CONCLUSION

OSIWA: Our Stories

Helping build open societies in West Africa is, and will continue to be, a work in progress. As these stories have shown, we are invested in a multitude of endeavors – from justice and human rights, governance and accountability, to media and minority rights. Each one of these projects (and many that are not laid out in these pages) seek in their own and complementarily ways to help lay the stones of foundation in creating a freer, fairer, safer and more equitable West Africa.

Along the way, we know, and we expect, to be confronted by the unexpected. There will continue to be political upheavals for some time to come as old leaders step down and new ones rise up. Social unrest is bound to persist as populations lay claim to their rights. And as the Ebola epidemic highlighted all too well, the potential for emergencies epidemics remains a very real and very deadly threat.

We need to be ready and we need to be flexible. Whatever the context, we are also cognizant that in our work good results and positive impact are the outcomes of effective planning – not mere chance. Understanding local realities, identifying influencing factors and assessing the availability of resources are key prior steps before supporting initiatives and expecting sustainable and impactful change.

OSIWA’s goal is to ally with partners and projects that aspire to lasting effects, while also being catalysts for changes in behavior, habits or context. To do this, we are rigorous in the review of each proposal and we try to be thorough throughout the entire monitoring and evaluation process.

To also value the joint effort between the Foundation and partner, we try to establish direct contact with each organization as much as possible. We also seek regular exchanges to understand the particular dynamics of each project. We understand that bringing about change is never a solitary nor one dimensional venture.

And while some of the partnerships are new and others are older, we all share one common and overarching goal: the vision and faith in the construction of a freer West Africa that is more integrated, more democratic and more equitable for both the current and future generations to come. And for us, this is the driving force that keeps us moving forward.

OSIWA’s work is driven by the vision, mission and values of creating an open society in West Africa – an environment where strong leaders and government institutions are accountable to their citizens, where natural resources are equitably distributed, and where human rights and rule of law prevail.
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