Progress Report: SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) – Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU)

2024/2025 Session

Executive Overview

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU) advances **Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)** by reinforcing institutional transparency, expanding legal education, upholding anti-corruption frameworks, and promoting peacebuilding across its campuses in Igbariam, Uli, and Awka. Anchored on the university's **"3Vs Agenda" (Values, Viability, Visibility)** under Vice-Chancellor Prof. Kate Azuka Omenugha, COOU strengthens governance through zero-tolerance policies against exploitation, legal training, inclusive decision-making, and public policy research in Anambra State and broader Nigeria.

Key Areas of Progress & Implementation

1. Legal Education, Justice, and Human Rights Training

COOU serves as a key training ground for legal professionals committed to the rule of law and human rights protection:

- **Faculty of Law (Igbariam Campus):** The Faculty of Law delivers accredited degree programs emphasizing professional ethics, constitutional law, public international law, and human rights. The curriculum prepares graduates for legal advocacy, judicial service, and public policy design.

- **Practical Clinical Legal Education & Advocacy:** Law students participate in moot court trials, legal aid exercises, and community sensitization on fundamental human rights, expanding access to legal literacy for underserved populations in host communities across Anambra State.

2. Institutional Governance, Integrity & Anti-Corruption

To build effective, accountable, and transparent administrative systems (Target 16.5 & 16.6):

- **Zero-Tolerance Enforcement:** COOU enforces strict disciplinary actions against administrative corruption, exam malpractice, grade manipulation, and student

extortion. Public reporting mechanisms, including public warnings and internal disclosures, reinforce deterrence and institutional integrity.

- **Meritocratic Governance & ICT Verification:** Administrative and academic staff promotions incorporate transparent ICT competency assessments and peer performance evaluations, curbing favoritism and strengthening accountability across university operations.
- **Reaffirmation of Institutional Core Values:** Academic departments (such as Political Science and Public Administration) routinely align their operational frameworks with the administration's 3Vs Agenda to deepen ethics, financial prudence, and institutional viability.

3. Peacebuilding, Civic Engagement & Public Policy Research

COOU leverages social science research to address regional conflict, governance bottlenecks, and democratic stability:

- **Political & Social Policy Studies:** Departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences (Political Science, Sociology, Public Administration) publish research on electoral integrity, conflict resolution, grassroots peacebuilding, and security governance in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Strategic Communication & Civic Trust:** COOU collaborates with professional bodies—such as the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR)—to train administrative personnel and scholars in crisis communication, public diplomacy, and transparent civic dialogue.

4. Democratic Student Representation & Campus Security

- **Student Union Government (SUG) & Civic Leadership:** COOU fosters democratic student governance through free, fair, and transparent SUG elections, empowering student representatives to participate in university committee decisions affecting student welfare.
- **Student Safety & Campus Security Frameworks:** Campus safety units—including student safety marshals and campus security networks—work collaboratively with local security agencies to prevent violence, suppress cultism, and maintain peaceful learning environments across Awka, Igbariam, and Uli.

Performance Summary against SDG 16 Targets

SDG 16 Target Area	COOU Operational & Academic Contribution	Impact Level
16.1 Reduce Violence & Related Deaths Everywhere	Campus security networks, safety marshals, and anti-cultism	**High** (Campus Safety)

SDG 16 Target Area	COOU Operational & Academic Contribution	Impact Level
	enforcement across all three campuses.	
16.3 Promote the Rule of Law & Ensure Access to Justice	Accredited Faculty of Law curriculum, moot court training, and community legal aid outreach.	**High** (Regional Legal Sector)
16.5 Substantially Reduce Corruption & Bribery	Zero-tolerance anti-extortion policies, transparent staff promotional testing, and public disciplinary notices.	**High** (Institutional Governance)
16.6 & 16.7 Develop Effective, Accountable Institutions & Participatory Decision-Making	3Vs Agenda governance, active SUG participation, and public relations partnerships (NIPR).	**High** (University System)

Strategic Recommendations for Acceleration

1. **Establish a Dedicated On-Campus Legal Aid Clinic:** Formalize a university-funded legal aid center where senior law faculty and students provide free legal advice and dispute mediation services for indigent community members.
2. **Institute an Open Governance & Financial Transparency Portal:** Launch a publicly accessible online portal detailing university procurement guidelines, capital projects, and institutional reports to showcase leadership in academic transparency.
3. **Form an Interdisciplinary Peace and Conflict Resolution Institute:** Create a specialized research center focusing on chieftaincy dispute mediation, land rights negotiations, and community conflict resolution within Anambra State and the South-East region.

Signature:  Date: 24/09/2026

Prof. Kate Azuka Omenugha, Fnipr

Vice Chancellor