



West Africa



FORDFOUNDATION

*Working with Visionaries on the
Frontlines of Social Change Worldwide*

The *Ford Foundation* works with visionary leaders and organizations worldwide to change social structures and institutions so that all people have the opportunity to reach their full potential, contribute to society, have a voice in the decisions that affect them, and live and work in dignity.

This commitment to social justice is carried out through programs that strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, and advance human knowledge, creativity and achievement.



The year 2010 marks the 50th anniversary of the Ford Foundation's work in West Africa. Since 1960, when the foundation established an office in Lagos, we have been committed to strengthening democracy throughout the region. Today, as West Africa is on the verge of a new era of peace and prosperity, we are working with visionary leaders in civil society and government who are expanding participation in the democratic process and accelerating the pace of social change.

We envision a future in which West Africans and their governments leverage the region's extraordinary human and natural resources for the common good—a future in which all people have both the right and the opportunity to achieve their potential.



EMBRACING OPPORTUNITY IN WEST AFRICA

Some of Africa's most inspiring political developments—historic shifts from military regimes to constitutional rule, cessation of civil war in Sierra Leone and Liberia, and renewed commitment among diverse countries to a strong regional economy—have occurred in the western portion of the continent. With a vibrant and youthful population and a growing body of capable civil society organizations, West Africans are taking important steps toward strengthening the rule of law, tackling corruption, and promoting greater transparency and government accountability.

Yet these significant gains will be lost unless West Africans develop their fledgling democracies in ways that produce tangible benefits for the millions of people who are struggling just to survive: the 135 million West Africans who, according to the United Nations, live on less than \$1.25 a day; the more than 90 percent of urban residents who live in crowded slums without access to clean water; the majority of young people who are unemployed and have no job prospects; the many girls and women who are still vulnerable to disease and violence.

West Africa is one of the world's most richly endowed regions, with abundant agricultural land, a vast array of oil and mineral deposits; and an entrepreneurial, energetic and enterprising population. Now is the moment to define West Africa in the 21st century by leveraging the region's extraordinary human and natural resources for the common good and by building vibrant, healthy societies. We support leaders in government and civil society who are embracing this opportunity.

WHAT FORD IS DOING

The Ford Foundation is supporting people and organizations that are committed to building a new culture of transparency, effectiveness and excellence across institutions and to fostering democratic participation and equal opportunity. Our grant making focuses on projects that promote democratic values and engage citizens in advocating for their social and economic rights. We also fund improvements in government, with a focus on openness. We believe these approaches will lead to an environment favorable to development.

In addition, we are addressing the root causes of poverty in two key ways: by funding scalable programs that

stimulate private enterprise, with a focus on developing small- and medium-sized businesses, and by supporting projects that advance reproductive health and rights among young West Africans.

The majority of our grants—about 75 percent annually—support projects in Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa and the economic engine of the region. We believe that strengthening governance and economic opportunities in Nigeria will have positive effects throughout West Africa.

A HISTORY OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

The foundation's investments in West Africa today build on a half-century of work in the region and an unwavering commitment to social change even in the toughest of times. Our work began in 1958 with a grant to train government workers in Nigeria's western region. Since then, we have supported micro-finance and agricultural programs and the development of key human rights and women's rights movements in West Africa.

Early on, we funded higher education in an effort to prepare young West Africans to lead their newly independent nations. When the young democracies faltered and were replaced

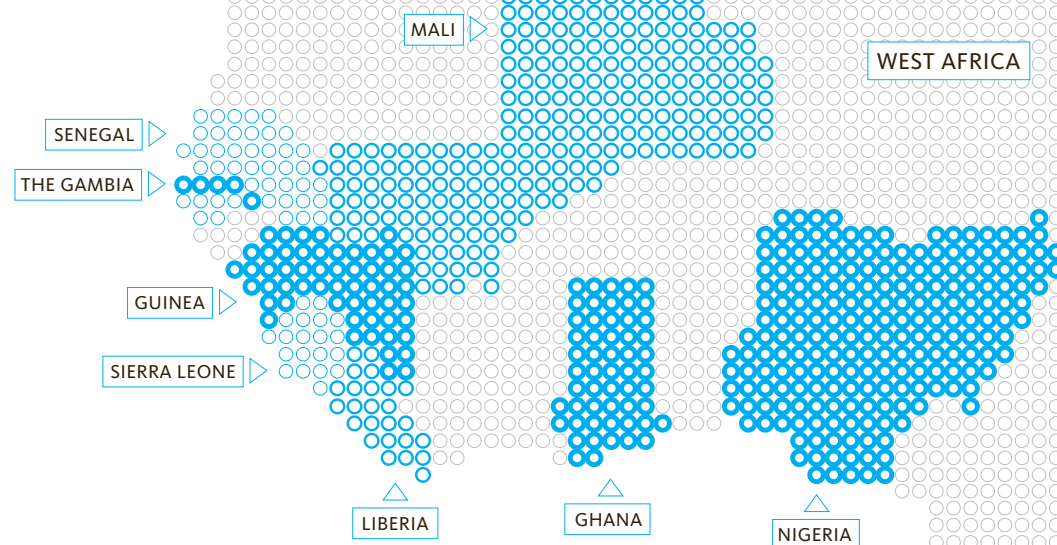
by military and autocratic governments, we stayed and our support for human rights came to the fore. We funded emerging civil society groups that carved out space for dialogue. The foundation also supported efforts to control the spread of HIV/AIDS, largely through education, at a time when a growing proportion of West Africans were becoming infected with the AIDS virus.

We responded to widespread civil strife beginning in the late 1990s by strengthening institutions working to promote peace and security, and also by supporting diverse voices in the media. As the conflicts ended and the region began to return to democratic rule, we focused on partnerships between government and civil society to promote the kind of good governance required to sustain the peace and to significantly reduce poverty and social exclusion. This remains our focus today.

SUPPORT FOR LASTING CHANGE

West Africa is poised to build a stable and prosperous future. Our aim is to help the people of West Africa create a region that is vibrant, healthy and democratic, one in which all people can live full and meaningful lives and achieve their potential.

SELECT STRATEGIES AND INVESTMENTS IN THE REGION



The foundation's past and present work in West Africa—a small sampling of which is offered on these pages—reflects our commitment to supporting progress over the long term.



GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

1958 A grant to the government of Western Nigeria supports fiscal management and economic planning.

TODAY our grants are helping to encourage full implementation of a new Nigerian law that mandates greater government fiscal responsibility.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

1962 A grant to the University of Ibadan funds the collection of Nigerian music and art for educational purposes.

TODAY we support efforts to preserve and make accessible ancient manuscripts and art that capture the region's rich history.



CIVIL SERVICE

1970 A grant to the government of Ghana funds policy reform and training for civil servants.

TODAY we support projects that make governments more transparent and accountable to the public.



MICRO ENTERPRISE

1987 Support for the Ondo State Country Women Association of Nigeria provides business training for rural women to start micro enterprises.

TODAY 50,000 entrepreneurs have been trained across the region and we're funding larger-scale efforts to cultivate a new generation of small businesses.



REPRODUCTIVE EDUCATION

1996 An investment in Action Health Incorporated leads to the development in 2003 of the National Family Life and HIV Education Curriculum for use in Nigeria's schools.

TODAY we support efforts to educate and empower youth who are not enrolled in school and may face pressures that put them at risk of disease, unwanted pregnancy and abuse.



PUBLIC AWARENESS

1999 TO PRESENT Investments in Communicating for Change fund educational programming on television and radio that raise awareness about issues, from maternal mortality to environmental protection.

TODAY we support civil society organizations that are increasing access to vital information on government policies and practices.



JUSTICE REFORM

2000–2006 Support for the Lagos State Ministry of Justice funded the establishment of Citizen Mediation Centres and Human Rights Protection Units in communities throughout the state.

TODAY these innovations have paved the way for projects that are expanding access to the courts and eliminating discriminatory decisions.



GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

2001 A grant to the University of Sierra Leone builds public support for the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

TODAY we fund numerous projects that engage citizens in the process of building governments that are truly accountable to the people.



WORKING ON THE FRONTLINES IN

West Africa

Promoting Transparent, Effective and Accountable Government

OUR GRANTEEES ARE LAYING THE GROUNDWORK for a new culture of excellence in government.

Over the past decade as democracy replaced single-party and military rule, political leaders in West Africa began shaping government to serve the people. The scale and challenges of such reform cannot be overstated. New leaders inherited governments with very little infrastructure and talent to address widespread poverty; rising crime; and a host of other problems. Yet there are clear signs of progress.

In countries where there had been virtually no formal checks on corruption within government, public agencies now regulate and monitor procurement practices, and oversight bodies are actively on the lookout for illegal transactions. Nine countries in the region are in the process of complying with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which aims to ensure that the vast wealth of the region's natural resources accrues to the public, and Liberia has already met EITI standards.

We support efforts throughout the region to make the workings of government more transparent, effective and accountable to the public. One of our grantees is building a coalition of informed citizens in Nigeria to accelerate implementation of the 2007 Fiscal Responsibility Act, which requires a new level of diligence and documentation in the management of public funds.

We also invest in projects that raise the level of professionalism among civil servants and engage citizens in the design and delivery of public services. For example, we support efforts to improve police community relations, both to raise morale among officers long discouraged by low expectations about what law enforcement can accomplish, and to give citizens a voice in establishing local crime-fighting priorities. In these and other projects we see the beginnings of a culture of excellence in government.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees work with civil society and government to ensure that government decisions and practices serve the public interest. Projects include:

Collaborating with citizens groups through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to monitor government policies related to energy, mining, trade and other industries and investments.

GRANTEE: Social Action (Social Development Integrated Centre)

Working with citizens and government officials in Nigeria to implement provisions of the 2007 Fiscal Responsibility Act.

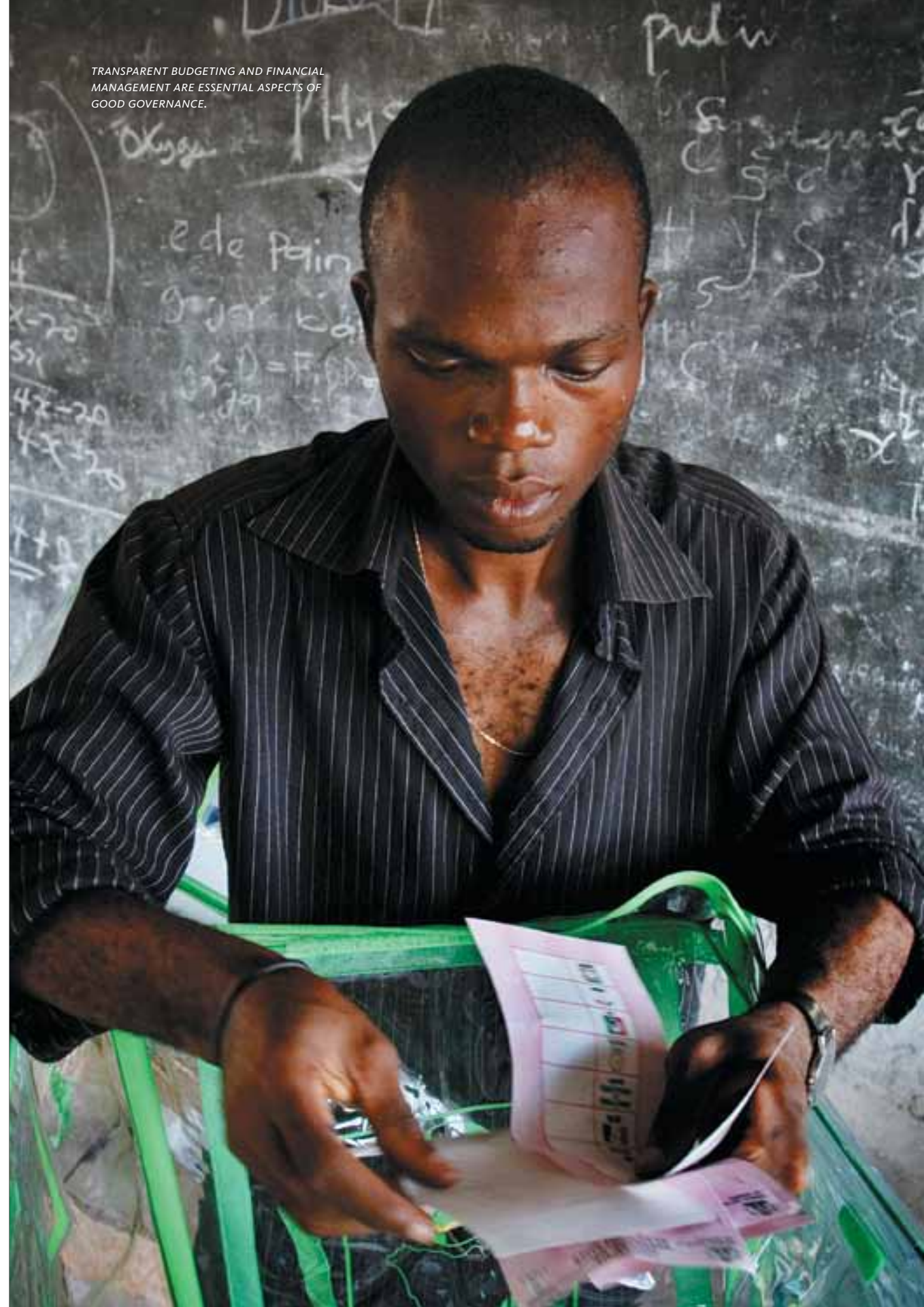
GRANTEE: Center for Social Justice

Improving police accountability through research and innovation, training and the development of strong police-community partnerships.

GRANTEE: CLEEN Foundation

For a full list of grantees, go to www.fordfoundation.org

TRANSPARENT BUDGETING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ARE ESSENTIAL ASPECTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE.



Advancing Economic and Social Rights

WE SUPPORT EFFORTS THAT ENGAGE CITIZENS in creating the kind of good governance that is essential for overcoming poverty and social exclusion.

Despite West Africa's wealth of natural resources, it remains the poorest region of the world's poorest continent, where the social and economic gap is widening between rich and poor, men and women, and young people and their parents. Economic growth over the past decade has yet to generate significant new jobs; guarantee the delivery of essential public services such as housing, water, sanitation, health-care and education; or create opportunities for women and youths. In West Africa, the dividends of democracy are not yet widely shared, but this can change.

We support organizations that engage citizens in shaping policies that meet the needs of ordinary people. Our grantees take a variety of approaches to grassroots education and empowerment. One of the organizations we support mobilizes communities to campaign for specific rights and protections. This organization was recently successful in halting forced evictions in metropolitan Lagos where affordable housing is scarce.

Recognizing the power of information, we fund efforts to safeguard freedom of the press as a tool to monitor government and increase access to information about public policies, practices and expenditures related to economic and social rights.

We also support projects that expand access to justice, building on a legacy of work that includes start-up funding in 1999 to create Citizens Mediation Centres throughout Lagos. Popular in local communities and known for providing a fair, fast and easily accessible alternative to the courts, the centres are inspiring examples of how civil society and government can work together to guarantee fundamental rights.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees use an array of approaches to promote citizen participation in securing fundamental economic and social rights. Projects include:

Addressing discrimination and corruption in the justice system to ensure equal access to the courts for poor and otherwise marginalized groups.

GRANTEE: Access to Justice

Combining research, advocacy, community organizing and litigation to advance economic and social rights.

GRANTEE: Social and Economic Rights Action Center (SERAC)

Training, networking, and disseminating information to help civil society promote economic and social rights through budget expenditure tracking, monitoring and evaluation in Nigeria.

GRANTEE: Socio-Economic Rights Initiative

For a full list of grantees, go to www.fordfoundation.org



TO BRIDGE THE ECONOMIC GAP, CITIZENS MUST BE ENGAGED IN SHAPING POLICIES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE.

Expanding Livelihood Opportunities for Poor Households

WE FUND EFFORTS TO GROW small rural and urban enterprises to stimulate economies and reduce poverty.

To be caught in the grip of poverty is a familiar experience in West Africa. Take the example of an enterprising woman who purchases fresh fish directly from local fishermen each day to sell in her coastal village. Because she has no access to refrigeration, she has to smoke any fish left at the end of the day and sell it at a much lower price. Despite her hard work, she is often unable to make a profit and continually struggles just to sustain her household. Her children, who already work alongside her, will inherit the same struggles.

Like this woman, the vast majority of people working in West Africa today—two-thirds according to the World Bank and United Nations—are part of an informal economy that is neither nurtured nor taxed. Moreover, most young West Africans are unemployed, with no prospects of a job regardless of their talents and education.

In urban areas, we support programs that expand the formal economy through the growth of private enterprise. Our grantees work with government to create business-friendly environments, and help emerging entrepreneurs access financing, reach new markets and manage their financial and human capital. We also support efforts to strengthen rural markets, expand participation in value chains, connect these markets with larger economies and help small producers meet increased demand for their products. Throughout the region, thriving local businesses not only provide stable jobs and raise household incomes but also infuse communities with optimism and new skill sets that spark further entrepreneurship.

Our goal is to bring the best enterprise development programs to scale and establish additional programs so that expanded economic opportunities and good jobs are not isolated events, available to only a few West Africans, but are widespread phenomena.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees use an array of approaches to nurture business and create jobs. Projects include:

Strengthening organizations such as microfinance banks, and researching new financial products and market support service innovations for the livestock and dairy sectors in rural Northern Nigeria.

GRANTEE: Centre for Microenterprise Development

Training and mentoring of low-income high school graduates in an entrepreneurial development program.

GRANTEE: Fate Foundation

Supporting policy advocacy, research and multi-stakeholder convenings to stimulate financial product innovations for rural and urban micro-, small- and medium-enterprises in Southwestern Nigeria.

GRANTEE: Development Initiative Network

For a full list of grantees, go to www.fordfoundation.org



PROGRAMS THAT BRING GIRLS TOGETHER
PROVIDE CAMARADERIE TO HELP THEM COPE
WITH THE CHALLENGES OF ADOLESCENCE.

Policies and Programs for Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health

OUR GRANTEES ARE PROMOTING reproductive health and improving life outcomes among the most vulnerable adolescents.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights in West Africa have improved significantly over the past 25 years, and we have supported many of these advances. Yet life outcomes for many girls growing up in poverty have yet to improve. Nearly 80 percent of young women in northeast Nigeria, for example, are married before age 18. The high maternal mortality rate among young West Africans suggests that roughly 1 in 10 of these girls will not survive into adulthood. Other risks of being female in West Africa today include genital mutilation, violence, HIV infection and being forced into sex work.

Our grants fund efforts to scale up the best programs and to reach the most vulnerable teens: those who never attended school or who dropped out, either because they married early or because school was a luxury their families could not afford.

One of our grantees operates four community centers in southern Nigeria that overflow on Sundays with girls, many of whom are not enrolled in school. This organization also educates adolescents through radio, television and Girls' Power, its quarterly newsletter. The organization's lessons about how to reach and change lives are influencing sexual and reproductive health programs across Africa.

Another priority is supporting policies and programs that connect reproductive health with economic opportunity, because young people with jobs have more freedom to make good choices about their own lives and about the quality of life in their communities.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Our grantees use a variety of approaches to promote reproductive health among adolescents. Projects include:

Using empirical evidence about what works to shape more effective reproductive health policies and programs.

GRANTEE: Action Health Incorporated (AHI)

Combining education with programming that helps girls in Nigeria develop self-esteem and build other life skills.

GRANTEE: Girls' Power Initiative

Using culturally sensitive approaches to reach adolescents in northern Nigeria's predominantly Muslim communities.

GRANTEE: Adolescent Health and Information Projects

For a full list of grantees, go to www.fordfoundation.org

Cultivating West Africa's Rich History and Heritage

IN ADDITION TO THE FOUR INITIATIVES described in this brochure, we support institutions entrusted with preserving the region's cultural heritage.

Ancient manuscripts, traditional art forms and historical monuments provide keys to the past for West Africans today. This knowledge—which often challenges conventional assumptions about Africa and Africans—and the pride it engenders are especially important for younger West Africans who are growing into leadership positions in the public and private sectors.

The restoration of manuscripts in Timbuktu, Mali, for example, debunks the widely held belief that African societies had no written or scholarly traditions before the colonial era. This project and others like it are creating jobs and cultivating a new generation of conservationists skilled in the age-old arts of calligraphy and bookbinding, as well as the latest digital technologies to make manuscripts available to researchers around the world.

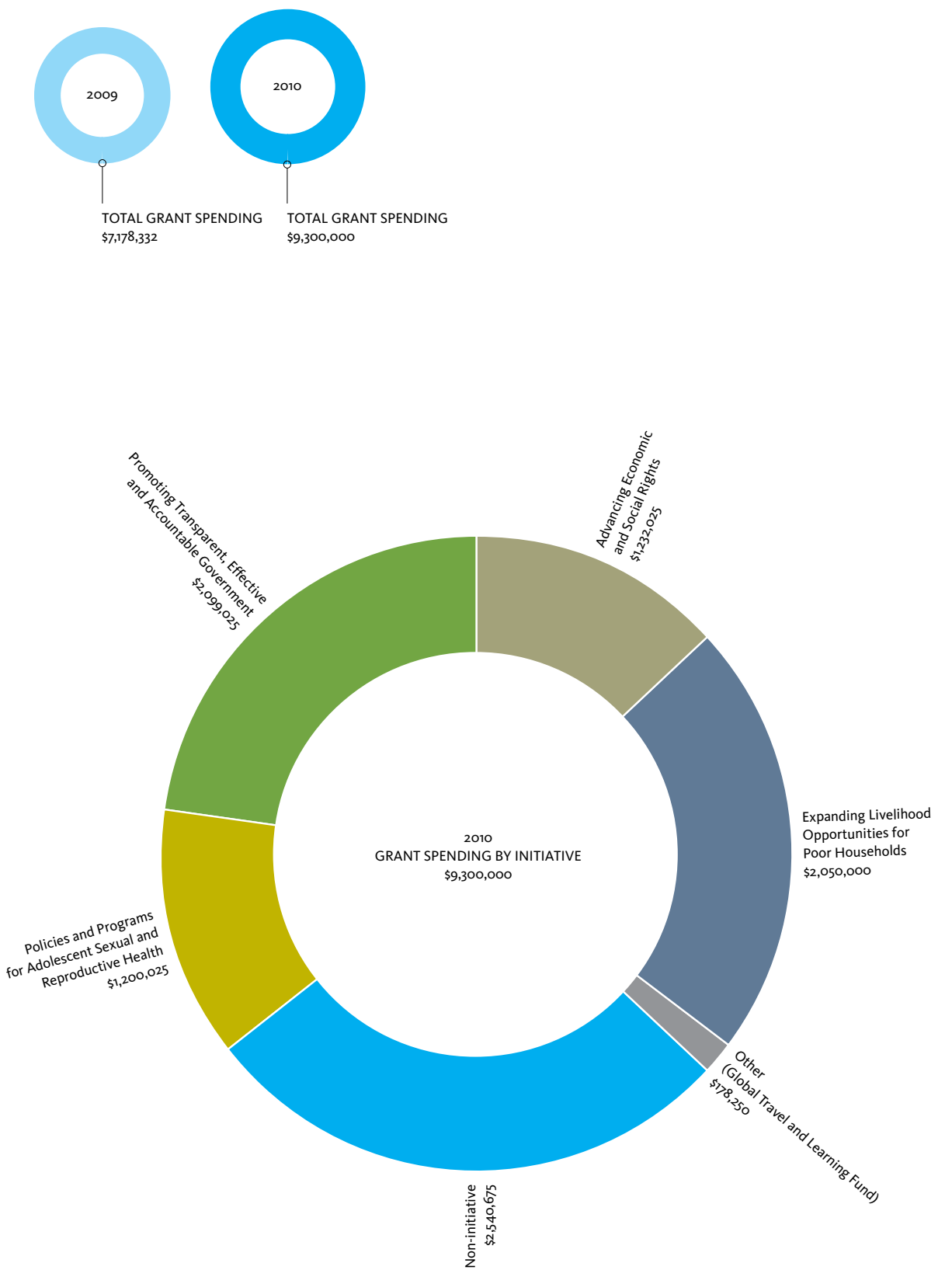
We support efforts to modernize museums to protect their collections and make them more accessible to the public. For example, a grant to the Arts and Business Foundation is helping to fund the construction of a conservation laboratory and temperature-controlled storage at the National Museum of Lagos for irreplaceable textiles, wood sculptures and other art.

We also fund professional development for museum staff in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone through a grant to the British Museum. And we are supporting renovations to the House of Slaves in Goree, Senegal—one of the region's most important historical monuments. These investments help ensure that West Africans can move into the future with a clear knowledge of the experiences and accomplishments of their ancestors and that visitors leave with a better understanding and appreciation of the region.

CONSERVATIONISTS ARE USING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY TO MAKE MANUSCRIPTS AVAILABLE TO RESEARCHERS GLOBALLY.



ISSUE	INITIATIVE
Democratic and Accountable Government	• <i>Promoting Transparent, Effective and Accountable Government</i>
Human Rights	• <i>Advancing Economic and Social Rights</i>
Economic Fairness	• <i>Expanding Livelihood Opportunities for Poor Households</i>
Sexuality and Reproductive Health and Rights	• <i>Policies and Programs for Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health</i>



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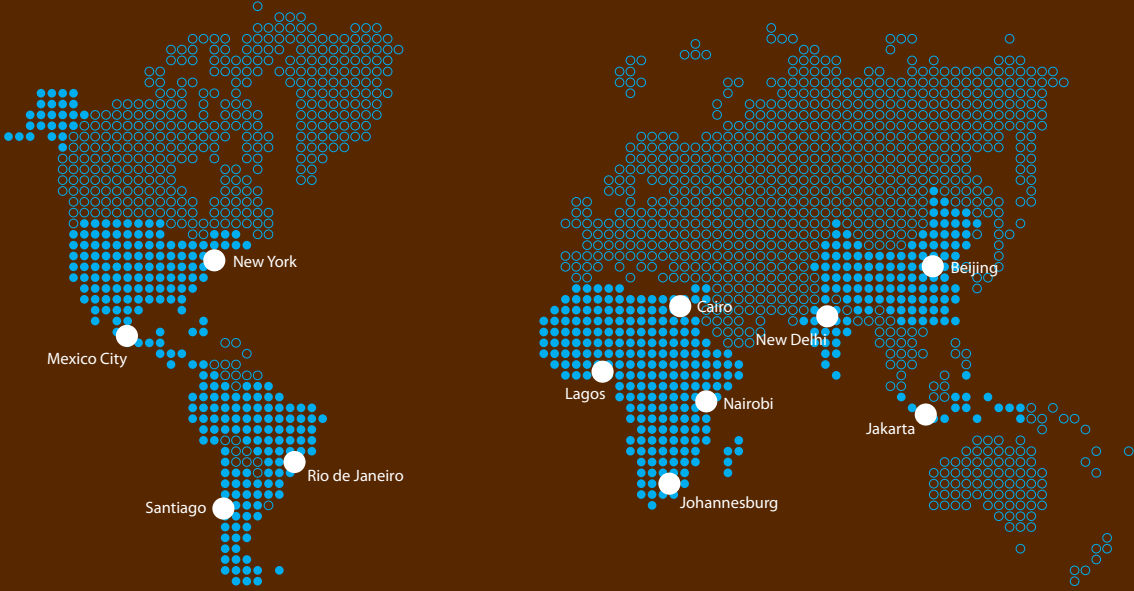
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TO LEARN MORE about the Ford Foundation and our grant making, visit www.fordfoundation.org

TO APPLY FOR A GRANT, visit www.fordfoundation.org/grants/grant-inquiry/west-africa where you will find a Grant Application Guide that describes our process and an online form you may use to submit a grant inquiry.



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