

# **MINISTERIAL PRESS BRIEFING**

## **SOKOTO STATE MINISTRY FOR WOMEN AFFAIRS AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

**HISTORY:** The State Ministry of Women Affairs, Sokoto came into existence on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1997 vide sokoto State edict No. 9 as an off-shoot of the defunct women Commission.

**MANDATE:** At its creation, the Ministry was mandated to evolve and implement policies, programmes and projects that would enhance and improve the socio-economic status of women and children in Sokoto State. The Ministry is made-up of three departments, namely

- The department of Administration
- The Department of Women Affairs and
- The Department of Child Welfare.

The Ministry also has under its supervision one Parastatal; the Maryam Abacha Women and Children Hospital.

It is worth noting here that, the State ministry of Women Affairs is strictly a service rendering organization, through which the State Government socio-economic programmes having direct bearing on the welfare, well-being and

development of women and children in the State are implemented.

Activities of the Ministry therefore include sensitization of women and children on important issues affecting their welfare and development. This is with a view to creating the much needed awareness on those roles they are expected to play in the onerous tasks of building the society for the overall development of our dear State and nation at large.

The Ministry also intervenes directly in those areas requiring the attention of the State Government relating to women economic empowerment, maternal health, child mortality, morbidity, girl child education e.t.c.

The Ministry in particular extends assistance to needy families, women and children, orphans and vulnerable children in-distress as well as needy-sick persons among others.

To effectively carryout the aforementioned intervention activities, the Ministry maintains certain institutions which are directly funded by the State government. These include the Maryam Abacha Women and children hospital, Sokoto the Women Development centre, Sokoto, the Children multipurpose Centre, Sokoto and Women Development Centres in the 23 LGA in the State.

The Ministry also in collaboration with the Federal Government, has established the Wamakko Drop-In-Center as part of its intervention efforts in the educational and economic spheres of life. It is hoped that the two pilot institutions would subsequently be established in the three senatorial zones in the State. It is also worth mentioning, that the Ministry in the collaboration with other donor agencies, particularly the UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA USAID e.t.c. has carried out a number of important activities mainly in the areas of hosting sensitization workshop and sample survey on orphans and vulnerable children among others.

Achievements recorded by the ministry under the two core Departments are as follows: -

1) Women Affairs Department

i) Reactivation of Women Centres;

In recognition of the importance of women development Centres to the economic development of women folk, the State Government has purchased working materials worth **N17,575,000.00** for the Centres. The working material which comprises sewing machines, Knitting machines and its accessories are to be used in training women across the State so as to make them self-reliant economically.

We have already toured all the 23 LGAS in the State with a view to assessing the condition of structures housing the Centres, as well as level of facilities and activities in those centres. It is hoped that very soon those working materials would be distributed to the individual centres across the State so as to make them livelier and functional in line with the State Government policy.

The Ministry has also resuscitated the women Development Centre along Sultan Ibrahim Dasuki road, here in Sokoto. Additional sewing and knitting machines were provided to the Centre to enable it effectively cope-up with the increasing demand of trainees wishing to enroll for those trades. Recently enrolment of trainee in the various trades being offered by the Centre has tremendously increased.

A Fitness Centre has also been established in the Centre as part of the reactivation exercise. Equipments worth N2,000,000.00 were purchased and installed in the Fitness Centre for women wishing to patronize such facilities. Other useful aspects of the reactivation exercise of the Centre include, the establishment of computer units within the premises, which would go along way in assisting women to become computer literate. All these efforts by the State

government have greatly enhance the performance of the Centre.

## **ii) ESTABLISHMENT OF RICE MILL PROCESSING**

This project was conceived by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and decided to site it in Sokoto state as a pilot scheme. The Sokoto state Government has already provided land for the project at Wurno. Site Plan and Bills of Quantity for the construction of the complex have been compiled and sent to the Federal Ministry for their necessary action. When completed, the project is expected to contribute immensely to the economic development of the area and state in general.

## **iii) WOMEN FUND FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WOFEE)**

This scheme was initiated by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development as part of effort to reduce level of poverty among women in the country. Individual States are expected to contribute counter-part fund to supplement whatever amount contributed by the Federal Government. The Sokoto State Government has since released the sum of **N10m** as its counter-part fund to the scheme, while the **N6m** pledged by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development is being awaited. Lists of women trade

groups and associations have already been compiled in readiness for the take-off of the scheme in the State.

iv) **MARYAM ABACHA WOMEN AND CHILDREN HOSPITAL.**

The institution was established to supplement other health institutions in the State in the areas of maternal and child care as well as provide specialized services to VVF Patients. The Hospital has been given the deserved attention by the State Government, with the aim of repositioning it to perform the functions for which it was established. Additional building structures have been constructed in an effort to expand facilities in the Hospital to match the increasing demand for the Services of the institution, particularly in the areas of maternal care and services to the VVF patients. The hospital in collaboration with **ACQUIRE** conducted in mass repairs of VVF patients at different intervals. This is in addition to the day-to-day repairs being carried out by the hospital.

Contract for the construction of Amenity Ward, VVF temporary shed and wall-fence in the hospital have been awarded at the cost of **N43,542,205,50**, as part of expansion exercise in the hospital. This has reached almost 80% completion stage. The State Government has also awarded another contract for the construction of VVF rehabilitation

Centre at the cost of **N18,436,957.14** where VVF patients would receive training in some useful trades before they are finally discharged from the hospital.

In addition to the physical development within the Hospital, the State Government has also accorded priority attention to the routined expenditure of the Hospital. This is with a view to adequately taking care of sanitary condition in the hospital, purchase of medicaments and periodic replacement of beddings and other usable items.

## **2. CHILD WELFARE DEPARTMENT**

A high level of success has been achieved by the Ministry under the department in up-lifting the welfare and protection of our children as well as their participation in numerous State and national activities.

### **i) WAMAKKO DROP-IN-CENTRE**

The Centre is a pilot institution jointly established by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social development one hand and the Sokoto state Government on the other.

The institution is aimed at mopping up students who could not finish secondary school education from the society, with the aim of training them in various vocations so that they can become useful to themselves and the general society.

The State Government has provided site for the Centre, recruited the entire workforce needed by the institution as well as awarded contract for the construction of additional structures at the cost of **N20,000,000.00** as part of its contribution to the successful take-off of the institution. Currently the Ministry in collaboration with the federal Ministry of Women Affairs organized training workshop for the newly recruited members of staff of the centre.

The Ministry has also successfully contributed to the constitution of the State Chapter of the National Children's Parliament. The process which commenced at the Local Government level through zonal level was finally concluded at the State level, with the election of the State Parliament. The elected parliament was sponsored by the Ministry to attend Children Holiday Camp at Abuja, where they freely interacted with children from other parts of the country in a wide-range of activities lined up for the occasion. The children were also opportuned to participate in the election of the National Children Parliament.

With regards to the Child Right's Act (CRA), His Excellency, the Executive Governor Alh. Dr Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko (Sarkin Yamman Sokoto) has approved for the constitution of a



State Committee to domesticate the Act in tune with our religious and cultural heritage.

The Ministry has also organized a number of sensitization workshops. These include launching of the new national gender policy, Baseline survey on orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and support for orphan in the area of education and health care delivery among others.

Workshops and seminars on locally available Nutritional supplements, maternal mortality, importance of Girl-child education were carried out by the Ministry. Others include campaign against trafficking in persons, Child Right's Act e.t.c. The Ministry also sponsored State delegates to the North West Zone Launching of the National Women Coalition against HIV/AIDS (NAWOCA) held at Kaduna. The Ministry hosted National Workshop of the Home Economic Teachers Association of Nigeria here in Sokoto

### **3. ASSISTANCE AND WELFARE PACKAGES TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

The Ministry periodically visits hospitals and extends assistance to needy-sick persons particularly, women and children. Such kind gestures have been extended to patients laying on their hospital beds on several occasions within the year. Welfare packages have also been extended to women and

children in-distress especially during the Ramadan and other festive periods.

#### **4. ENLIGHTENMENT PROGRAMMES**

The Ministry, as part of its effort to create awareness on important issues among women and children has sponsored a number enlightenment programmes on both Radio and Television; these include "**ABOKAN TAFIYA, DUNIYAR MATA, JINGLES** on the importance of immunization.

#### **CONCLUSION**

It is clear from the foregoing that the Ministry has successfully executed a number of important projects and programmes, as part of its statutory responsibilities of catering for the socio-economic well-being of women and children in the State. It is our ardent hope that the State Government would continue to accord priority attention to activities under the Ministry so that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) relating to women and children can be achieved before the year 2020.

Our vision in particular is to produce a society where greater resources are committed to the education of our children, health care delivery, fight against hunger, poverty, negative practices, habits and other vices in our society.