

The

# EXECUTIVE

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# SUMMARY

NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM



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NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH

## PHC LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

*Exceptional Leadership. Resilient PHC. Better Outcomes*

BILL & MELINDA GATES Foundation



Universal Health Coverage



Polio Eradication Initiative/Routine Immunization



Nutrition



unicef

HEALTH SECURITY



# GOVERNORS Launch

PHC CHALLENGE FUND



ISSN: 2714-5107

ALSO INSIDE

STATES CHARTER TO SUSTAIN FISCAL TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY REFORMS UNVEILED



**PROF. ABBA GAMBO**

## Curbing The Huge Post-Harvest Losses In The Agricultural Sector

*States should be encouraged to capitalize on their respective comparative advantages in agriculture, so that the whole value chain is further enhanced*

**N**igeria is a blessed with a great array of agroecological vegetational Zones, ranging from the arid Sahel Savanna in the extreme North, the milder Sudan Savanna, and the Guinea Savanna, in addition to the Rainforest, Mangrove, Swamps, and the altitude elevated Sites of the Mambila (in Taraba State), Jos (Plateau State) and Obodu (Cross-Rivers State). The diversity is further exemplified by about 3 months of rainfall per annum in the Sahel Savanna, 9 months per annum in the Guinea and even all year round in the Mangrove Swamp (Particularly, Forcados Island in Rivers State).

This is the greatest advantage Nigeria has as a country. Virtually all the flora and fauna of the world can be found or cultivated within this blessed country, coupled with the robust Manpower.

Nigeria within the present regime of President Muhammadu Buhari has made giant strides in the agricultural sector, the Rice Revolution, Establishment of Several Rice Mills across the country, job and wealth creation within the Rice corridor, special intervention from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) as well as other MDA's. With the above scenario, actual productivity has actually increased in Rice and Horticultural crops (Fruits, Vegetables, Roots and Tubers).

However Post-harvest loss is the major constraint to consumption. In the Horticultural sub-sector, the annual post-harvest loss is estimated at 59%, meaning for every

100 Oranges produced, 59 never get to processed. Same with Plantain, Bananas, Pawpaw, Mangoes, Pineapple, Guava, Cashew, Watermelon, Soursop, Yams, Potatoes, Tomatoes, Onions, Pepper, Carrots, Leafy vegetables etc.

Post-harvest loss actually starts at the farm through, Crude and rudimentary harvest systems, like stoning Mangoes, shaking of Citrus trees and the misuse of harvesting tools, Matchets, Cutlasses, and Sickles etc, as well as the deployment of untrained manpower for harvesting purposes.

The second major contributor to post-harvest loss the transportation. A recent survey showed that a Truckload of Tomatoes from Kano to Lagos passes through a record 27 different checkpoints, inter and intra states, coupled with rickety vehicles and bad roads, every stop at a checkpoint increases post-harvest loss.

The poor packaging of agricultural products in Nigeria unlike in developed climes, where specific packaging methods are used for specific crops, for example perforated paper bags for Apples, to allow for in-and-out flow of air but in Nigeria, poly bags are used, which absorb heat and transmit to the product thereby increasing post-harvest loss. It is also common to see in Nigeria, a single vehicle transporting onions from Wurno in Sokoto State to Port Harcourt in Rivers State, for example with additional carriage of livestock and human beings. A single drop of animal urine on any agricultural product catalysis the deterioration process leading to reduced shelf live and hence post-harvest loss.

The lack of value addition through agro-processing is also a major contributor to

post-harvest loss. Fiditi town near Ibadan, Oyo State is a famous depot for Citrus. Fiditi is synonymous with the thick aroma of fermenting Citrus. The same scenario plays out in Major production sites in the country; Plantain in Edo State, Pepper from Borno State, Brown beans from Yobe State, Yams from Benue and Taraba States etc. Due to the lack of agro-processing facilities, sun drying is the commonest method used. Roof tops, roadside (especially for Cassava and Corn) are common sights across the country.

The non-conformation of our agricultural products to enter the international market is another big challenge. International safety rules, quality control, and Standardization procedures are very difficult to attain. While most countries go for "Zero Chemicals" in agricultural produce, Nigeria is heavily chemicalized, from land clearing using Diesel tractors, chemical fertilizers to enhance growth and development of the crops, to the use of insecticides, pesticides, and fungicides for the control of pests and diseases, and the use of internationally banned substances such as DDT and Sniper to enhance growth and prolong shelf live. Any agricultural product with as low as 0.01% of such chemicals never gets to enter the European markets.

The utilization of modern harvesting methods, better packaging, modern transportation systems with the establishment of small scale, home based agro-processing plants can provide solutions to post harvest losses. In Abuja, fresh fruits are juiced together in mixtures of Citrus-Watermelon, Guava-Pineapple, Cashew-Mango, with addition of medicinal spices like Ginger and Garlic. These are unhygienic production methods. Similarly, the farmers can be sensitized to grow mainly for export, with good advocacy and sensitization of the international market.

Finally, States should be encouraged to capitalize on their respective comparative advantages in agriculture, so that the whole value chain is further enhanced. The up branding of agriculture as a full business venture should be unbundled by states. The re-orientation of the farmers towards an export-based production system will further increase the GDP as well as the livelihood of the farmers.

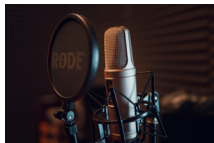
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# Commentary

## FROM THINKTANK TO DO-TANK

**T**he week of August 19th stands out in the life of the NGF. That week brought out NGF's true character and the kinds of favour it is enjoying at home, and abroad. There were handshakes between various institutional leaderships. For example, the handshake between the Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Saad Abubakar III and the UNICEF Country Director, Peter Hawkins could easily pass for "the handshake that saves lives". The Sultan's and Hawkins' speeches at the occasion say just as much. Hawkins' reference to the various colours that they support meant that their partnerships were genuine and much deeper than meets the eye. It is a friendship beyond work alone. On his part, the Sultan emphasised that the traditional and religious institutions, as represented by NAREC, which is co-chaired by the Christian Association of Nigeria CAN and the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, a fusion that the country so desperately needs will continue to support the initiatives of the NGF towards a better life for the citizenry.

It is evident from the gathering for the Primary Healthcare Challenge Fund that the NGF's current leaders have carved for the NGF a standard by which it would want the Forum to be rated, going forward. Dignitaries from far and near tramped in, many of them seeking to understand what the problems are and see if they have a remedy; some came in solidarity and some with bouquets of praise. It looked like a validation of the work the governors are doing or an agreement with the NGF operational manual.

In the long run, this would be the parameters by which the NGF would want to be defined.

It is important to note that with this very strong showing, the leadership of the Forum

is unapologetically moving from a thinktank to a do-tank. What started out as Governors' resolve to discuss the situation that the citizenry has found itself in, the state of the nation, eventually became a mini summit. A member of the presidential economic advisory council, Bismarck Rewane, spread out the framework of the state of the nation for all the governors to see. The event received the attention and concern of all of them and at the end they chairman Dr John Kayode Fayemi constituted a committee to review the presentation for Governors to adopt a common position on their next steps. A few governors could not make it to the Aso Rock Villa gathering but even they tendered unreserved apologies for their absence. Overall, the August 17th Governors' meeting was glamor galore. Only the Induction of Governors by the Forum compares in the fanfare that this meeting exuded. It is for this reason that the months edition of the Executive Summary is more pictorial than editorial. The World Bank, BMGF, The World Health Organisation, The Dangote Foundation and UNICEF were all represented by their top brass. For the weight of the occasion, only pictures can tell the story right.

The launch of the Primary Healthcare Challenge Fund marks the beginning of an era. There was also a side show; The SFTAS program which was unveiled with flourish where its main executioner from the World Bank office in Nigeria Yue Man Lee who was transferred out of the country jetted in to witness the occasion.

As if by coincidence, the following day the United States delegation of congressional council members and their staff visited the NGF secretariat, led by the Maybeth Leonard, Ambassador of the United States to Nigeria. In tow was the Representative of the World Health Organisation to Nigeria and a retinue of WHO officials. The NCDC was not left behind. They tagged along. That meeting and the Americans that came for it constituted the biggest delegation ever to visit the NGFS.

The euphoria had hardly died down when another group of professionals, the Stop TB Partnership in Geneva and their Nigerian counterparts graced the NGF Secretariat. They discussed disease control and how vaccine aided epidemics can be curbed.

This edition of the Executive Secretary serves dozens of pictorials from all the occasions and as they say, a picture speaks more than a thousand words.

Enjoy!

## THE TEAM

**Director-General**  
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Abubakar JIBIA  
**Executive Director (Res & Str)**  
Abdullateef SHITTU  
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**Photo Editor**  
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**Director Legal**  
Chijioko CHUKU

## PHC LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE FUND INDICATORS

Indicator 1: State budget is informed by annual operational plan (linked to the SSHDP) with evidence of budgetary release for execution of AOP activities			
Domain	SN	System	Max Score
Definition	1	An annual operational plan has been developed, approved and disseminated on or before the first month of the planning year	1
	2	It is based on data driven analysis of the health situation of the state, including gender analysis	1
	3	The AOP reflects a translation of the SSHDP	1
	4	Sets out clear and realistic deliverables and costed activities for achieving them that promotes the delivery of integrated health services with an emphasis on primary health care and essential public health functions - includes activities that explicitly addresses gender barriers	1
	5	The state health budget is based on the annual operational plan including how extrabudgetary resources (donors, private sector and other contributions) will be allocated	1
	6	Proportion of approved budgetary release	10
Indicator 2: Number State Executive Council meetings where PHC performance was discussed with clear actions for improvement			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	Report of PHC performance review conducted for the reference quarter, including gender analysis	1
	2	Presentation of the performance review at the council meeting as evidence by agenda and council extract	1
	3	Clear council resolutions on key challenges and corrective actions to improve PHC performance	1
	4	Evidence showing that previous council resolutions on PHC has been implemented	1
	5	Proportion of previous council resolutions implemented	5
Indicator 3: Number of monitoring visits conducted by State Governor to PHC facilities			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	Personal visit of Governor to PHC facility outside the state capital in support of PHC system improvement	1
	2	A session during the visit for the Governors and delegation to interact with facility management committee (of which women groups are part of it) to understand challenges and needs	1
	3	Quarterly visit must be to different PHC facilities in different LGAs	1
Indicator 4: Number of biannual meetings held by State Governor with traditional leaders to discuss PHC issues			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	Meeting is held at least once every six months the Governor and diverse community stakeholders - traditional leaders council, civil society organizations and women groups, to discuss PHC specific issues and agree on actions to improve performance of the system	1
	2	Presentation by the health sector on community engagement challenges and recommendations for PHC improvement, including WDC functionality and gender barriers	1
	3	Minutes of meeting indicating clear action steps with responsibilities/accountabilities and timelines	1
	4	Action tracker showing the proportion of implementation of actions from the previous meeting	5

## PHC LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE FUND INDICATORS

Indicator 5: Number of PHC taskforce meetings held, with the Chairperson (Deputy Governor) present			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	State PHC taskforce/committee meets at least once every quarter with the Deputy Governor presiding	1
	2	Participation of at least one LGA Chairman from each senatorial district	1
	3	Minutes of such deliberations and action steps with clear responsibilities/accountabilities and timelines are recorded	1
	4	Discussion of gender barriers and recommendations are included in the meeting	1
	5	Action tracker showing the proportion of implementation of actions from the previous meeting	5
Indicator 6: Enabling environment for Nutrition programing in the state			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	Evidence of a functional State Committee on Food and Nutrition (SCFN) with TOR aligned with the State and National Policies on Food and Nutrition	1
	2	Multisectoral and multistakeholder (all nutrition-aligned MDAs and members from Academia, CSOs, women groups and private sector) representation in the SCFN	1
	3	Evidence of quarterly meetings, chaired by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Budget and Planning with detailed records of meeting.	1
	4	Action tracker showing the proportion of implementation of actions from the previous meeting	5
	5	Availability of a current state specific costed Multi-sectoral plan of Action approved by the Executive	1
	6	Availability of a list of nutrition interventions budgeted for in the annual budget of all nutrition-aligned ministries	1
	7	Proportion of approved budget released from all nutrition interventions in all the nutrition-aligned ministries	10
Indicator 7: Appropriate mechanisms and processes are in place for BHCPF implementation and oversight at state and facility levels			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	State BHCPF Ministerial Oversight Committees is meeting regularly (at least every quarter) according to its TOR	1
	2	At least 80% of ward focal PHC facilities have met the criteria for accessing fund from the BHCPF (NPHCDA & NHIS gateways) urban/rural ratio	1
	3	At least 100% of facilities that received fund during previous disbursement have retired the funds received	1
	4	Proportion of ward focal PHC facilities receiving complimentary funding from state government source	5
Indicator 8: Proportion of sampled focal PHC facilities with data verification factor of between .95 and 1.05 for selected coverage indicators			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition		This indicator is a multidimensional index defined as the degree of disparity between verified counts for selected indicators in sampled facility records, and reported values for the same facilities in DHIS2 platform to be calculated as the recounted number of events from source documents divided by the reported number of events from the DHIS2.	
		To score a point for this indicator, at least 80% of sampled ward focal facilities should achieve a data verification factor of between .95 and 1.05 for the following indicators for the quarter under review: Antenatal coverage, Penta 3, malaria treatment using ACT	10

## PHC LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE FUND INDICATORS

Indicator 9: Proportion of ward focal PHC facilities that meet the minimum staffing requirements for each level in line with state's MSP			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	Minimum Service Package (MSP) developed for the state	1
	2	Developed Minimum Service Package (MSP) approved by the Governor/Executive Council	1
	3	MSP has clearly defined minimum staffing requirement for each level of care	1
	4	Existence of a costed Service Delivery Plan (SDP)	1
	5	Proportion of ward focal PHC facilities meeting the minimum staffing requirement for level according to the MSP, data to be disaggregated by sex.	11
Indicator 10: Percentage of ward focal PHC facilities that have a core set of essential health commodities and medicines consistently in the last 3 months			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition		The indicator is a multidimensional index defined as a proportion (%) of health facilities that have a defined core set of health and nutrition commodities and medicines (Artemisinin based combination therapy, Family planning commodities, Vaccines, Iron Folate, Ready to Use Therapeutic Food, HIV testing kit, Misoprostol and Chlorhexidine) consistently for the last three months relative to the total number of ward focal health facilities.	5
Indicator 11: DQA-adjusted coverage of essential health services as measured by RMNCAH+N scorecard			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	The composite indicator defined as the geometric average coverage of essential services based on nine tracer interventions that include couple years of protection, antenatal coverage, Iron-Folate supplementation for women of child bearing age, skilled birth attendance, postnatal care coverage for newborns, Vitamin A supplementation, HIV counselling and testing for pregnant women, Penta 3 coverage, and Malaria treatment using ACT.	10
	2	A composite score will be calculated for each state taking into account the margin of error for each indicator	10
Indicator 12: State Level PHC Challenge for LGA Council Chairmen			
Domain		System	Max Score
Definition	1	• State develop level PHC challenge for LGA Chairmen approved by State Exco	1
	2	• State PHC Challenge Technical/Steering Committee established and inaugurated	1
	3	• Independent Varification Agent Selected with clearly defined ToR	1
	4	• Independent Judging Panel Selected/appointed	1
	5	• LGA Chairmen fully sensitized and State PHC Challenge activities launched	1
	6	• Activities commenced with measurable progress based on defined timeline.	1
<b>Total Maximum Score</b>			<b>6</b>
<b>OVERALL MAXIMUM TOTAL SCORE</b>			<b>128</b>

**TARGETING ROBUST PHC SYSTEM**

# Governors Recommit to Seattle Declaration

At the official launch of the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge Fund on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, governors of the 36 states and the federal government reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen primary health care system in the country.

Unquestionably, the Primary Health Care (PHC) approach is the most effective way to sustainably solve contemporary health and health system challenges. It is foundational to achieving the shared global goals in Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

But while great strides have been made in health outcomes globally over the past several decades, many ongoing challenges still subsist. And these are no exceptions in Nigeria.

The foregoing scenarios apparently informed a fundamental intervention captured in the November 12 & 13, 2019 roundtable on PHC and human capital development held by Alhaji Aliko Dangote, Bill Gates with the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), the Ministry of Health and the NPHCDA all in attendance.

The forum reflected on the states' government development agenda for immunization, PHC and human capital development. It also mirrored NGF's enduring partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates and Aliko Dangote Foundations.

The pivotal roundtable birthed the Seattle Declaration which reaffirmed the

commitment of the NGF to strengthen leadership and accountability for the PHC system at the state level as well as accelerate Nigeria's progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and sustainable economic growth.

To fast-track implementation of the Seattle Declaration, the NGF in conjunction with the National Primary Health Care Development Agency and UNICEF is implementing the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge to motivate, track and publicly recognize states' progress in fulfilling the commitment.

The official launch of the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge Fund on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, was indeed a milestone event where governors of the 36 states recommitted to the Seattle Declaration proclaimed three years ago.

The sedate ambience of the Banquet Hall, Presidential Villa, Abuja, perceptibly lent an introspective atmosphere which its partners perhaps needed to recommit to the seven key tenets of the Seattle Declaration.

His Excellency, Dr. John Kayode Fayemi, Chairman of NGF and Governor of Ekiti State fittingly captured the spirit needed for the bracing journey. "If you want to walk fast, walk alone but if you want to walk far, you walk together and we hope to walk far and sustain this initiative as we walk together," he told his raptly attentive audience which included the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar 111, and President, Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, Archbishop Daniel Okoh, amongst other top government functionaries.

Grabbing the bull by the horns, Dr. Fayemi proclaimed, "Today, we are pleased to restate our commitment to building a resilient primary health care system as evidence has shown that PHC has the potential to expand attainment of Universal Health Coverage to as much as 80% of the population."

He then dove into the core of his presentation: "The Nigeria Governors' Forum, representing the 36 states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, hereby affirm our commitment to strengthen the primary healthcare system in the country. We therefore adopt and confirm our commitment in line with the Seattle Declaration as outlined:

"Improve the governance of the primary healthcare system at the subnational level by fully implementing the Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR) policy and providing active leadership for PHC through regular engagement with relevant PHC stakeholders and quarterly PHC performance review at the State Executive Council meetings.

"Promote progressive increase in PHC FUNDING by ensuring efficient budgeting that is aligned to annual operational plans, promptly releasing approved

stewardship. The PHC Leadership Challenge aims to address these bottlenecks as it strives to build a resilient PHC system."

Prominent religious leaders in attendance also made their pitches. The Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar 111 and the Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, pledged their supports for governors of the 36 states as they seek to enthrone an effective Primary Healthcare system in the country.

Speaking at the launch the Sultan noted that since health was wealth, he was pledging his support for the successful implementation of primary health care across the country. On his part, the President, Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, Archbishop Daniel Okoh, tasked the governors on vigorous pursuit of the initiative and spoke on the need to ensure the programme was implemented for the benefits of the citizens living in the grassroot.

Peter Hawkins, the outgoing UNICEF Representative in Nigeria, drew enthusiastic applause from the audience when he adroitly enlisted an example of leadership from the English Premiership League which incidentally enjoys considerable viewership in Nigeria.

Hear him: "The Sultan and I over the weekend were reflecting on our own talents. I suggest that at 4-0 after thirty-five minutes (Manchester United Vs. Brentford FC), his challenge was more than mine after 1-0 over 90 minutes (Nottingham Forest Vs. Westham United). However, going back to the 1992/93 season, the Reds (Man-U) lost their first two matches for the season and yet won the English Premiership. It's all about leadership. It's not where you start from; it's how you finish."

According to Hawkins who was UNICEF Representative in Iraq, worked for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), and with Save the Children UK as Regional Director East/Central Africa (London HQ), the Primary Healthcare Leadership Challenge "Is also an opportunity for sharing experiences - in each geographical zone and states - and challenging each other while coordinating with other sectors with regards to quality of service in PHC."

Perhaps on a valedictory, reflective note, Hawkins observed that "The focus on investments on you and your PHC is now. I want to thank the Nigeria Governors' Forum and its leadership. I also want to thank Bill and Melinda Gates and Aliko Dangote Foundations for their time and millions to the PHC in Nigeria. This challenge - and it is a challenge - is about leadership.

"As I step down as UNICEF Rep in Nigeria, this is my challenge to you; this is my legacy to you. Again, it's about the result at the center - this year and next year. It's not where you start today. It's your leadership. I will be watching from far."

Cut to the bone, until new knowledge births other new-fangled options, the Primary Health Care (PHC) approach remains the most effective and holistic strategy to engage contemporary health and health system challenges. Its capacity to aid achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is hardly disputable.

Three years after the flagship Seattle Declaration, the August 2022 'Abuja Declaration' driven by the Primary Healthcare Leadership Challenge which essentially recommit to the former, speaks to the imperatives of exceptional leadership, more resilient PHC and ultimately better outcomes.

That's the way to go.

Today, we are pleased to restate our commitment to building a resilient primary health care system as evidence has shown that PHC has the potential to expand attainment of Universal Health Coverage to as much as 80% of the population



budget to the state PHC Board and PHC facilities and ensuring that there is a mechanism in place for BHCPF implementation and oversight at the state and facility levels.

"Recruit requisite health workforce to ensure that all PHC facilities have the minimum staffing requirement appropriate for their level in line with the state's minimum service package. Institute a culture of use of EVIDENCE for decision making by ensuring that the data quality across all PHC facilities is progressively improved.

"Develop a State-led and State-owned LGA level PHC Leadership Challenge for LGA Chairmen for sustainability and strengthening the commitment of the LGA Chairmen to PHC."

Drawing attention to the recent data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) the NGF Chairman expressed elation at improvement in some of the health indices such as Immunization coverage. His words: "The National Bureau of Statistics launched the MICS/NICS results and it is gratifying to note improvement in some of the health indices such as Immunization coverage which increased from 33% to 57%.

"However, we know that much still needs to be done to achieve desired results, especially in the areas of human resources for health, financing, and







# UN Officials and US Congressional Staffers on a Global Immunisation Learning Trip to the NGF

**A** team of UN Officials and US Congressional Staffers together paid a fact-finding visit to the Chairman of the NGF at the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat (NGF) to discuss Nigeria's healthcare sector and developments spanning from polio eradication to COVID-19 vaccination and Nigeria's preparedness for another potential pandemic.

The visit was led by the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Ambassador Mary Beth Leonard.

Ambassador Mary Beth Leonard said that health is significant and makes a tangible difference in people's lives. "We want to look at polio and how the U.S. is spending its money on health and how we can better shape things globally," said Ambassador Leonard.

The Chairman of the NGF, Dr John Kayode Fayemi welcomed the delegation to the NGF Secretariat and



Brian Massa, Director, Global Health Advocacy, Immunization and Global Health Security with the NGF Chairman, Dr Kayode Fayemi and the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Mary Beth Leonard. The Director-General of the NGF, Mr Asishana Bayo Okauru smiles in the back.

stated that the NGF is a non-partisan body that primarily focuses on policy.

Dr Fayemi added that health is a priority even among the six core priorities of the NGF. That when meetings are held, the health team in the NGF Secretariat comes up with a progress report on what each state has been doing with immunisation coverage and COVID-19 vaccination. "We intend to know what is done in states to ensure that they achieve maximum coverage," he said.

The Chairman added that they take the information back to health commissioners and the Health Commissioners are the primary drivers of the healthcare system in their states. As to some of the successes of the forum, Dr Fayemi said that the NGF's response to polio led the NGF to become the coordinating centre for dealing with all the measures put in place.

To have polio eradication, what



UN Officials and U.S. Congressional Staffers make a visit to the NGF Secretariat with the Chairman of the NGF, Dr Kayode Fayemi.

works for the NGF is partnerships. The polio crisis was the first time the NGF was delving into a health issue that was a challenge and with the cooperation or partnerships with traditional leaders, to handle assumptions and rumours connected to the polio campaign, the Forum triumphed.

For the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chairman pointed at the existence of a National Steering Committee. "We have a mechanism we follow in states that have helped us to address the COVID-19 pandemic."

In addition, the Governors have also worked on policies such as the National Health Act which was passed in 2014 to achieve universal health coverage.

Furthermore, the Chairman emphasized that Governors' wives have established the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum which makes an impact on the lives of Nigerian women and children.

During the pandemic, one of the steps that the First Ladies took was to declare a state of emergency on gender-based violence.

In June 2020, only 14 states signed the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP). By December of last year, up to 30 states have signed the Act.

To support survivors of gender-based violence, the First Ladies have also established sexual assault referral centres in their state.

Dr Fayemi said that in Ekiti State, they have a sexual assault referral centre and a naming and shaming



The staff at the NGF Secretariat with the Director General of the NGF, Mr Asishana Bayo Okauru, the Senior Health Advisor, Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab, the Director of Media and Public Affairs, Mr Abdulrazaque Bello Barkindo, Senior Health Specialist, Dr Chinekwu Oreh and the Executive Director of Strategy and Research, Mr Lateef O.T Shittu

the social safety net for disabled Nigerians.

Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab, the Senior Health Advisor at the NGF said that the basic health provision fund is intended to help vulnerable people access care, however, human resource and the use of data remain challenges to tackle.

Dr Ahmad also admonished all to consider how innovative the forum can be adding however, that the 1% coming from the federal government is quite infinitesimal.

As to the question of the social safety net for disabled Nigerians, Dr Ahmad said that there is a law protecting people living with disabilities just as there are varying support mechanisms at the subnational level.

A roll call of the U.S. officials in the secretariat include Sofia Deiro, Legislative Assistant, Congressman Tom Cole, Erin Doty, the Legislative Director to Representative Raul Ruiz, Leah Hill, Legislative Director, Senator Cory Booker, Erin O'Quinn, the Chief of Staff to Congresswoman Kim Schrier, Carter Thompson, the Legislative Aide & Appropriations Coordinator to Senator Chris Coons, Merrilee Rogers, the Legislative Assistant to Representative, Jake Auchincloss, Sebastian Wigley, the Legislative Assistant to Representative Young Kim.

From the UN Foundation, there were Brian Massa, the Director of Global Health Advocacy for Immunization and Global Health Security, Glendora (Gigi) Meikle, the Senior Manager for International Engagement and Advance, Rachel Bowen Pittman, the Executive Director of the United Nations Association of the USA.

Brian Massa, Director, Global Health Advocacy, Immunization and Global Health Security, Carter Thompson, Legislative Aide & Appropriations Coordinator, Senator Chris Coons, Merrilee Rogers, Legislative Assistant, Representative Jake Auchincloss, Leah Hill, Legislative Director, Senator Cory Booker, Sebastian Wigley is a Legislative Assistant for Representative Young Kim, Sofia Deiro, Legislative Assistant, Congressman Tom Cole



policy for offenders and that has been effective.

The Chairman of the NGF also emphasized that the First Ladies' work spans across to cancer and substance abuse. "We insist on states developing their own plan. We work with development partners and emphasize what would improve our health indices in Nigeria," he said.

As it relates to the challenges, it includes funding health and human resource personnel.

The U.S. Congressional staffers asked the NGF Secretariat other questions that bordered on the implementation of the basic health provision plan and

**We intend to know  
what is done in states  
to ensure that they  
achieve maximum  
coverage**



# Handshakes That save lives



1 His Excellency meets His Eminence.



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1 The Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III greeted by Gombe State Governor, Alhaji Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya.

2 Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire exchanges pleasantries with Kano State Governor, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje.

3 Sokoto State Governor and Vice Chairman of the NGF, Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal exchanges pleasantries with Ebonyi State Governor, Engr. Dave Umahi Nweze.

4 Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki with the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III

5 Archbishop Daniel Okoh, President of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Niger State Governor, Abubakar Sani Bello, the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Saad Abubakar III, Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu and the Vice Chairman and Governor of Sokoto State, Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal, Nigeria's country Director of Bill & Melinda Gate foundation Mr. Jeremie Zoungrana and a representative of Dangote Foundation, Zouera Youssoufou.



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His Excellency meets His Eminence.



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**1** Sokoto State Governor and Vice Chairman of the NGF, Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal greets Osun State Governor, His Excellency, Adegboyega Oyetola.

**2** Archbishop Daniel Okoh, President of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kwara State Governor, Abubakar Sani Bello, the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Saad Abubakar III and Nigeria's country Director of Bill & Melinda Gate foundation Mr. Jeremie Zoungrana.

**3** Nasarawa State Governor, His Excellency, Abdullahi Sule shakes hands with NGF Chairman, Dr Kayode Fayemi.

**4** Taraba State Governor, Arch. Darius Dickson Ishaku with Ebonyi State Governor, Engr. Dave Umahi Nweze and Plateau State Governor, Rt. Hon. Simon Bako Lalong.

**5** Ebonyi State Governor, Engr. Dave Umahi Nweze greets the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III

**6** Osun State Governor, Adegboyega Oyetola shakes hands with Ondo State Governor, Akeredolu Oluwarotimi

**7** Ondo State Governor, Akeredolu Oluwarotimi with Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki and UNICEF Representative in Nigeria, Peter Hawkins

**8** Peter Hawkins, the UNICEF Representative in Nigeria greets the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III.



## Hanshakes That save lives



**1** Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire greets the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Saad

**2** Dr Kayode Fayemi, the Chairman of the NGF greets Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire smiling is the Director of NPHCDA, Dr Faisal Shuaib

**3** Osun State Gov. His Excellency, Adegboyega Oyetola greet the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III

**4** Governor of Ondo State, His Excellency Arakunrin Akeredolu shakes hands with Gombe State Governor, His Excellency, Alhaji Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya.

**5** Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire, Dr Kayode Fayemi, the Chairman of the NGF, Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Saad Abubakar III with Vice Chairman of NGF, Sokoto State Governor, Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal and the Director of NPHCDA, Dr Faisal Shuaib displaying the signed commitment.

**6** Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe with Ebonyi State Gov. Dave Umahi Nweze greet the Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III.

**7** Edo State Governor, Mr. Godwin Obaseki with Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Olusola Sanwo-Olu.

**8** The Sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Sa'ad Abubakar III exchanges pleasantries at the launch of the PHC fund, with Deputy Governor of Enugu State, Lolo Cecilia Ezeilo



# Health: Gov. Inuwa Commits To Increase Primary Health Care Funding

**G**ombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, earlier today, attended the official lunch of the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge Fund Project held at the Banquet Hall of the Presidential Villa in Abuja. The high level engagement was organised by the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) in collaboration with the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), UNICEF and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).



Gov. Inuwa

Governor Inuwa Yahaya and his colleagues under the auspices of the Nigerian Governors' Forum, NGF, the Ministers of FCT and Health, the Sultan of Sokoto and the President of CAN, Leadership of the Gates Foundation, President of the Aliko Dangote Foundation, Heads of multi-lateral and bilateral agencies and implementing partners in Nigeria witnessed the launch.

The Governors, after the launch, made a statement of commitment to strengthening primary health care system in their respective states, through improving the governance of the PHC as a sub national level by fully implementing the primary health care under one roof policy.

Governor Inuwa and his colleagues have also undertaken to promote progressive increase in primary health care funding by ensuring efficient budgeting that is aligned to annual operational plans, promptly releasing approved budget to the state primary health care board, and primary health care facilities.

The PHC Leadership Challenge fund aims at incentivising high-level oversight and accountability at the level of the Executive Governors to propel States to build public health capacities for evidence-based planning and monitoring, with long term sustainability by periodically tracking progress towards implementing the Seattle Declaration.

Under the programme, progress will be tracked using an agreed set of indicators and states who meet these indicators will be awarded accordingly. This novel project is seen by critical stakeholders as a likely game changer in the collective drive to revitalize and strengthen the PHC system with the aim of bringing the states an edge closer to achieving universal health coverage in Nigeria.

**To promote progressive increase in primary health care funding by ensuring efficient budgeting that is aligned to annual operational plans, promptly releasing approved budget to the state...**



Gov. Bello

## Niger Gov. Decries Low Patronage Of State Contributory Healthcare Scheme

Niger State Governor and Chairman North Central States Governors' Forum (NCSGF), Abubakar Sani Bello has decried the low level patronage by Nigerites of the State Contributory Healthcare Scheme.

The governor stated this while receiving a report/presentation of the end of year review and performance of the State Primary Healthcare Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The governor who blamed the low level of patronage of the scheme on lack of adequate awareness, also believed that people are somewhat cynical because they do not have confidence in the system because, when they pay for premium services they don't get value for their money.

He however expressed hope that when people begin to enjoy the benefits, more and more will register adding that the whole scheme is relatively new to the people unlike elsewhere in the world where it is fully operational and even mandatory.

The governor expressed hope that the health insurance scheme will pick-up in the state stressing it was the only way hospitals will be properly maintained and sustainable in the long term.

Governor Sani Bello acknowledged the health sector requires huge investment and lots of resources stressing that the solution is to ensure that the system fully integrates the healthcare system and funds it adequately.

He assured that the state government will continue to engage and fulfil its obligations to development partners and donors especially with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Governor commended the Ministry of Health and the Primary Healthcare Development Agency who stood firm and ensured that the state government succeeds in the execution of the primary health care policies.

Earlier, the State Commissioner of Health and Hospital Services, Dr. Mohammed Makusidi, enumerated the countless achievements and successes recorded by the state government through the partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



Nafeesah

## VAP Act: Group condemns husband's release after brutalising Adamawa journalist

The National President, National Association of Women Journalists, Ladi Bala, has condemned the Adamawa State Police Command for releasing a man, Ibrahim Aliyu, who was arrested for brutalising his wife, a female journalist, Nafeesah Vand, working with the Adamawa State Broadcasting Corporation.

PUNCH Metro had reported that Aliyu, a former worker with the defunct Power Holding Company of Nigeria, was arrested over domestic violence which endangered the life of the female journalist suing for divorce from her estranged husband.

The incident sparked public outrage with various agencies, including the National Union of Journalists, National Association of Women Journalists, the wife of the Adamawa

State Governor, Lami Fintiri, calling for the prosecution of the suspect in line with Violence against Persons Prohibition Law, already enforced in the state.

However, on Tuesday, Aliyu was reportedly released after he and Nafeesah reached an amicable solution following mediation over the case being investigated by the police.

Reacting to the development, the President, NAWOJ, Ladi Bala, took exception to the out of court settlement and condemned the police for not ensuring the prosecution of the matter.

Bala was said to be in the state to meet with the state Commissioner of Police, Sikiru Akande, over the case.

She said, "Nafeesah is not in the right frame of mind to make any concise decision as a brutalised victim."

The Director, Media and Public Affairs of the Nigerian Governors' Forum, Abdulrazaque Bello-Barkindo, had after the viral report of the abuse against Nafeesah, urged the wife of the state governor to ensure the victim got justice.

— culled from Punch



Mrs Fayemi

## Geneva Stop TB Partnership visits NGF on mission to end TB in Nigeria

The train of the global TB fighter based in Geneva was at the NGF on a very important mission. Stop TB Partnership was led by its Executive Director, Dr Lucica Ditiu on a high-level mission on domestic resource mobilisation to end tuberculosis in Nigeria. They discussed the challenges and offered recommendations to mobilize additional domestic resources to end tuberculosis in Nigeria, especially through the corporate structure.

Dr Lucica said that they want to showcase Nigeria and how the Governors can be of support to the Stop TB campaign. "There are so many people dying in the community that we don't know about, and this of an infection that is curable," she said. Sadly, she added, as of now, the TB coverage in Nigeria is only about 45%.

If the cases of tuberculosis are not controlled, it could exceed that in South Africa, which has the highest infections on the continent. But South Africa is doing something about its situation.

The team at Stop TB Partnership made a plea to the



TB patience

NGF for support because they believe that the Governors are the chief herdsmen in the states and once, they take charge of the issue, then the magnitude of the burden is reduced by a considerable percentage.

The world needs 230 billion to end TB by 20130; and of the USD 15 billion annual funding for TB promised by world leaders at the UNHLM in 2018, less than half was delivered. In Nigeria, of the USD 373 million needed for the TB response in 2020, only 31% was available to all the implementers of TB control activities in Nigeria, (7% domestic and 24% donor funds) with a whopping 69% funding gap.

Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab, the Senior Health Advisor at the NGF, who considers the TB team as partners in progress said that though there are resource constraints, the best way to get the attention of the Governors is through the provision of state-specific data.

"We need to have a clear sustainability roadmap. We must try to see how government can gradually take over this," he said.

Secondly, Dr Ahmad said that regarding the issue of metrics, there is the need to have state-specific data to ensure that Governors would prioritise TB. "We could learn from lessons that other states have implemented", emphasising that the Governors wives should be brought into the discussion for ways to implement solutions, disclosing that the NGF has an excellent partnership with the Governors' Wives and that challenges that concern women and children would be at the top of their priorities.

Furthermore, Dr Ahmad disclosed that in terms of resource mobilisation, states are now preparing the 2023 budget and believes it is most expedient now, more than any other time, engage with states.

The Director General of the NGF, Mr Asishana B Okauru lamented that it is unfortunate that the coverage of TB to be so low in Nigeria. He added that it is paramount that in addition to engaging with other states, TB must be prioritised to the pinnacle of global news.

## Ekiti monarch to honour Fayemi's wife with chieftaincy

A frontline traditional ruler in Ekiti State, the Oore of Otun in the Moba Local Government Area, Oba Adekunle Adeagbo, has said Mrs. Bisi Fayemi, the wife of Ekiti State Governor, Kayode Fayemi, is to be honoured with a traditional title in his domain in appreciation of her sterling leadership qualities and roles in human development.

Oba Adeagbo said his community, in recognition of the attributes, would on Saturday, confer the chieftaincy title of Fiwajoye of Otun Ekiti Mobaland on the governor's wife.

The monarch said eminent personalities and traditional leaders including the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi, would be in the ancient Otun community to be part of the ceremony. The paramount ruler of Mobaland, in a statement at Otun Ekiti on Sunday, titled, 'Erelu Bisi Fayemi to bag chieftaincy title,' urged Nigerians to celebrate with the governor's wife on the occasion.

He said, "The traditional title is to celebrate the unique characters, worthy of emulation, of Erelu Fayemi and in recognition of her leadership qualities and roles in the Nigerian society and at the global level."

The traditional ruler said the exploits of the governor's wife as a gender equality activist, philanthropist and advocate of protection of child's rights, could never go unnoticed and uncelebrated.



Lami



Nafeesah

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

# Justice for Nafeesa Vandri against her husband

**T**he First lady and wife of Adamawa state Governor who also doubles as the Champion of Gender based violence (GBV) Hajiya Lami Ahmadu Fintiri has condemned in strong terms physical and mental injuries inflicted upon a mother of 3 a female journalist working with Adamawa Broadcasting corporation (ABC) Yola Nafeesah Aliyu.

The oppressing act which was perpetrated by her husband a dismissed staff of PHCN (YEDC) Yola was regarded as barbaric, inhuman, archaic and unacceptable by the first lady. Her Excellency Hajiya Lami posited that in this 21st century when the campaign against Gender based violence and Domestic violence is taking centre stage in order to eradicate such dehumanizing practices Globally, such shameful actions will never be condoned in any ramification.

In a statement issued by the Press Secretary/Information Officer to the First Lady Mary Adamu, the statement read that Adamawa state being one of the signatory to the Violent Act persons Prohibition (VAPP) to which all Governors wives are championing and Her Excellency Hajiya Lami Ahmadu Fintiri is a member vows to leave no stone unturned in the current Nafeesa Vandri's case and indeed any other so as to ensure that justice always prevails in the end after serving as deterrent to others.

The statement further added that it is even more pathetic realizing that the victim' who attained another role of fending for the family after the lose of her husband job would be subjected to such manner. She regretted that instead of receiving appreciation and accolades, what she received in return is battery.

The Wife of the Governor is therefore calling on women, wives, mothers and daughters to always speak out whenever such ill treatments is meted on any women so as to stem the rising cases of domestic violence and Gender based violence in the society.

It could be recalled that Her Excellency in a recently organized survivor fund programme empowered over 50 survivors of Rape and GBV Victims who are women and girls with the sum #50,000 each from the 3 Senatorial zones of the state so as to encourage them start up petty businesses in order to be self reliant in the society.

— MARY ADAMU PRESS SECRETARY/INFORMATION OFFICER TO THE FIRST LADY OF ADAMAWA.

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# Communique

NIGERIA  
GOVERNORS'  
FORUM

## ISSUED AT THE END OF THE MEETING (6TH IN 2022) OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 17TH AUGUST 2022

*We, members of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), at our meeting held today, deliberated on issues of national importance and resolved as follows:*

**1** The Forum launched a Primary Health Care (PHC) Leadership Challenge – a flagship programme to revamp the Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR) policy in the country by maximizing the commitment of state governors to PHCUOR, promoting progressive increase in PHC funding, and ensuring all primary health care centres have the requisite human resource capacity. The Leadership Challenge is a joint project of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the Dangote Foundation and the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA). Starting from December 2022, the challenge will be anchored on a total of 13 awards to state governments, consisting of 12 awards for the best performing and most improved states and 1 award for the overall best performing/most improving state.

**2** A State Charter on State Fiscal Transparency Accountability and Sustainability Programme for Results (SFTAS) sustainability was also launched by the Forum in the company of the Federal Minister of Finance, represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Aliyu Ahmed; the Director General of the Debt Management Office (DMO), Mrs. Patience Oniha; the Auditor General of the Federation, represented by Dr. Fawale Busayo; and the Nigeria Country Director of the World Bank, Shubham Chaudhuri. Through charter Governors of the 36 states committed to the following five (5) actions:

- i. Support and participate in the annual SFTAS assessment scorecard;
- ii. Sustain public financial management (PFM) reforms coordination and implementation mechanisms in all states;
- iii. Support the uptake and integration of courses offered on the NGF e-learning Management System (LMS) with in-state continuous learning and assessment of state officials;
- iv. Support the sustainability of reforms targeted at increasing fiscal transparency and accountability, domestic revenue mobilization, efficiency in public expenditure, and debt sustainability; and
- v. Encourage the domestication of similar PFM reforms at the local government-level.

**3** The Forum extensively reviewed the purported attempt by the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) and the Minister of Finance (HMF) to circumvent the law and a recent judgement of the Supreme Court to secure the approval of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) to effect payment of the sum of US\$418 million to contractors who allegedly executed consultant in respect to the Paris Club refunds to the state and local governments. A committee was set up comprising the Chairman, Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State, Governor Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State, and Governor Abdullahi Sule of Nasarawa State to interface with the committee set up by Mr. President to review the matter.

**4** On the prolonged strike by Nigerian Universities, the Forum encourages the federal government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) to find meaningful resolutions to the lingering impasse and has proposed to engage with both parties in a bid to ending the strike.

**5** Finally, the Forum extensively discussed the state of the Nigerian economy following a presentation by Mr. Bismarck Rewane, member of the President's Economic Advisory Council (EAC). The Forum resolved to immediately engage with the federal government to implement a set of immediate actions to ameliorate the worsening economic conditions of the citizenry.



# \$418m

## Paris Club Refund: Gaming On the Subnationals?

**Unabashedly pushing for consultancy claims, some companies apparently backed by senior state operatives are going into overdrive attempting a nimble sneak-and-grab of \$418m Paris Club Debt Refund – but the governors would have none of that. What are the facts?**

On August 20, 2022, Chief Ned Nwoko, former national legislator and the Lead Consultant of Linas International who claims arrowhead status for the recovery of over deductions from Paris and London clubs refund, proclaimed his firm was being

**The outstanding fees owed my firm with regards to last work done for the states is approximately 68million dollars and not 418million dollars conveyed by Governor Fayemi and co. Our original claims calculated based on agreed terms was well in excess of 300 million dollars. We offered huge discount on the entitlement to accept the 68million dollars**

owed \$68 million - not \$418 million - the figure provided by the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF).

Nwoko was reacting to the flurry of allegations and claims trailing his company's demand for the payment of fees from the accounts of state governments and local government councils in the country in Abuja.

Specifically, Nwoko challenged the recent clarifications by the Chairman of the NGF chairman, Governor John Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State, regarding the Paris Club refund.

His words: "The outstanding fees owed my firm with regards to last work done for the states is approximately 68million dollars and not 418million dollars conveyed by Governor Fayemi and co. Our original claims calculated based on agreed terms was well in excess of 300 million dollars. We offered huge discount on the entitlement to accept the 68million dollars."

It could be recalled that the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation Abubakar Malami had featured

at the weekly briefings coordinated by the Presidential Media Team, on August 11, where he spoke extensively on issues surrounding the refund and backed payment of fees to consultants.

Malami stated that there was no basis for agitation by the NGF concerning deductions from the Paris Club refund paid to the consultants they hired and described the governors' action as akin to crying over spilt milk.

It could be recalled that the governors after their recent deliberations at the Presidential Villa Abuja, accused the minister of orchestrating the deductions from their funds to settle spurious consultancy fees. But not surprisingly, Nwoko quickly absolved AGF Malami of any wrongdoing claiming the minister was only trying to ensure that the law was obeyed.

But the NGF would have none of that. In a stern, detailed rebuttal the forum shredded Nwoko's claims as dubious and an opaque agenda designed to

short-change the subnationals at a very difficult period and for good measure countered Malami's position.

According to the NGF in a statement signed by Abdulrazaque Bello-Barkindo, Director, Media and Public Affairs, NGF Secretariat, Abuja,

It is "Not surprisingly, the desperate, spurious and futile advocacy mounted and coordinated by the AGF on behalf of the so-called Paris Club Consultants to justify the plundering of the humongous sum of USD418.9m from the public treasury of the States and Local Governments continued on Saturday 20th August 2022, when Ned Nwoko, in a press statement, attempted to blur and obfuscate the real facts and legal issues in controversy by dishing out blatant lies and half-truths."

More specifically, the Forum drew public attention to a fundamental kernel of the face-off. "The facts are and will always remain: whether the claims of the consultants are lawful and justified under our Constitution and whether any Judgment which is a subject of a pending appeal can be enforced or executed as the consultants now attempt to do? If both questions are answered in the negative,

it does not matter if the contracts leading to the claims were entered into by any public official, past or present."

The NGF also debunked Nwoko's allegation of deployment of part of the Paris Club refund to funding elections. It stated that it has not at any time been involved in or been in receipt of USD\$100m or any other funds from NED Nwoko to finance elections in any State.

The NGF further insisted that the salient facts on the fraud associated with the Paris Club refunds can never be changed by a thousand Press Statements by the AGF or any of the so-called consultants. It hinged its position on the fact that "the Judgments of the appellate courts, particularly that of the Supreme Court have begun to expose the creepiness and unlawful nature of the consultants claims."

The NGF also noted it was "not surprising that they are now afflicted by dizzy spells, seriously discomfited and are now driven by desperation to ensure that the plundering and fleecing of the State is quickly completed before the determination of the pending proceedings in the appellate and other courts in order to foist a situation of frustration and helplessness on the States."

Noting it was obvious that the consultants are not in a position to restore the funds to the States if they lose on appeal, the Forum stressed this scenario is clearly becoming apparent by the day.

"It is therefore needless joining issues with NED NWOKO or indeed any of the consultants. However, it is imperative to debunk patent lies dished out in order to disabuse the minds of the undiscerning public," it stated.

To totally discredit Nwoko, the Forum provided facts and figures surrounding the alleged claims by so-called consultants which showed the figures that totalled USD\$418,953,690.59.

Hear them: "While Mr. Ned Nwoko strenuously tried to single out and justify his own bogus claim of USD\$68 million; the total amount which all the consultants working in concert, collectively seek and claim from the States and Local Governments, albeit unlawfully is USD\$418,953,690.59 broken down as follows:

- i. NED MUNIR NWOKO (\$68,658,192.83)
  - ii. DR. TED ISIGHOHI EDWARDS (\$159,000,000)
  - iii. PANIC ALERT SECURITY SYSTEMS LTD (\$47,831,920)
  - iv. RIOK NIG. Ltd (USD142,028,941.95)
  - v. PRINCE ORJI ORIZU (USD1,219,440.45)
  - vi. BARRISTER OLAITAN BELLO (USD215,195.36)
- TOTAL - USD\$418,953,690.59"**

Bringing even more clarity to the contrived controversy, the NGF stated, "It is instructive to note that all the claims by the consultants are rooted in Suit No FHC/ABJ/CS/130/13

"BETWEEN: LINAS INTERNATIONAL LTD & 35 ORS VS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA & 3 ORS in which NED NWOKO instituted, and was awarded a bogus 20% of the sum of \$3,188,078,505.96 from the States and Local Governments Paris Club refunds. The Judgment has been challenged on appeal by the States and NGF in Suit No CA/ABJ/PRE/ROEA/CV/327M1/2022: ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ABIA STATE & 35 ORS VS LINAS INTERNATIONAL LTD & 239 ORS."

Apparently having been unwittingly provided more potent ammunition to rubbish Nwoko's claims curiously by himself, the NGF without hesitation struck home.

In the Forum's words: "The attempt by NED therefore to separate his own claim of \$68 million as if it is not related to the claims of other consultants is being clever by half. All the consultants claim to have rendered the same or similar service of helping the States and Local Governments to recover over-deducted Paris Club refunds by the Federal Government.

"Their cases therefore rise or fall together. A poison of the part is a



along the line to claim a percentage of the refunds as payment for their services to the states and councils. Some of the contractors also claimed they were asked to execute projects across the country by the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON).

Cogent questions were raised on why states would need consultants to negotiate with federal government over the refund, while the projects said to have been awarded by ALGON reportedly turned out to be mostly non-existent.

Down the line, state governors then asked for a forensic audit. Significantly, while the consultants went to court, Abubakar Malami curiously went to pay \$418 million as judgment debt.

The NGF believes that while it is possible that the unlawful scheme hatched by the consultants to feast on public funds may have over the years been executed with the cooperation of enemies of the State without anyone raising an eyebrow, the bubble has now burst and the time to account has come.

Notes the NGF: "It is an irony that Nwoko and other consultants who flaunt Judgments of courts as justification for payment are now uncomfortable and jittery when the same Judgments are tested on appeal. An appeal is not a circumvention of a Judgment as NED may want the public to believe.

"It is a constitutional right. The consultants have no choice but to pursue the various appeals. While NED has vowed to fully enforce the Judgment in FHC/ABJ/CS/130/2013; may we remind him that the law does not permit the enforcement of a Judgment that is on appeal. Let him reserve all his vituperations against the NGF Chairman and canvass them on appeal as the law may permit him."

is unlawful remains unlawful. Its origin is immaterial and the part or role played by all parties separately or collectively at all times is unlawful and cannot be remedied.

"As it is common with all unholy alliances, it does appear that the romance between the consultants and their determination to fight together under the AGF's tacit coordination to pull out of the States the sum of USD\$418,953,690.59 may have suffered a crack."

There is more - "This must have led NED to address the press alone and single out his unmerited claim of \$68 million as justifiable. This is also coming just on the heels of a similar press briefing by the AGE, a few days ago during which he stoutly defended all the consultants and berated the States for opposing or delaying the prompt payment of the sum claimed.

"It was thought that the AGF had done a good job of defense for all of them; but NED's decision to go solo to make his own case without reference to others suggest that the union of consultants is gradually falling apart.

"What however NED did not tell the public is: If all the Local Governments engaged him directly as claimed and if he acted for the States through his lawyers and the NGF requested that he extends the services to all the States as also claimed, what different service did TED ISEGHOHI-

EDWARDS, his collaborator and conspirator (indicted by the EFCC) render for which he is being paid the whopping sum of \$159,000,000 also from the Paris Club refund?"

In Nwoko's desperation to justify his claim, he peddled untruths that his team was a member of the Federal Government Committee constituted to reconcile figures under the Paris Club refunds to the states and local government areas. But according to NGF, that is patently false, clarifying that the report of that committee dated May, 2007 shows that only the FME, OAGF, CBN, DMO and RMFC (secretariat) were members.

It further stated that "Private persons who were not privy could not have been included in a committee that was meant to examine purely public financial records. It was this Committee that did all the work now claimed by NED and the other consultants."

Tracking back, it could be recalled that in 2006, the federal government under the Olusegun Obasanjo presidency had paid \$12 billion to secure an \$18 billion debt write-off by the Paris Club of international creditors. But because the payment was made directly from the revenue accruing to the entire federation, states and local government councils that did not owe the Paris Club asked the federal government for a refund.

Some 'consultants' nimbly surfaced



## **BREASTFEEDING IN NIGERIA: NGF, Save The Children, Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum Step In**

**T**he Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat, Save the Children International and the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum hosted a webinar via zoom: Step Up for Breastfeeding in Nigeria on Thursday, August 4th at 3 pm.

The webinar was in line with the theme of breastfeeding week, to step up for breastfeeding, educate and inform. It consisted of opening remarks from the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum such as Mrs Erelu Bisi Fayemi, the First Lady of Ekiti State, Dr Zainab Shinkafi Bagudu, the First Lady of Kebbi State and Mrs Bamidele Abiodun, the First Lady of Ogun State.

In attendance was also the First Lady of Anambra State, Mrs. Nonye Soludo and First Lady of Enugu State, Mrs. Monica Ugochi Ugwuanyi.

The webinar also consisted of a panel discussion from the State Committee Representatives of Food and Nutrition. The panellists were Bashir Muhammad, the Permanent Secretary of Planning and Budget Commission of Kaduna State, Bolanle Olorunyomi, the State Nutrition Officer for the State Primary Healthcare Development Agency in Ekiti State and the Director of Development Partnerships in Oyo State represented the Permanent Secretary, Mr Moruff Oyetunji.

To kickstart the webinar, the Country Director of Save the Children International, Mr Famari Barro provided the opening remarks.

He said that Save the Children has worked in Nigeria since 2001 to ensure children are alive and well protected and free from violence, neglect, and malnutrition, especially girls and orphans.

Save the Children works in the community to the national level to promote children's rights and to strengthen the capacity of health workers and health systems in Nigeria.

When it comes to breastfeeding in Nigeria, Save the Children believes in exclusive breastfeeding and would continue to advocate for policies that support

lactating mothers and their babies.

"Breastfeeding is the most cost-effective option that gives everyone a fair start at health and well-being for under-five children. Our goal is to make sure that we push forward in efforts that make a difference towards Nigerian women," said Mr Barro.

After the opening remarks, the First Lady of Ekiti State, Mrs Fayemi stated that it is worrying that less than 50 per cent of Nigerian women feel encouraged, enabled, or empowered to breastfeed their babies for up to six months.

"It is however encouraging to see that some states in Nigeria have made bold steps to enable exclusive breastfeeding such as Ekiti, Lagos, Oyo and Kaduna State which have implemented the six-month maternity leave policy for civil servants," said Mrs Fayemi.

The First Lady of Ekiti State further emphasized that if "we are to meet the World Health Organisation (WHO) target of exclusive breastfeeding by 2025, we will need to massively scale up efforts to ensure that other states are brought up to speed and that no child in Nigeria is deprived of the nutritional, immunological and psychological effects which breastfeeding provides.

"At Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum (NGWF), we are committed to working together and with partners to ensure that all women in Nigeria have the support they need to breastfeed and to ensure that childhood malnutrition is drastically reduced by 2025. As the Chair, I can assure you that we would be tireless champions for breastfeeding in all our respective states."

First Lady of Kebbi State, Dr Zainab Shinkafi Bagudu said in Nigeria, "we are below the target for breastfeeding and as mothers of our state, we are passionate about how we would like to see an improvement in this."

Dr Zainab said breastfeeding is important because breastfeeding offers protection against cancer of the breast and this is an important factor in public health.

"The more we breastfeed, the less the chances of a woman to have breast cancer," said Dr Zainab.

She further stated that one of the major achievements of her office is the institution of breastfeeding rooms across the states.

In addition to setting up a breastfeeding room, there is a special baby care unit in the medical centres.

Dr Zainab said that there is a lack of bonding between mothers and babies, and it affects breastfeeding but with the help of the state government, the mother's room has been in existence for



three years now.

After Dr Zainab gave her presentation, the First Lady of Ogun State, Mrs Bamidele Abiodun discussed the interventions that are done to support mothers in her state.

In her words: "We work with nurses and midwives in primary healthcare centres. Our focus is on the primary health benefits of breastfeeding, nutrition, bonding, recovery of post-partum and weight loss, and increased immunity for our children."

She further stated that in Ogun State, they create sensitisation programs through radio, television, and social media.

They also incorporate breastfeeding advocacy into child and maternal policy. To advocate for employers to have family-friendly policies that would support mothers.

"Part of advocacy is tackling myths, medical to social issues such as that breastfeeding causes the mother's breast to be saggy."

Mrs Abiodun said a lot of children get infected because their bottles are not kept properly and her mission through sensitization is to tell women that there is nothing wrong with breastfeeding. In fact, from age 0 to 2, she carried her children everywhere.

For the panel discussion, Mr Bashir Muhammad, the Permanent Secretary of Planning and Budget Commission of Kaduna State said that in Kaduna State, malnutrition is a major health concern, particularly how malnutrition manifests itself.

He further said that there is a close relationship between malnutrition and under-development and that through the present government of El Rufai, they developed a strong commitment to eradicate malnutrition in Kaduna State.

The administration not only allows for six months of paid maternity leave but approved creches across MDAs.

"In my own office, we have a creche

where nursing mothers come with their children for breastfeeding," said Mr Muhammad.

He said the impact is a reduction in infant mortality rate and expenditure on childhood killer diseases.

The next panel speaker was Bolanle Olorunyomi, the State Nutrition Officer for the State Primary Healthcare Development Agency in Ekiti State.

She stated that the challenge in Ekiti State was that the exclusive breastfeeding rate was at 39.8%. This is according to the National Health Summit in 2014. That percentage is below the target of 50%.

"We saw the need to proffer solutions from extending the leave from four months to six months," said Olorunyomi.

They then involved the necessary actors that would effect change such as having high-level meetings with stakeholders involved, including members of the House of Assembly, state committees and public office holders.

After, there was a follow-up to fast-track the process to have the bill passed and approved by Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State.

The result is that a six-month paid maternity leave is being effected in Ekiti state and enjoyed by all civil servants.

Olorunyomi said that to extend this to the private sector, the Ekiti State Committee of Nutrition officers

conducts sensitization through social media for the private sector to extend to six months of paid maternity leave for their workers.

"Investing in maternity protection is a form of social justice that protects the right of women to breastfeed," she said.

For Oyo State, the Director of Development Partnerships stood in for the Permanent Secretary, Mr Moruff Oyetunji.

He said that in Oyo State, all female employees enjoy a paid six-month maternity leave.

The impact is that it has helped to reduce the mortality rate in the state and healthcare costs on children.

The webinar ended with a call to action from Ifedilichukwu, Innocent who is the Advocacy, Policy and Campaign Manager at Save the Children International.

Some of the points raised were that Save the Children encourages the subnational governments to adopt and implement maternal infant and young child feeding (MIYCF) policy.

That the public should share awareness about exclusive breastfeeding, be respectful to breastfeeding mothers in public and support breastfeeding mothers in our household.

Next, the government should strengthen the capacity of health workers to provide counselling on infant and young child feeding practices and ensure resuscitation of baby-friendly hospital initiatives across health facilities in Nigeria.

Finally, Nigerian Governors Wives Forum as ambassadors and champions should influence their husbands to create enabling environment for nutrition activities in their state. Especially, ensuring that funding is released timely to relevant MDAs to implement activities that will improve our human capital development indices.

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# DEMOGRAPHIC Profile of Informal Sector Workers in Nigeria



The informal sector is an important part of a nation's economy that contributes to job creation and income generation. It comprises of both formal and informal enterprises and workers that produce legal goods and services. This paper summarizes the main findings of a sample demographic survey of Nigerian informal sector workers – those that do not pay PAYE or any other form of income tax and are covered under the presumptive tax regime. To be broadly representative, the sampling captured 1000 randomly selected informal households in 12 States in Nigeria - South-South (Edo and Delta), South-East (Anambra and Enugu), South-West (Ogun and Ekiti), North-Central (Kwara and Plateau), North-East (Yobe and Gombe) & North-West (Kaduna and Kano). Supporting tables and figures are provided, together with comparative information. Findings reveal that there is gender segmentation in informal employment across the country, with an even distribution of men (50.41%) and women (49.59) that are employed in the informal sector. The share of young and middle-aged adult workers in informal employment is around 86 percent (49.92% young adults and

36.45% MAA), while old-aged adults make up the remaining 13.63%. The service industry provides 49.2% of work for both women and men, it leads all sectors as the largest employer of informal sector workers, followed by agriculture. Most informal sector workers are in low wage jobs with more than two-thirds earning between N5,000 – N40,000, while less than one percent earn between N100,000 – N200,000 or more.

Activities in the informal sector are not necessarily carried out because the workers and enterprise seek to evade tax obligations and/or benefit from the absence of supervision. Informal sector comprises of both formal and informal enterprises and workers that produce legal goods and services. This is different from underground economy, that comprise of economic activities that do not comply with tax reporting requirements.

The definition of the “informal economy” and “informal employment” varies across countries; it is mostly fluid to accommodate national contexts and circumstances. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2018) the informal economy consists of a subset of unincorporated economic units – including enterprise, entrepreneurs, and households – that are not registered with a national government authority. This informs the definition of an informal sector worker as anyone employed in at least one informal economic activity, regardless of their

employment category or the duration of employment.

From a policy making perspective, it is important to differentiate between an informal economic unit – producing units that provide informal employment – and informal employment – employment in the informal sector. Two-thirds of the global workforce earn their living in the informal economy<sup>1</sup>. In emerging and developing economies, 93 percent of employments are provided by the informal economy; in Africa it is about 85.5 percent<sup>2</sup> and in Nigeria it exceeds 90.4 percent of employment<sup>3</sup>. “The informal economy is characterized by significant decent work deficits and a disproportionate number of poor workers” (ILO, 2014). In Nigeria the informal economy is comparable to lower middle-income countries where agriculture and services provide the largest share of informal employment<sup>5</sup>.

This paper summarizes the main findings of a sample demographic survey of Nigerian informal sector workers – those that do not pay PAYE or any other form of income tax and are covered under the presumptive tax regime. It provides insights on the characteristics of this economic group. To be broadly representative, the sampling captured 1000 randomly selected informal households in 12 States (two States per region) in Nigeria. Supporting tables and figures are provided, together with comparative information.

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## Survey Findings

### 1. Gender composition

The sample indicates that on the national average, men 50.41% compared to women 49.59% are in the informal sector. This trend is similar across all regions, except in the North-West where men make up a slightly higher share of 52.98%

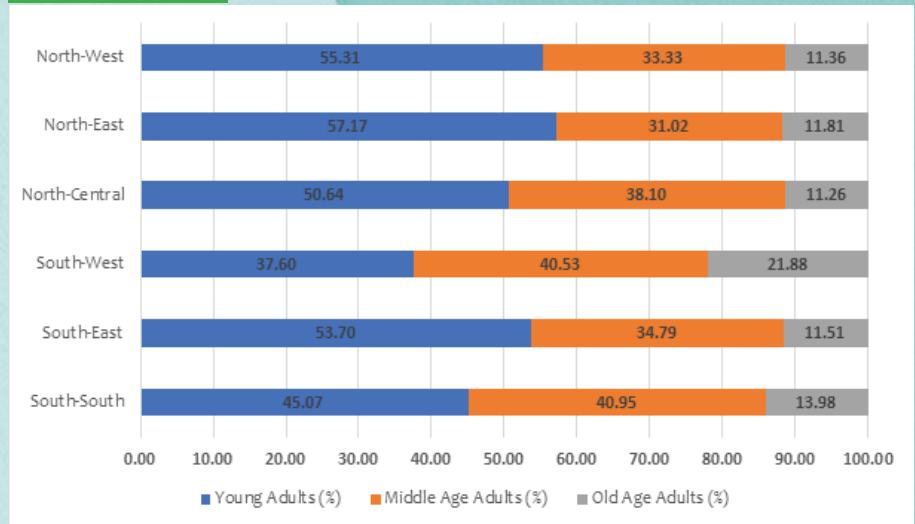
Figure 1: Gender composition by region



### 2. Age Distribution

In terms of age distribution, half of all informal sector workers are young adults (18-25 years), while 36.45% are middle aged adults (25-64 years) and old age adults (65 years – older) 13.63%. The north-east (57.17%) has more young adults than any other region, closely followed by the north-west with 55.31% and the south-east with 53.70%. The south-south has the most middle aged adults in the sector with 40.95%, the south west is a close second with 40.53% and north-central 38.10% to round up the top three. While 21.88% in the south-west are old aged adults, followed by the south-south 13.98% and north-east with 11.81% (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Age Group



### 3. Education

The educational background of informal sector workers revealed that 8.50% have received non-formal education, 13.63% have completed their primary education, while those that have completed secondary education and tertiary education are 50.29% and 16.09% respectively, 7.49% received vocational training, and

about 4% have not received any education at all. At the regional level (see figure 3) a combined 43% of workers in the north-east, north-west, and north-central have not received any formal education, while an additional 18% have no education at all. In the south-east 64% have completed their secondary education, followed by south-west and south-south with 55% and

52% secondary completion rate respectively. At 23%, the south-south region leads all regions in university completion rates, followed by north-central 20% and south-east and south-west with 18% each. Similarly, the south-south leads all regions in vocational training with 11%, followed by the south-east, south-west and north-central all with 8% each.



Figure 3: Educational

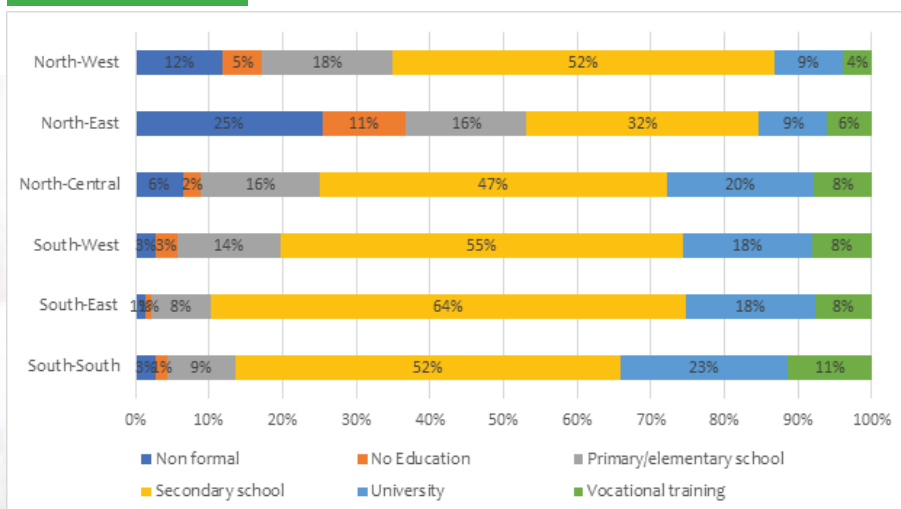


Table 1 disaggregates the educational attainment of the informal sector workers by age groups. Middle aged adults make up more than two-thirds of the population across all levels of educational attainment, closely followed by young adults 27%, and old age adults 2%. 80% of informal sector workers with university education are middle aged adults, 19% young adults and 2% old-aged adults. 33% of those with secondary education are young adults, 66% are middle aged adults, while old-aged adults make up the remaining 6%. 24% of informal sector workers with vocational training are young adults, 75% are middle aged adults and 2% old-aged adults.

Table 1: Educational Attainment by Age Groups

COUNTRY				
LEVEL OF EDUCATION	YOUNG ADULTS	MIDDLE AGED ADULTS	OLD AGE ADULTS	TOTAL
Non formal	23%	71%	6%	100%
None	17%	74%	9%	100%
Primary/elementary school	23%	71%	5%	100%
Secondary school	33%	66%	1%	100%
University	19%	80%	1%	100%
Vocational training	24%	75%	2%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2: Educational Attainment by Age Group and Gender

FEMALE				
LEVEL OF EDUCATION	YOUNG ADULTS	MIDDLE AGED ADULTS	OLD AGE ADULTS	TOTAL
Non formal	23%	71%	6%	100%
None	19%	72%	9%	100%
Primary/elementary school	23%	72%	5%	100%
Secondary school	34%	65%	1%	100%
University	18%	81%	1%	100%
Vocational training	23%	76%	1%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>100%</b>





MALE				
LEVEL OF EDUCATION	YOUNG ADULTS	MIDDLE AGED ADULTS	OLD AGE ADULTS	TOTAL
Non formal	24%	71%	5%	100%
None	15%	76%	10%	100%
Primary/elementary school	23%	71%	6%	100%
Secondary school	33%	66%	1%	100%
University	20%	79%	1%	100%
Vocational training	24%	73%	2%	100%
TOTAL	27%	70%	2%	100%

respectively. Secondary school attainment among young female adult was 34%, while for middle aged adults and old age adults it was 65% and 1% respectively. Similarly, 33% of young male adults, 66% of middle-aged adults and 1% of old aged adults have received secondary education. Young adults without a formal education comprised of 23% female and 24% male, middle age adults 71% for both female and male, while for old age adults it was 6% and 5% respectively. Additionally female vocational education attainment is comparable to male attainment across all age groups, for female young adults 23% and male 24%, middle aged adults 76% to 73%, and old-aged adults 1% and 2% comparatively.

Further disaggregation of the educational attainment of informal sector workers by gender reveals an even distribution among male and female respondents. Across all age

groups, and gender, persons with university education were mostly middle-aged adults 81% female and 79% male, 18% to 20% among young adults and 1% for both female and male

#### 4. Occupation

In terms of occupation, 49.2% are employed in the service industry as retail workers, vendors, hawkers, barbers, and tailors; 20% work as farmers or fishermen; 16% work as artisans, supervisors, foremen or clerics, while skilled manual workers make up 16.11%. At the regional level, the service sector is the predominant employer in the south-west 58%, north-west 53% and south-east 49.06%. The north-east has the highest share of workers in agriculture with 33.05%, followed by the north-west and North-Central with 23.16% and 20.35% respectively. The north-central has the highest share of skilled manual workers 25%, followed by the south-east 20% and south-west 20%. For businesspersons, south-south 2.8%, north-west 2.5% and

south-east 2% make up the top three. Domestic workers as a share of total population are higher in the north with the north-east 11%, followed by North-Central with 4% and north-west 3.8%. The largest concentration of assistants to

professionals are in the south-south 2%, south-east 1.3% and south-west 1%. Unskilled labour is 12% in the south-south, followed by south-east 8.34% and north-west 7.19% (figure 4).

Figure 4: Occupation

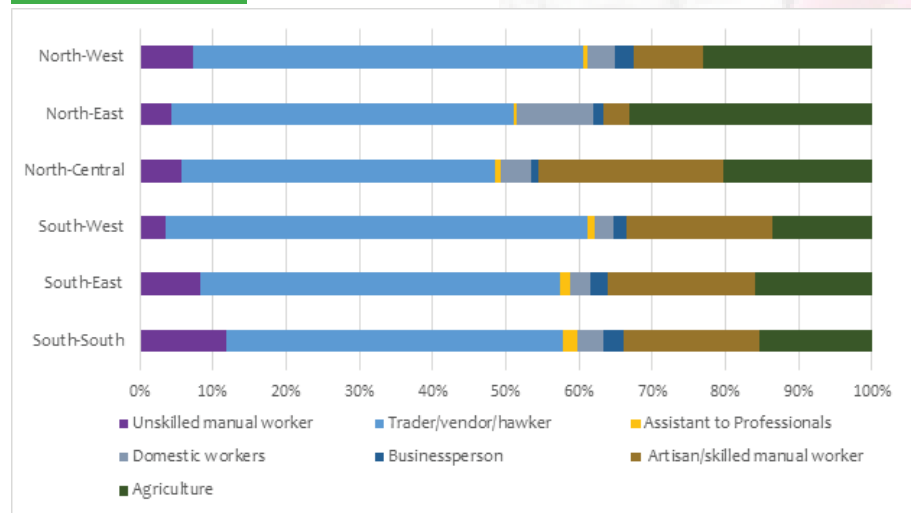




Table 3 disaggregates the occupation of informal sector workers by age groups. Middle aged adults make up more than two-thirds of the population across all levels of educational attainment, closely followed by young adults 27%, and old age adults 2%. 82% of informal sector workers that are professionals are middle aged adults, 17% young adults and 1% old-aged adults. 20% of those in agriculture are young adults, 75% are middle aged adults, while old-aged adults make up the remaining 5%. 33% of unskilled manual worker are young adults, 75% are middle aged adults and 2% old-aged adults. While 37% of young adults are domestic workers, compared to 61% middle aged adults and 2% are old-aged adults.

**Table 3: Occupation by Age Group**

COUNTRY				
OCCUPATION	YOUNG ADULTS	MIDDLE AGED ADULTS	OLD AGE ADULTS	TOTAL
Agriculture	20%	75%	5%	100%
Artisan/Skilled Manual Worker	30%	68%	2%	100%
Businessperson	22%	76%	2%	100%
Domestic workers	37%	61%	2%	100%
Professional	17%	82%	1%	100%
Trader/ vendor/hawker	28%	70%	2%	100%
Unskilled manual worker	33%	64%	3%	100%
TOTAL	27%	70%	2%	100%

**Table 4: Occupation by Age Group and Gender**

FEMALE				
OCCUPATION	YOUNG ADULTS	MIDDLE AGED ADULTS	OLD AGE ADULTS	TOTAL
Agriculture	20%	75%	5%	100%
Artisan/Skilled Manual Worker	30%	68%	2%	100%
Businessperson	22%	76%	2%	100%
Domestic workers	37%	61%	2%	100%
Professional	17%	82%	1%	100%
Trader/ vendor/hawker	28%	70%	2%	100%
Unskilled manual worker	33%	64%	3%	100%
TOTAL	27%	70%	2%	100%

MALE				
OCCUPATION	YOUNG ADULTS	MIDDLE AGED ADULTS	OLD AGE ADULTS	TOTAL
Agriculture	21%	74%	5%	100%
Artisan/Skilled Manual Worker	30%	68%	2%	100%
Businessperson	21%	76%	3%	100%
Domestic workers	36%	62%	2%	100%
Professional	15%	83%	2%	100%
Trader/ vendor/hawker	28%	70%	2%	100%
Unskilled manual worker	33%	65%	3%	100%
TOTAL	27%	70%	2%	100%

Middle-aged workers have the most representation across all occupation. Across all age groups and gender the informal sector workers that are professionals were mostly middle-aged adults 81% female and 83% male. 20% of young female adults are employed in agriculture, 76% are middle aged adults and 5% old-aged adults. Similarly, 21% of young male adults, 74% of middle-aged adults and 5% of old aged adults are employed in agriculture. Female 37% and male 36% make up the young adults employed as domestic workers, middle aged adults 60% female and 62% male, while for old adults it was 6% and 5% respectively. Additionally, the distribution of female unskilled manual worker is comparable to the male worker across all age groups, for female and male young adults 33%, middle aged adults 64% to 65%, and old-aged adults 3% each.



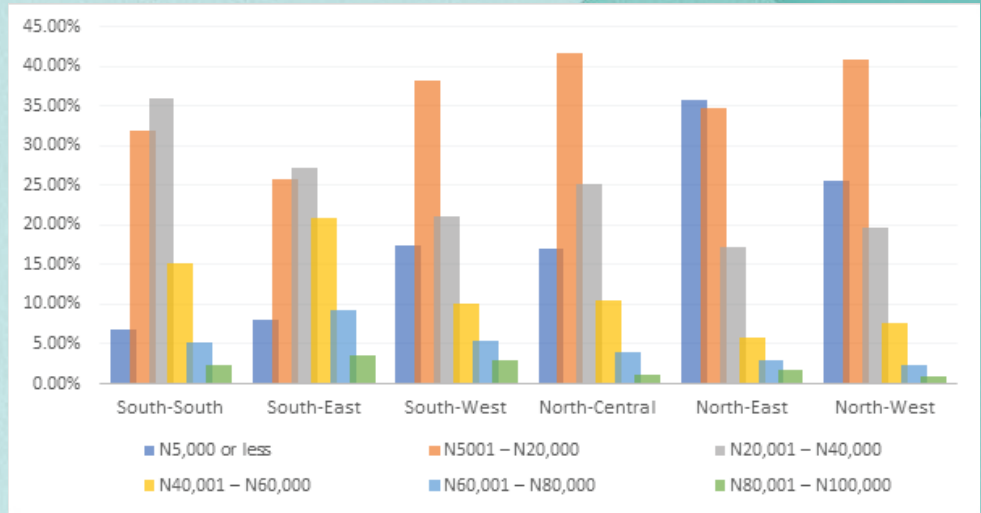
**5. Income**

On average, 78.36% of all informal sector workers earn between N5,000 and N40,000, 18.62% between N40,000 to N100,000, while less than 1% earn between N100,000 and N200,000 or more. It should be noted that there may have been some level of underreporting in income levels amongst the informal sector workers. At the regional level 35.73% earn N5,000 or less in the north-east, followed by the north-west 25.50% and south-west 17.36%. The top three regions in other categories include (N5,001 – N20,000) north-central 41.77%, north-west 40.82% and south-west 38.14%. (N20,001 – N40,000) south-south 36.02%, south-east 27.025 and south-west 21.18%. (N40,001 – N60,000) south-east 20.94%, south-south 15.22% and north-

central 10.42%. (N60,001 – N80,000) south-east 9.18%, south-west 5.41%, and south-south 5.22%. (80,001 – N100,000)

south-east 3.62%, south-west 2.88% and south-south 2.24% (see figure 5).

**Figure 5: Income**



Informal workers who work as or assist professionals earn on average more than other informal workers. Artisans earn more than 5000 Naira per month. Traders and primary sector workers on the other hand

have a roughly equal income distribution but earn less than artisans. The lowest earners are agriculture, domestic workers, and unskilled workers (see table 1).

**Table 5: Personal income across occupational groups**

	< N5,000	N5,001 - N20,000	N20,001 - N40,000	N40,001 - N60,000	N60,001 - N80,000	N80,001 - N100,000	N100,001 - N200,000	> N200,000	TOTAL
Do not know	15%	71%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Refuse to answer	0%	0%	53%	0%	23%	23%	0%	0%	100%
Other	9%	23%	16%	9%	22%	22%	0%	0%	100%
Agriculture	23%	34%	21%	12%	5%	2%	2%	1%	100%
Trader/vendor/retail	23%	39%	21%	10%	4%	2%	1%	0%	100%

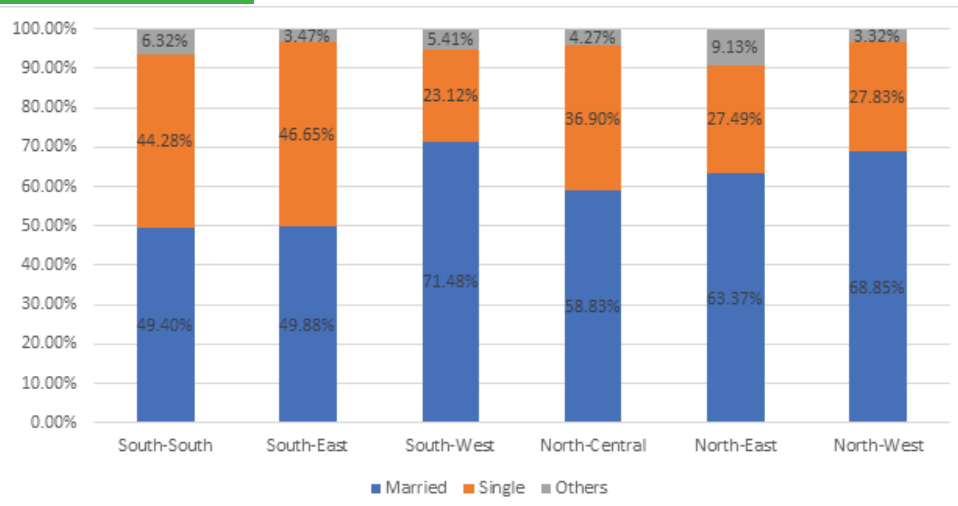
Domestic worker	29%	47%	16%	5%	2%	0%	0%	1%	100%
Artisan/skilled labour	14%	33%	29%	14%	6%	3%	1%	0%	100%
Unskilled labour	32%	32%	21%	9%	4%	2%	0%	0%	100%
Businessperson	11%	25%	29%	12%	15%	6%	1%	2%	100%
Assistants to Professional	1%	14%	30%	20%	12%	7%	13%	4%	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>100%</b>



## 6. Marital Status

A high proportion of the informal sector workers are married, accounting for almost two-thirds (60.31) of all respondents, 34.37% were single, 1.43% were divorced, less than one percent were unmarried but lived with a partner, 3.38% were widowed, and less than one percent did not provide any answer. At the regional level, 71.48% of all respondents in south-west were married, followed by north-west and north-east with 68.85% and 63.37% respectively. The south-east (49.88%) had the most single respondents, followed by south-south 44.28% and north-central 36.90%. Other respondents that are not single or married were predominant in the north-east (9.13%), south-south 6.32% and the south-west 5.41% (see figure 2).

Figure 6: Marital Status



### Conclusion

There is evidence of gender segmentation in informal employment across the country, with an even distribution of men (50.41%) and women (49.59) that are employed in the informal sector. The share of young and middle-aged adult workers in informal employment is around 86% percent (49.92% young adults and 36.45% MAA), while old-aged adults make up the remaining 13.63%. The education attainment of respondents is poor, over half of the respondents have only received education up to the secondary level, while only about one fifth of the population have received either university education or vocational training. Further disaggregation by gender shows no significant difference.

However, when broken down by age groups we see that a large proportion (>70%) of the educated population are middle aged adults for both female and male. The service industry provides 49.2% of work for both women and men, it leads all sectors as the largest employer of informal sector workers, followed by agriculture. There are considerable differences across the regions in the income of informal sector workers, most informal sector workers are in low wage jobs with more than two-thirds earning between N5,000 – N40,000, while less than one percent earn between N100,000 – N200,000 or more. Finally, two-thirds of the respondents were married, while 35% were single.

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L-R: Chief Taskman of SFTAS from the World Bank, Yue Man Lee; Auditor-General of the Federation representative, Dr. Busayo Fawale; Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki; chairman of the NGF, Dr Kayode Fayemi; Vice Chairman of the NGF and Sokoto State Governor, Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal; Permanent Secretary, FMFBNP, Mr. Aliyu Ahmed; Director General, DMO, Ms. Patience Oniha; Country Director of the World Bank, Nigeria, Shubham Chaudhuri and the Director General of the NGF, Mr Asishana Okauru at the unveiling of the States' Charter to Sustain Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability Reforms



## NIGERIAN GOVERNORS COMMIT TO STATES' CHARTER TO SUSTAIN FISCAL TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY REFORMS

**T**he launch and signing of the States' Charter to Sustain Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability Reforms was held successfully on Wednesday, 17th of August 2022,

The State Governors, led by the Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), Governor of Ekiti State, Dr Kayode Fayemi, expressed their appreciation of the efforts by Partners, Ministries, Departments, Agencies and most importantly, State officials who have worked tirelessly to ensure States progress in their resolve to strengthen the fiscal system and deliver improved fiscal transparency, accountability, and sustainability.

He highlighted during the launch that much is already being sustained beyond SFTAS performance years, with States still publishing their fiscal documents in line with appropriate standards and pursuing the implementation of various laws that have been put in place.

While encouraging everyone to support the broader programme sustainability plan being co-designed by the FMBFNP, NGF, DMO, OGP, World Bank and the States, the Forum expresses through the Charter, their unwavering commitment to sustainability and willingness to be further accountable to the people.

The Governors emphasised that government is a continuum and solemnly pledged to:

Support and participate in the Annual States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability & Sustainability (SFTAS) assessment and scorecard.

Sustain Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms co-ordination and implementation mechanisms within the States.

Support the uptake and integration of courses to be offered on the NGF e-Learning Management System (LMS) with States continuous learning and certification for State Officials.

Support the sustainability of SFTAS related reforms to - Increase fiscal transparency and accountability; Strengthen domestic revenue mobilisation; Increase efficiency in public expenditure; Improve debt management and strengthen debt sustainability.

Encourage the domestication of similar and relevant reforms at local government-level to strengthen their fiscal transparency, accountability, and sustainability likewise.

Consequently, the NGF in collaboration with the FMFBNP and partners look forward to deepening the advocacy and implementation of the ideals contained in the Charter.

The Charter is only one of the many activities in the broader SFTAS sustainability plan to be implemented by various partners and agencies on the programme.

Ultimately, sustaining, and deepening reforms' gains of the programme will require all efforts.

In attendance were the State Governors, Honourable Minister of Finance, Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning (FMFBNP) represented by the Permanent Secretary for Finance (Mr. Aliyu Ahmed), Director, Home Finance and National Programme Co-ordinator SFTAS (Mr. Stephen Okon), Deputy Director, Home Finance Department and the Deputy National Programme Coordinator SFTAS (Mr. Ali Mohammed), Director General, Debt Management Office (Ms. Patience Oniha), Director General, Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat (Mr. Asishana Bayo Okauru, Esq.), Auditor-General of the Federation represented by Dr. Busayo Fawale, Programme Manager, FMFBNP SFTAS Programme Co-ordination Unit (PCU) (Mrs. Oyindamola Adedokun), Country Director, World Bank, Nigeria (Shubham Chaudhuri).



## NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM



# STATES CHARTER TO SUSTAIN FISCAL TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY REFORMS

*The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) representing the 36 States of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, having benefitted from the fiscal reforms facilitated by the States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability & Sustainability (SFTAS) Programme for Results and the consequential need to sustain the reform gains of the programme, hereby solemnly commit to the following:*

1

Support and participate in the annual States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability & Sustainability (SFTAS) assessment and scorecard.

2

Sustain Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms coordination and implementation mechanisms within our States.

3

Support uptake and integration of courses to be offered on the NGF e-Learning Management System (LMS) with our in-State continuous learning and assessment of State Officials.

5

Encourage the domestication of similar and relevant reforms at local government-level to strengthen their fiscal transparency, accountability and sustainability likewise.

4

Support the sustainability of SFTAS related reforms, especially to:

- Increase Fiscal Transparency and Accountability, by publishing In line with timelines and best practice standards advocated by the programme for (i) annual budgets (ii) citizen's budgets (iii) budget implementation reports (iv) audited financial statements and (v) citizen's accountability reports.
- Strengthen Domestic Revenue Mobilization, by implementing the new Consolidated Revenue Cade (CRC) to increase our internally Generated Revenue (IGR), reducing revenue leakages by fully implementing Treasury Single Account (TSA) at the State level, and increasing enumeration of properties within our States to strengthen land administration and data-driven property tax administration.
- Increase Efficiency in Public Expenditure, by improving the transparency and value for money of public procurement through the implementation of the new/amended procurement laws and adoption of e-Government Procurement (e-GP) system across all our Ministries, Departments and Agencies (M DAs), and implementing the new/amended State audit laws that guarantee the operational and financial autonomy of the Offices of State and Local Governments Auditors-General.
- Improve debt management and strengthen debt sustainability, by reducing the stock of domestic expenditure arrears, implementing the new/amended fiscal and debt laws, conducting and publishing Debt Sustainability Analysis as well as Medium-Term Debt Strategy reports in line with timelines and best practice standards advocated by the programme.

SIGNED

**His Excellency, Kayode Fayemi**  
Executive Governor of Ekiti State  
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum

**His Excellency, Aminu Waziri Tambuwal**  
Executive Governor of Sokoto State Vice-  
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum

**His Excellency, Godwin Obaseki**  
Executive Governor of Edo State Chairman,  
Nigeria Governors' Forum SFTAS Committee



# PHOTO SPEAK

Photos from the Safeguarding of Schools Summit Hosted by the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) with the NGF Chairman, Dr. John Kayode Fayemi in attendance and the NGF Director-General, Mr A.B Okauru as a panelist



## PHOTO CAPTION

1. L-R: Chief of Defence Staff, General Lucky Irabor; Minister of Finance, Zainab Ahmed; World Bank Country Director to Nigeria, Shubham Chaudhuri, Director General of the NGF, Mr Asishana Okauru; Founder (ECC), Dr. Ayoade Alakija and Deputy Director General for Multilateral Affairs, Mrs Gunn Jorid in a panel of discussion.
2. Chairman of the NGF, Dr Kayode Fayemi (right) with the Principal of the Chibok Girls Secondary School, Mrs Asabe Kwabura holding the report on "A Call to Action for the Safeguarding of Schools,".
3. Chairman of the NGF, Dr Kayode Fayemi (middle) and other participants in a group photograph at the Summit.
4. Director General of the NGF, Mr Asishana Okauru (3rd right) and other participants in a group photograph holding copies of the report on "A Call to Action for the Safeguarding of Schools," at the Summit.



# Again Crown Agents return to the NGF

## Discuss Potential Partnership

The Crown Agents Quality Assurance and Inspection Services again turned up at the secretariat of the Nigeria Governors' Forum led by their Country Director at Crown Agents Nigeria, Nkiru Anonyuo.

Crown Agents is a not-for-profit international development company that works in partnership with clients to design and implement practical solutions. They support and deliver individual supply chain functions and also provide a complete end-to-end solution to teething problems.

They are established in several countries in West Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia and East and Southern Africa.

When it comes to procurement, they offer direct and procurement support and consultancy services. For logistics, they work through Greenshields Cowie to deliver last-mile logistics and warehousing services. Crown Agents deliver quality assurance and inspection services globally to a diverse global client base across multiple sectors.

The leader of the delegation emphasised that Crown Agents offer the client access to its global inspector base to provide locally present and qualified inspection capabilities wherever and whenever required.

For over 110 years, Crown Agents has had a long-standing commitment to quality assurance and inspection to protect the purchasing activities of their global client base. Inspection services provided for their clients result in a reduction of the inherent

risks associated with purchasing goods, materials and products from remote and first-time suppliers.

Through their subsidiary, Greenshields Cowie, they contribute to saving millions of lives around the world and ensure that crucial healthcare products reach the people who need them most, whether it be malaria-preventing bed nets throughout South Sudan, or urgently needed medical treatments to communities in Sierra Leone, for example.

They specialise in expediting the international movement, storage and final distribution of highly sensitive health and medical commodities, including cold chain.

By unblocking barriers and building local capacity, they help create efficient and effective health supply chain systems right through to the last mile.

One of their flagship projects is COVID-19 and over the last two years, Greenshields Cowie has supported major world donors, governments and NGOs, in their COVID-19 emergency response activities with operations including delivery of 250 tons of PPE cargo, including swabs, test kits and hand sanitizers, the handling of over 980 shipments, the loading of 1,300,000 hygiene products on trucks destined for Syria and the transporting of over 5 million vaccines to countries around the world.

As the world moved into the vaccine delivery stage of response, they stepped up to support governments and donors. Greenshields Cowie, as the logistics arm of Crown Agents, was entrusted by the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to distribute their very first round of COVID-19 vaccines to the UK's 14 overseas territories.

Other pharmaceutical projects include 124 million treatments delivered throughout Northern Nigeria under the Accelerating the Sustainable Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases (ASCEND) programme, 3,500 tonnes of life-saving medicines delivered to over 800 health centres in South Sudan on behalf of the Crown Agents led health pooled fund.

In the pharmaceutical grade warehouse in Sierra Leone, Greenshields Cowie has managed the warehousing services and temperature-controlled storage of the National Medical Supplies Agency's Free Healthcare drugs and medicines in support of the UK Government's Saving Lives Programme.

The NGF led by its Director General, Mr Asishana Bayo Okauru and the Executive Director of Strategy and Research, Mr Lateef O. Shittu said that the NGF would continue to stay connected to Crown Agents for the possibility of having them make a presentation for the Governors to be better informed of the services they offer.





# NEWS

From the states

## GOV GANDUJE RELEASES 3,898 CONVICTS IN SEVEN YEARS

In compliance with President Muhammadu Buhari's call for decongestion of Correctional Centres, Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje of Kano State has released 3,898 inmates across Kano centres within a period of seven years.

The exercise is conducted through the State Prerogative of Mercy Committee at the intervals of Sallah festivities when such releases are effected.

The 90 inmates who were released recently were among the released 3,898, as he disclosed during a visit to Gorondutse Correctional Centre, on Sallah Day.

Governor Ganduje assured that he would continue with the good work up to 2023 when his administration ends.

"This exercise is in compliance with President Muhammadu Buhari's urge for decongestion of our correctional centres," he explained.

"We will continue with this good initiative. And at the same time I assure you that the process will continue even after I left office.

When my Deputy, Nasiru Yusuf Gawuna, who is the gubernatorial candidate of our great party, APC, wins come 2023," he further disclosed.



Ganduje

## KANO GOV. INSPECTS 60-KM RURAL ROAD, SEVEN BRIDGES LINKING SIX LGAS



Striving to optimize road networks between Kano Emirate and other Emirates of the state, Kano State Governor, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, inspected a 60-km road linking a part of Kumbotso Local Government that links five more local government areas up to Karaye town of Karaye Emirate.

The road which is over 80 percent at completion stage, is expected to be completed by the end of December this year.

It links Kumbotso, Rimingado, Gwarzo, Kabo, Tofa and Karaye local government areas, assuring that, "The state government will put all the necessary effort to see that the project is completed within the stipulated time."

Governor Ganduje said "When we came to start the project we found that there were five bridges, but to make the project more viable we added another two bridges. And all the seven bridges are completed."

The road was the oldest road linking Kano and other places from northern axis of the state. He further added that, "We are doing such project to ease transportation of farm produce from our rural areas and to also take development to their doorsteps."

## ... VISITS FAMILIES OF 19 DECEASED AUTO CRASH ASSISTS VICTIMS, PROVIDES N3.8M SUPPORT

Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje of Kano State visited the families of the 19 people who were involved in a ghastly auto crash between Zaria-Kano expressway, at Tusguri village of Sanda ward, in Bunkure Local Government Area.

He gave out the sum of two hundred thousand Naira (N200,000) to each of the victims' families, killed in the resultant fire, while on their way returning from Ilorin.

We received the death with shock and we pray that may Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala

forgive all their wrongdoings and reward their good deeds with Jannah," he prayed.

The governor directed the Chairman of the local government area to write to the state government and request for the construction of primary school in the area and promised to expedite related action.

To also help the people of the area in dry season farming, he assured them that there is federal government intervention for dry season farming and affirmed the town will be included in the programme.

## ASUU STRIKE: GANDUJE COUNSELS NLC, LECTURERS, CSOs

**A**s Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje of Kano State received state leadership of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), who were at the Kano Government House, recently, protesting in solidarity to the cause of the striking Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), he pitched that the crisis must be resolved to save the system.

"This crisis must be resolved to help save the system. We don't want system collapse in

this country at all," he said.

He assured that, the striking University lecturers are in the strike action " ... to save the system from collapsing."

While lamenting the plight of students across the country, for being idle all this while, he revealed that, "Myself and my colleagues from all the 36 states, irrespective of our party differences are concerned about the prolonged strike action and we will put our heads together to bring an end to the

crisis."

The Chairman of the Kano branch of NLC, Comrade Kabiru Ado Minjibir, commended Ganduje for not joining others in no work no pay resolution against university lecturers.

"We really appreciate the state government under your able leadership, the people's Governor Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje. for your magnanimous approach in not stopping the salary of the teachers of two state universities. This shows you are education-friendly governor," Comrade Minjibir stated.

Others in the peaceful protest were ASUU members, students' bodies, civil society groups, youth organisations, human rights activists, among others.



## EXCHANGE PROGRAMME: PARENTS COMMEND KWARA GOV. OVER CONSTANT SUPPORT

*...Otoge not a fluke, parents insist*

Parents Association of Students on Exchange Programme (PASEP) of Government Secondary School (GSS) Ilorin has commended Governor Abdulrahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara State for being passionate about the welfare of students on Exchange Programme from the State.

In a statement jointly signed by its Chairman Ahmed Funsho, and Secretary Shehu Gidado, the Association pointed out that the present administration has been consistent about the payment of transport fares of the students since its inception, saying that the gesture is helping the students to enjoy stable and uninterrupted study in their respective schools outside the State.

It said the previous government was not sensitive to the students' plight, explaining that it owed them arrears of fares to the tune of over N15 million.

"Your Excellency, we wish to place on record that prior to your coming on board, there had been a backlog of unpaid transport fares for our children on the Exchange Programme, spanning about 4 years (over N15 million).

"But ever since you became the Governor of our dear State in 2019, we have been enjoying (from your government) a steady and timely payment for the affected students who are schooling all over Northern Nigeria. We commend you for this," the statement said.

More: "We are keen followers of your style of governance since you assumed office and no doubt you have justified the 'Otoge mantra' that birthed this administration. We are also proud of your track record of achievements across key sectors, which clearly manifest that Otoge revolution is not a fluke but a change that is genuinely placing Kwara high in the comity of states in Nigeria."

The Association then requested the government to look into payment of the four-year arrears of fares and provide them with a Toyota Coaster bus for smooth running of their other activities, among other requests.

It prayed for the success of the administration and pledged their support for realisation of the second-term bid of the Governor in the 2023 general elections.

"For these reasons, you remain our strength and strong pillar of sustaining the programme almost planned for extinction by those administrations before you. May Allah continue to be your strength and compass of life," the statement added.

## I DIDN'T KNOW MY COMMISSIONERS LACKED SECURITY PROTECTION

**G**overnor Abdulallahi Sule of Nasarawa State recently disclosed he was not aware that his commissioners have no security details attached to them.

It was learnt that since their inauguration more than seven months ago, no fewer than 14 commissioners serving in the cabinet of Governor Sule, do not have security details attached to them.

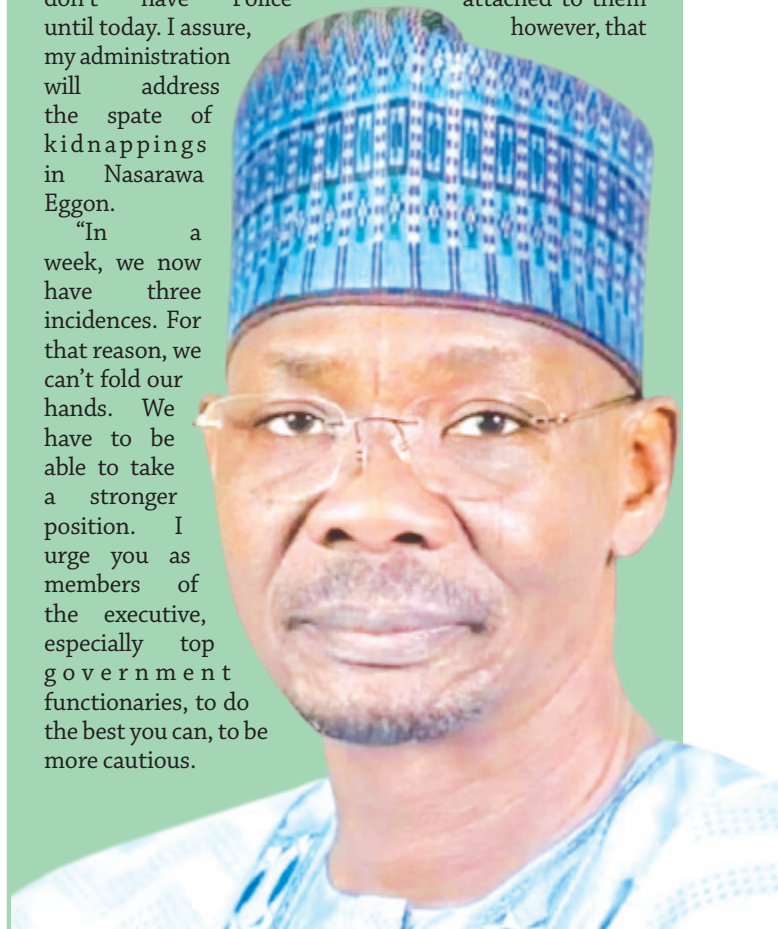
Also, some of the commissioners do not have official cars. This had forced the commissioners to use their private cars for official duties.

The governor spoke at the Government House, Lafia, while reacting to the Monday's abduction of his Commissioner for Information, Yakubu Lawal, by gunmen at the headquarters of the Nasarawa Eggon Local Government Area of the state.

He said: "I have no idea that some of our commissioners don't have Police attached to them until today. I assure, however, that

my administration will address the spate of kidnappings in Nasarawa Eggon.

"In a week, we now have three incidences. For that reason, we can't fold our hands. We have to be able to take a stronger position. I urge you as members of the executive, especially top government functionaries, to do the best you can, to be more cautious.





## ASUU STRIKE: BAGUDU URGES LABOUR UNIONS TO COME OUT WITH PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

Governor Abubakar Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State has urged labour unions to work towards ending the prolonged and recurring ASUU strikes in Nigeria.

The governor made the call at Government House, Birnin Kebbi, recently, when the Kebbi State NLC Chairman, Comrade Alhassan Halidu, alongside the executives of the Academic Staff Union of the University (ASUU), and other affiliated Unions presented a letter to him.

The unions were requesting Bagudu's intervention and support to end the lingering ASUU strike.

The governor, who decried the prolonged ASUU strike, also described it as worrisome, urging the unions in the state to come out with plausible solutions to end the strike.

Bagudu further called in them to proffer workable ways to ensure sustainable funding of Nigeria's education sector.

Bagudu lamented that inadequate funding was the most challenging issue confronting the education sector which previous governments, including military administrations sought to address.

He appealed to the NLC in the State to set a pace for other Unions in Nigeria, by not following the footsteps of others, urging they should come up with solutions on how to curb the challenges facing the Nigeria's tertiary institutions..

His words: "It is important for all the stakeholders to come together, to find solutions to the funding of the education sector in Nigeria.

No single institution should be closed for one day as such prolonged closures impede the educational development of the nation.

Let us start analysing the situation, come out on how to solve the problem.

The NLC love Nigeria, just like all of us, love Nigeria. Let us narrow the challenges, on how we could resolve this so that our institutions could receive better funding", he averred.

Bagudu thanked the NLC leaders for the visit and presentation of the letter to him and promised to everything possible to find lasting solutions to the problem.

The State NLC Chairman, Comrade Alhassan Halidu, presented their letter to Governor Abubakar Atiku Bagudu, on behalf of the National President of NLC, Comrade Ayuba Wabba.

## NIGER STATE GOVT TO INVEST MORE ON WOMEN, YOUTHS' SKILLS

The Niger State Government is to provide more skills empowerment to women and youths in the state. Governor Abubakar Sani Bello stated this in an interview shortly after presiding over the All Progressives Congress (APC), Kontagora Local Government Area critical stakeholders meeting in Kontagora.

The governor explained that skills acquisition remains vital in the administration's desire to engage women and youths in meaningful ventures. He stated that already, the state has supported women groups in rice milling and groundnut oil production and they are doing well.

"In the last quarter of our budget, we made enough provision for youths and women empowerment skills acquisition because the only way to move forward is to develop skills.

"So what we are trying to do is to expand so that we have more, even graduates that are doing nothing can participate in such ventures", he further explained.

The Governor added that herders will also be captured in the next budget to give them sense of belonging in the state adding that Fulfulde has already been included among the official broadcasting languages in the state.

Chairman of APC, Kontagora Local Government Chapter, Umar Adamu Kawo, Sen. Ibrahim Musa and Sani Mamman Lafiya, Commissioner for Works and Infrastructural Development we're among some of the critical stakeholders who made contribution to the meeting and stressed the need for regular interaction among party members to identify areas of need and make adequate planning towards 2023 elections.

According to them regular meetings would unite members and avail elders the opportunities to give pieces of advice where necessary.

Governor Abubakar Sani Bello had earlier received 543 women who decamped from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) to the APC in Kontagora Local Government Area.

Addressing the decamppees, Governor Abubakar Sani Bello commended them for making a wise decision and assured them that the Party will treat them equally with other existing members of the Party.

Governor Bello enjoined the women to vote for APC across board in next year's General elections, stressing the need for Party Members to contribute their quota towards its unity and stability.

The leader of the women PDP decamppees, Hajija Aisha Makka explained that their decision was a collective one based on the goodwill and benevolence of some APC stalwarts to them regardless of Party differences.

She said they decided to join the APC so that they will partake in the activities of the Party and fully enjoy the benefit of being members while assuring that other PDP women from across Zone C will soon join them.

Governor Sani Bello thereafter interacted with some ex-convicts that were freed after some APC stalwarts in the local government area paid off their fines.

He commended the gesture and encouraged the party at the local government level to emulate it saying as an individual, he has been doing it for about 10 years now.





# GOV. IKPEAZU EXTOLS ABIA STATE EDUCATION e-PORTAL

**G**overnor Okezie Ikpeazu of Abia State has commended the Honourable Commissioners, Permanent Secretary and the staff of the Ministries of Basic and Post Basic Education for the successful launch of the Abia State Education Electronic Portal.

Ikpeazu who stated this in his office in Umuahia when the operations and features of the Education Electronic Portal were demonstrated to him, described the electronic portal as a very robust digital platform and expressed delight that the Abia State Education sector now had in place, a comprehensive digital education management system that would serve as a model for the other states in the country.

Speaking earlier on behalf of the Abia State education sector, the Honourable Commissioner for Basic Education, Chief Ukwu Rocks Emma, stated that the Abia State Education Electronic Portal is a product of thorough and painstaking work by the crop of dedicated Civil Servants in the Ministry of Basic and Post Basic Education and expressed gratitude to the governor for his solid support from the commencement to the conclusion of the project.

Chief Ukwu Rocks Emma disclosed that the electronic directory at the moment contains 4,385 school portals, reflecting the member of public and approved private school already uploaded and running on the platform and assured the Governor that the remaining 3,358 schools will be uploaded before the end of August, 2022.

Present at the presentation and documentation of the Education Electronic Directory were the Deputy Governor, Sir Ude Oko Chukwu, the Chief of Staff to the Governor, Chief Okey Ahiwe, the Honourable Commissioner for Post Basic Education, Sir Israel Mark, the Honourable Commissioner for Finance, Dr. Aham Uko, the Honourable Commissioner for Information, Dr. Eze Chikamnayo and the Honourable Commissioner, Documentation and Strategy, Ugochukwu Emezue.

Others include the Head of Service, Sir Onyii Wamah, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education Mr. Eze Ajuzie, the Chairman of the Abia State Universal Basic Education Board, Elder Okechukwu Analaba, the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor, Sir Onyebuchi Ememanka and Heads of Departments in the Ministries of Basic and Post Basic Education.



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