

**TALKING POINTS FOR HIS EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR DR BUKOLA SARAKI,
EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KWARA STATE AND CHAIRMAN GOVERNORS' FORUM**

VISIT OF MR BILL GATES

1. WE APPRECIATE MR BILL GATES INTEREST AND SUPPORT TO NIGERIA IN ITS QUEST TO ERADICATE POLIO AND IMPROVE IMMUNIZATION AS MEANS FOR PRESERVING ITS HUMAN CAPITAL.
2. WHEN MR GATES VISITED NIGERIA IN FEBRUARY 2009, WE AT THE GOVERNORS FORUM COMMITTED OURSELVES TO DO ALL WE CAN TO ACHIEVE POLIO ERADICATION AND IMPROVE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES. (THE ABUJA DECLARATION OF 2009).
3. SINCE THEN, A LOT OF PROGRESS HAS BEEN RECORDED. LET ME OUTLINE A FEW OF THE AREAS OF PROGRESS:
 - a. THE CASES OF POLIO IN NIGERIA WERE REDUCED BY 50% IN 2009 COMPARED TO 2008. OVER THE SAME PERIOD, THERE WAS 90% REDUCTION IN TYPE 1 POLIO WHICH IS THE ONE MORE SEVERE. FROM JANUARY TO JUNE 2009 WE HAD 360 CASES OF POLIO AND ONLY 28 FROM JULY TO DECEMBER 2009.
 - b. THIS YEAR 2010, SO FAR WE ONLY HAVE 3 CASES OF POLIO! THIS SUCCESS WAS ACHIEVED AS A RESULT OF THE COMMITMENT OF ALL STATE GOVERNMENTS. WE RECOGNIZE THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE TRADITIONAL LEADERS.
 - c. IMPROVEMENT IN ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION HAS RESULTED IN REDUCTION OF UNIMMUNIZED CHILDREN IN NIGERIA BY 34% IN 2009 COMPARED TO 2008.
 - d. TO STRENGTHEN HUMAN RESOURCES FOR PHC, WE AS GOVERNORS HAVE PARTNERED WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE MIDWIVES SERVICE SCHEME IN ALL 36 STATES AND FCT. THE SCHEME HAS POSTED 2488 MIDWIVES IN 652 PHCs AROUND 163 REFERRAL GENERAL HOSPITALS ALL OVER NIGERIA.
4. DESPITE THIS PROGRESS, IT IS NOT YET TIME FOR COMPLACENCY. POLIO IS A DEADLY PARALYZING VIRUS THAT CAN COME BACK IF WE DO NOT SUSTAIN THE EFFORTS. HOWEVER IF WE SUCCEED IN STAMPING OUT POLIO IT CAN PROVE TO BE THE ARROW HEAD FOR REVITALIZING MANY ASPECTS OF OUR BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM.
5. BEYOND POLIO ERADICATION, WE WISH TO ENCOURAGE YOU AND YOUR FOUNDATION TO PARTNER WITH US IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY TO ADDRESS SOME OF THE BROADER HEALTH SYSTEM CHALLENGES THAT WE FACE AS A COUNTRY, INCLUDING HUMAN RESOURCES

DEVELOPMENT AT THE FRONTLINES AND HEALTH FINANCING THROUGH INSURANCE
MECHANISMS TO OFFER FINANCIAL PROTECTION FOR POOR HOUSEHOLDS.

6. ONCE AGAIN, WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP AND WISH YOU A VERY
SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO NIGERIA.