings together technologists, activists, policymakers, and communities to co-create locally relevant solutions—from digital town halls and election apps to radio dialogues and service trackers—that enhance democratic participation, especially in low-resource and rural settings.

Beyond tool development, the Lab offers training, fellowships, and research on democratic innovation, while advocating for digital rights and open governance. Aligned with the African Charter on Democracy, it fosters a vibrant ecosystem of civic innovation that empowers citizens, amplifies marginalised voices, and reimagines democracy from the ground up.



Community Action for Resilience (CARE)

The Community Action for Resilience (CARE) Programme empowers communities in conflict-affected and climate-vulnerable areas to manage risks, recover from shocks, and rebuild social cohesion. By focusing on local solutions, CARE enhances communities' ability to assess vulnerabilities, develop response strategies, and promote peaceful coexistence. The programme integrates conflict sensitivity, climate adaptation, and disaster risk reduction to ensure sustainable interventions.

Through participatory planning and training, CARE establishes resilience committees, early warning systems, and peacebuilding initiatives. It fosters dialogue and collaboration among diverse groups, especially including women, youth, and displaced populations. By strengthening social bonds and local preparedness, CARE promotes long-term stability and resilience, enabling communities to not only survive crises but also thrive afterward.



Policy and Practice Series (PPS)

The Policy and Practice Series is a knowledge-to-policy platform that connects grassroots realities with high-level decision-making across Africa. It hosts dialogues, public forums, and community discussions to amplify the voices of those affected by development and governance challenges. The Series publishes accessible position papers and policy briefs that transform grassroots insights into actionable proposals and fosters regional cooperation with think tanks and advocacy networks. This platform serves as a catalyst for turning knowledge into policy impact at both national and continental levels.



The African Solidarity Fund for Humanitarian Action (ASFHA)

This is a locally managed fund aimed at enhancing the capacity of African civil society to provide timely, community-driven humanitarian responses. It offers flexible funding to grassroots organizations tackling crises like conflict, displacement, food insecurity, and climate-related disasters. By empowering local actors, ASFHA ensures that responses are agile and culturally relevant, while promoting African ownership and accountability in humanitarian efforts. The fund also seeks to build institutional capacity and establish sustainable financing through partnerships with African philanthropy and regional networks, reinforcing Africa's ability to address its humanitarian challenges effectively.

Institutional Structure

Pan-African Board of Directors

Governance oversight by diverse African leaders in development, governance, business and civil society and diplomatic background.

Executive Leadership Team

Based in Nigeria, led by the President/CEO, supported by regional coordination hubs for West, East, Central, and Southern Africa.

Affiliate Institution

Pan African Institute for Development and Humanitarian Studies – A centre of excellence for research, training, and policy innovation in African development and humanitarian practice.

Core Values

Our work is anchored in a set of values that reflect our commitment to African-led, people-centred development. These values are interconnected and deeply rooted in the spirit of Ubuntu, the African philosophy that affirms our shared humanity, dignity, and interdependence.

Ubuntu – Shared Humanity and Solidarity: We are guided by Ubuntu, *“I am because we are.”* This principle inspires our commitment to compassion, mutual respect, and collective responsibility. It reminds us that sustainable development and social justice can only be achieved when communities act in solidarity and uphold the dignity and agency of all people.

People-Centred Leadership: We value servant leadership that uplifts communities, prioritises lived experience, and builds power with, NOT for, those most affected by inequality and injustice.

Resilience and Local Ownership: We support locally led solutions that build resilience, encourage self-reliance, and honour indigenous knowledge and leadership.

Equity and Inclusion: We champion the full participation of all people, especially women, children, and marginalised groups. We recognise that diversity strengthens our collective well-being and that no one should be left behind.

Integrity and Accountability: We act with honesty, transparency, and responsibility in all our engagements. We are answerable to the communities we serve, our partners, and each other.

Collaboration and Pan-African Solidarity: We believe in working together across borders, sectors, and identities to promote unity, shared learning, and collective action across the continent.

Partnerships



To enhance its reach, credibility, and impact on policy and practice, SDA-Trust builds strategic and operational partnerships with:

- Network of African civil society organisations and grassroots movements
- Universities, research institutions and independent think tanks
- Government agencies, ministries and sub-national and local authorities
- Continental and Regional institutions (e.g., African Union, African Development Bank, ECOWAS, EAC, SADC, etc.)
- African philanthropic organisations, foundations, and individual donors.
- International development partners, foundations, and donors



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