

The Executive

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NIGERIA
GOVERNORS'
FORUM



SUMMARY



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GOVERNOR – ADEMOLA
ADELEKE



NGWF
Raising Scarfs
Against **SGBV**



PROF. ABBA GAMBO

NIGERIAN AGRICULTURE IN 2022 the ups and downs

President Muhammadu Buhari Succeeded in returning Nigeria to the January-December budget cycle, kudos to the present members of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The budget of 2022 came with high hopes by the farmers, and indeed all stakeholders for a huge chunk allocation to the Agricultural sector.

President Muhammadu Buhari budgeted 1.73% of the total budget to whole Agricultural Sector.

In February of 2022, precisely on the 24th, Russia attacked Ukraine. The crisis changed the global Agricultural landscape. Coincidentally both Countries produce about 50% of the global wheat demand and also several agricultural products, ranging from machineries, fertilizers, seeds, and other chemical need across the whole agricultural value chain of about 45 different countries with 17 in Africa plus Nigeria. The crises stopped export from both Russia and Ukraine, Fertilizer, NPK, 15: 15:15 50kg sold for N8,000.00, in 2021 rose to N30,000.00; farmers all over the country had to look for alternatives, organic manure, cattle dungs etc. Similarly, the states based "Tractor Hiring Services" at N7,500.00 per hour (in Yobe State, for example), rose to N50,000.00 per hour, the farmers were further dumb founded. The nearest alternative was Cattle Ploughing, but unfortunately Cattle rustling was the order of the day, in most states, particularly in the North Western States of Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara and Katsina States, and North Central States of Nigeria. Nassarawa, Kaduna and Benue States. Rusty bikes came to the farms for the very first time, and most farmers ploughed manually to plant.

The rains came early in 2022, especially in the Sahel and Sudan Savannah agroecological vegetational zones of the Country, mostly, the Northern most States of Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Jigawa, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi states. The farmers rushed to the farms to plant and the rains then ceased, with most farmers loosing very costly seeds. The loss of seed to a farmer is like losing family member.

The Nigerian Metrological Agency (NIMET) had earlier issued the 2022 forecast of early rains in the north, stating clearly that farmers should not plant early. Unfortunately, the forecasts were released in Abuja and to date most farmers are not even aware of the NIMET report. The NGF has a very critical role to play here, annual NIMET

forecasts should be known to all States through massive and aggressive sensitization and advocacy.

The rains came, much more than the NIMET forecasts, leading to a serious flooding across the country, affecting 34 out of the 36 States, with the FCT least affected. The floods led to massive loss of lives, livestock, properties and farmlands. The much expected harvest in most States became a mirage. Jigawa State, been the most affected.

Expectant farmers became IDPs in camps, while the farmers were waiting for palliatives, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) announced for a "redesign of the Naira Note", stating clearly that by 31st of January, 2023, the present Naira in circulation will cease to be a legal tender.

Almost immediately, huge sums of money entered all the major markets of the country. Grains most especially, were mopped up to the last grain in the markets.

A bag of Millet selling for N8,000.00 rose to N35,000.00, Sorghum from N12,000.00 to N40,000.00, Rice rose to N45,000.00 per 50kg, even for the locally produced and milled.

The year 2022, was a very great nightmare to most farmers in Nigeria. To feed 3 times a day, became a huge challenge to most families and new Cuisines entered Nigerian homes. For example, Garri that a typical Kanuri family do not take in years, entered Borno/ Yobe kitchens, women learnt how to make Tuwo out of Garri and for the very first time, Garri with Miyan Kuka became a common Cuisine plus "Garau Garau", (boiled Rice, Beans, without soup, but some oil and spices) became common in most campuses and homes across Nigeria.

Indeed, 2022 was a very tough year for the Agricultural sector, but yet the sector contributed 23% to the national GDP in the Q3 of the year, surpassing Oil and Gas, Manufacturing and Telecommunications. Hmmm, we pray for a most benign and pleasant rainy season in 2023, and an increment in the Agricultural budget at all the three tiers of Government.





Commentary

Thumbs up for NGWF

As an enthusiast of youth empowerment, and a friend of youth groups all around the country, I always appreciate and learn from my visits to schools, talks and my conversations with students and their leaders. So, it is deeply concerning that many people have created a false caricature of Nigerian youths that I've known my whole life.

I am not just talking about youth as in males but I'm specifically referring to the girl-child. Long before I began hobnobbing with young people as a mentor, I had observed the evolution of perilous stereotypes in our society, from one corner of the country to another. While one part of the country prohibits education for the girl child, the other part of the country allows the girl child to go to school but at the end of it, if nothing comes out of school, the girl child is compelled by circumstances beyond her control and indeed beyond her parents control, to use what she has, to win bread.

It is appalling, but true. I am bringing this up because, like it or not, the NGWF program of this month has further pushed to the fore the basis for this country to have a conversation over the faith of our future mothers, who daily experience violence of different types, like beating, raping, mental torture, abuse and even death.

It is everywhere. A lot of people think there are many criminals in Nigeria, but the subsisting narrative shows that there are more sexual predators in the country than there are thieves. In fact, there is hardly any real skirmish with insurgents, kidnappers, robbers or burglars in Nigeria that does not have as its footnote a rape or gangrape case. Women are not safe

in their homes, where they have uncles, brothers, and cousins just as it is unsafe for them at workplaces with bosses threatening girls with dismissals or job security. Young boys who join insurgents are more enticed by the availability of free women, for lascivious purposes, than they are in the money. This explains why most of the criminals that have tormented this country for ransom, when eventually arrested, have nothing to show but vague memories of their sexual escapades with their female victims.

As a policy hub, the NGF is committed to our nation's promise of a free, qualitative, public education for all. But schools have remained largely unsafe for the girl child. Remember Chibok, Birnin Yauri and other girls' schools around the country. Women grow into the same predatory environs after school, in offices, markets and sports grounds. Nowhere is safe.

To realize that promise of a society without gender-based violence, drastic punitive action must be taken against the men that Perpetrate them. Schools must be a place where all students are safe and feel safe. It was heartbreaking to me, when at a PTA meeting somewhere in Abuja, a few members exchanged fisticuffs over a girl that went to the same class as their kids. No shame, no respect.

There is therefore a national emergency that must be addressed. Governors' wives under the aegis of the NGWF have placed a finger on the problem. They need the help of their husbands to go further. Women in Nigeria only live on common grounds, but they are facing uncommon conditions under uncommon circumstances. There is no better time to start a conversation on their matter than now. The NGF in-house publication is ready to partner NGWF to execute its role of propagating this gospel until a solution is found.

Thumbs up for NGWF.

Also inside, a quick peek at the professors that are manning healthcare delivery in their states. Happy reading.

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Edo People's Health Mistress



PROF. OBEHI

Edo State said we are redesigning our healthcare system in the state to enable our people access quality healthcare, he was referring to the commendable efforts of Professor Obehi Akiora, the Commissioner for Health in Edo State whose appointment as Commissioner for Health in Edo State has received commendations such as that from the Edo Women's Consultative Forum.

In a statement after their annual meeting and signed by the Chairwoman, Dame (Dr.) Ivie Esther Akhionbare, the group described the appointment as a true testament to the governor's promise to make Edo Great.

The Forum noted Prof. Akiora's track records in her career and expressed their absolute confidence in her abilities to turn the fortunes of the health ministry and the entire health sector in Edo around for the good of the people, especially the women.

Indeed, she is a shining light, a round peg in a round hole, according to women in the state. Today the world wide web is replete with accomplishments of the health sector in Edo state and the people of Edo are looking healthier for these.

Prof Akiora knows her onions and she has been a Leader in Healthcare, Medical Education and Public Health. Her work leverages several competencies including expertise in Internal Medicine, Clinical Pharmacology and

Therapeutics, Geriatrics, Public Health, Leadership and Management, medical editing, database design, project, and programme management, as well as public speaking. In short she can easily claim the title of Health mistress, anywhere.

She had worked extensively with the World Health Organization and the Federal Ministry of Health in Nigeria in the development of the National Standard Treatment Guidelines, and in the revisions of the National Essential Medicines List.

She has also taught several public health subjects in the online Master of Public Health programme of the

“We

are driving a revolution in which we are rebranding, resourcing our primary health care system, and training our workforce to understand that primary health care is not health care for the poor.”

When Governor Godwin Obaseki of



University of Liverpool between 2011 and 2017. She went further to state that “As the current sub-speciality Chair for Geriatrics in the Internal Medicine Faculty of the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria, and as a Professor of Medicine in the School of Medicine, University of Benin, she trains and mentors undergraduates, resident doctors, and professionals in healthcare disciplines, in a holistic, person-centred, quality healthcare, especially for older persons.

Currently, her advocacy revolves around a life course approach to healthy ageing and wellness as the main thrust of her clinical and public health work. Some of her other major development in Edo State is the inauguration of the State’s Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

While inaugurating the Committee in Benin City, she said Governor Godwin Obaseki-led administration places a huge premium on the life of every resident in Edo State, hence the need to ensure human subject protection in line with good clinical practices.

According to her, these considerations and the need to improve the quality and outputs from indigenous research necessitated the constitution of a more robust HREC into which seasoned professionals from various backgrounds have been appointed.

In her words, “It is not business as usual in Edo State. A lot is changing and much of the change is a focus on Health and Healthcare Regulation. “What we are doing today is an integral part of the new regulatory framework that the Ministry of Health is driving.”

In addition, the Primary Health Care in Edo state is no longer restricted to the old system

of focusing only on immunization, health talk, and ante-natal care for a few women who may choose to have their babies in PHC centres.

She said: “We are driving a revolution in which we are rebranding, resourcing our primary health care system, and training our workforce to understand that primary health care is not health care for the poor.”

She cited some unique features of PHC in Edo state which include the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) – which provides free care to people under the age of 5 years, pregnant women, older adults and the indigents – and the novel Telemedicine programme which offers health services virtually through the use of video conferencing.

Akoria further revealed that the goal of the Government is to bridge what the people can provide for themselves with the provisions of health insurance. She said: “Achieving universal health coverage is a non-negotiable goal for us in Edo State. For us, a situation where people must spend out-of-pocket for every healthcare encounter causes much concern. So, we have a health insurance commission working to improve and increase enrolment from not just the formal but also the informal sector.

There are also provisions for specialised packages for those who may have health care needs that go beyond what we call the basic health care package.

Prof Abdullahi Isa Adept at brokering partnerships

Professor Abdullahi Isa is the Honourable Commissioner for Health and Human Services in Adamawa State. Professor is an Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) surgeon and an alumnus of the College of Medical Sciences, Maiduguri Borno State.

A strong believer in hard work and perseverance Professor Isa enjoys playing badminton at his leisure time.

In his over 22 years of service most of his time has been dedicated to healthcare training, research and service delivery. Prior to becoming Commissioner for Health in Adamawa State, he spent his energy in enhancing healthcare services in Nigeria through management, teaching and research.

In his state, he brokered an arrangement with Fidelity Bank which supported the state in delivering healthcare services to the people. Fidelity Bank had donated a thousand pieces of bed sheets and pillows for use in Yola's Specialist Hospital as support towards improved healthcare services in the state. Prof. Isa described the donation as part of the bank's corporate social responsibility.

He said, "This donation of 1,000 pieces of bed sheets, pillowcases and pillows for use in the 500 bed hospital in Yola represents efforts targeted towards delivery of accessible, affordable and qualitative health care service to every citizen. He admonished that it is a task that government alone cannot shoulder.

One area of remarkable prowess of the Professor was in the brutal and technical eradication of cholera

in the state. There was a cholera outbreak in April of 2022. Abdullahi brought the disease to an end after it had affected 1,959 people and 55 deaths. He recalled that cholera outbreak was declared in July last year. But the expertise, commitment and dexterity of the Commissioner drove cholera away. The Commissioner cautioned, however, that the declaration of the end of cholera does not suggest a time to relax.

Abdullahi had brokered a partnership between the state and several development agents to rid the state of the plague. He thanked the World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) and other organisations that collaborated with the state government in managing cholera from when it broke out to keep both infections and fatalities as low as it could be helped.

"Reporting and referral were widely circulated. Cholera treatment centres were set up in Specialist Hospital Yola while general hospitals and cottage hospitals as well as some primary health care centres were utilised as cholera treatment centres," the commissioner said.

In addition, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Health Commissioner was active in taking steps to eliminate the spread of coronavirus. One of the efforts taken was the inauguration of an advisory committee consisting of 21 traditional rulers and traditional council secretaries from the 21 local government areas of the state.

Clerics were also part of the committee.

The state ministry of health organised a 2-Day sensitization and awareness meeting for traditional rulers and religious leaders on the need to curtail the spread of the disease. While inaugurating the committee, Prof. Abdullahi Isa, charged them to improve on the efforts of sensitizing their subjects on the need to adhere to the COVID-19 protocols to help in maintaining the successes the state has recorded in fighting the spread of the disease. Professor Abdullahi Isa continues to broker partnerships that keep Adamawa people healthy.



PROF. ABDULLAHI



PROF. NGBEA



PROF. AUGUSTINE

Professor Augustine Vincent Umoh Multi-tasker-in-chief

The Honourable Commissioner for Health in Akwa-Ibom State is one of a kind. Although research has proven that men are not usually able to multi-task, his experiences tell a different story. Professor Augustine Vincent Umoh has over 30 years of medical practice in his kitty, and he has served as Commissioner for two years. He is an alumnus of the College of Medicine, University of Lagos and also the West African College of Surgeons. But the most interesting thing about this Commissioner is his propensity for several extra experiences which he combines seamlessly with his medical practice.

An ardent believer in the saying, "whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well" the Professor enjoys reading, singing, travelling and playing football apart from also exhibiting stoic understanding of such word games as scrabble in his spare time. How he combines all of those and still proves his mettle in medicine is incredible.

Professor Umoh was unbelievably pivotal to the cultivation of the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Uyo where he served as a professor and led the establishment of the Ibom Medical Journal where he served as the journal's editor for over 5 years. Not all men are known to be able to multi-task, but this Professor is a multi-tasker in chief.

Professor Ngbea A. Joseph A doctor and an activist

Professor Ngbea A. Joseph is the Commissioner for Health and Human Services in Benue State. Among the professors manning the health and human services ministries in states he may have come as the last of the Mohicans. But the selections were made in no particular order. This one is a professor and an activist.

Professor Ngbea A. Joseph is the Honourable Commissioner for Health and Human Services in Benue State. Professor Joseph is a prolific healthcare educator and administrator with over 15 years of experience leading healthcare departments and parastatals. Some of these appointments include: HOD, Department of Pathology at Benue State University, Dean Faculty of Basic and Allied Medical

Sciences (BAMS) BSU Makurdi, Chairman, Nigerian Medical Association, Benue State, Chairman of Governing Council, Benue State Polytechnic Ugbokolo and Chairman NMA National Committee on Cancers. Unarguably different from the pack, Professor Ngbea is the one who particularly affects humanity wherever he goes, going by this story about himself. Professor Ngbea is an expert in Histopathology and seeks every opportunity to significantly contribute to the well-being of every person he comes across. An alumnus of the University of Jos where he got his MBBS degree, he also holds a PhD from Chukwuemeka Odimegwu Ojukwu University in Anambra State. He believes in taking responsibility and promoting handwork and excellence. When he is not working, Professor Ngbea enjoys watching football, the news and reading.

Prof. Chike Princewill Oiling Rivers of Health

Professor Chike Princewill Rewhuamwhu is a Qualified Medical Doctor, Professor of Cardiovascular and Tissue Perfusion Physiology and Honourable Commissioner for Health, Rivers State. He was born on the 28th day of June, 1964 in Kaduna, Kaduna State Nigeria, Professor Princewill Chike is a Committed Medical Academician who has devoted his life to teaching, research and service to humanity. The learned professor, who hails from Eligbam Community in Rumueme Kingdom of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, attended St John State School, Rumueme from 1971 to 1976. He thereafter enrolled as a secondary school student at the famous Birabi Memorial Grammar School (BMGS), Bori in the present day Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State from 1976 to 1981 and latter County Grammar School Ikwerre Etche between 1981 to 1982.

In pursuit of his dream to study medicine as a chosen career, the young scholar, as he was then referred to, proceeded to the prestigious University of Port Harcourt in 1983 and by 1987 he has acquitted himself in character and learning and was conferred with a Bachelor of Medical Sciences (B. Med. Sc) in Human Physiology, Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) in 1991, Master of Science (M.Sc) immunopharmacology in the year 2000 and Doctor of Medicine (M.D) Cardiovascular Physiology/Medicine in the year 2007. Professor Chike is a Fellow of the Association of Nigeria Private Medical Practitioners (FAGP) as well as a Distinguished Medical Practitioner of Nigeria (DMP). His scholarly brilliance while serving as a student of the University of Port Harcourt was not hidden in these years as he combined his passion for knowledge with the thirst to become a solution provider

in scholarship. As a Cardiovascular Physiologist, the then Dr. Princewill Chike embraced the challenging areas of Endocrine, Cardiovascular, Neuro, Blood, Renal/Respiratory and ageing Physiology and today he has boldly made remarkable roads in researches into these areas.

Between June 1992 to August 2010, our young academic gave an account of stewardship in such unquantifiable manner as house officer at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, Registrar and honorary tutor to students of Internal Medicine Department and Adjunct Senior Lecturer at the School of Laboratory Technological Sciences, University of Port Harcourt. At many times he was visiting Lecturer/Scholar of Human Physiology at the Colleges of Medicine, Imo State University, Niger Delta University Bayelsa State and Madonna University Elele amongst others. Within this period, this hardworking Iwhuruohna Ambassador also left indelible footprints as External Examiner at the Universities of Calabar, Uyo, Benin, Lagos, Ibadan, Ife, Jos and Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State. Professor Chike has indeed proven to be a man of many parts.

He has supervised over 300 B.Sc Human Physiology Students, 30 M.Sc. Students and 10 Doctorate Degree (PhD/MD) Students and accessed over 12 Professorial Candidates from various Universities in Nigeria.

He has attended several conferences within and outside Nigeria and also presented research papers as well. He not only professed in the classroom and research laboratory, but has spread his



PROF. CHIKE PRINCEWILL

impact to professional Associations too. The Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), the Neuroscience Society of Nigeria, the Physiological Society of Nigeria, the Nigerian Environmental Society, the West African Society of Pharmacology as well as the Association of Nigerian Private Medical Practitioners have equally benefited from the forthrightness of this noble Physiologist whom the College of Health Sciences, University of Port Harcourt referred to as their Champion of Ethics and Values. Little wonder that by July 2012, his contributions to medicine had become so obvious and inspiring that his alma mater, the Unique University of Port Harcourt honoured him with the academic recognition of Professor of Cardiovascular and Tissue Perfusion Physiology. Professor Chike has a thing with research and book publication, he reels them out as if life depends on them. Six(6) Medical Physiology books, Ten(10) Monographs as well as over 200 Research and Journal Articles.

On the political front Professor Chike has served the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) at various levels, held many positions of trust such as the chairman, Rivers State Primary Healthcare Management Board; Member Board of Management, Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital, Zaria as well as other responsibilities on State, Zonal and Presidential Campaign Councils.

It is on record that the health sector in Rivers State made several land mark achievements which include

- Renovation /rehabilitation of 13 General Hospitals.
- Opening of College of Medical Sciences in Rivers State University with massive engagement of both teaching and non teaching staff as well as erecting Faculty building for Faculties of Basic Medical Sciences, Basic Clinical, Clinical, College of Medical Sciences building with all offices fully furnished and laboratories/lecture theatre well equipped.
- Opening of Rivers State University Teaching Hospital
- Rehabilitation and building of several Model Primary Healthcare Centres.
- Rehabilitation and building of 5 Zonal Hospitals in the 3 Senatorial

areas of the State.

- Construction, Furnishing, Equipping and Commissioning of the 164 bed Mother and Child Hospital in Port Harcourt.
- Construction, Equipping, Furnishing and Commissioning of the Dr Peter Odili Cancer and Cardiovascular Diagnostic and Treatment Centre with full component of Chemotherapy, Radiotherapy and Brachytherapy units as well as full compliment Cardiovascular Unit with a functional CAT Lab, 4 Operating theatres, CT Scan, MRI, Mammography Echocardiogram, Nuclear Medicine unit with Bunker and accessories.
- Construction, Furnishing, Equipping and commissioning of a complete Renal unit with capacities for Dialysis, Nephrectomy and renal transplants with associated procedures.
- Establishment of Scholarship Schemes to accommodate 100 Rivers State indigenes yearly studying Medicine, Nursing Pharmacy and other allied medical courses for the past 5 years and extended for another 5 years.
- Accommodation and welfare packages for Doctors and other health professionals in Rivers State.
- Payments for free drugs treatment of HIV patients in the state just to mention but a few of well established land marks in the Health Sector in Rivers State.

This humble, unassuming, three time Commissioner for Health, Rivers State is the Medical Director of Nissi Medical Centre, off Ada George Road, By Open Door Christian Centre, a private hospital and diagnostic centre in Port Harcourt. He loves singing church and classical music, plays chess, billiards and snooker, squash racket, cricket and tennis. He would give everything to watch Boxing bouts, Martial Arts, Swimming and spread the message of the Kingdom of God Almighty.

Professor Chike, Chike Princewill Rewhuamwhu heals with Orthodox Medicine and also heals with the Christian Faith. He is an Evangelist, Deliverance and Healing Minister of God. This husband of beautiful Mrs Chinwe Blessing Chike (a Chattered Accountant) a father of three boys and a girl.

Professor Chike is a charismatic leader, councillor, teacher, the team leader for several Healthcare/ Medical interventions in Rivers State which includes COVID-19, a devoted husband, politician and an impacting societal persona.

A Prof, Arab & Alhaji

The titles of professor, Arab and Alhaji may conjure up the picture of a laid-back individual. But Borno State's Health Commissioner is a man who is pushing human limits to upscale Borno's healthcare delivery system.

Prof. Mohammed Arab Alhaji, is the Commissioner for Health, and Human Services, Borno State. He specializes in paediatrics, gastroenterology, hepatology, and nutrition. He ran the paediatric gastroenterology, hepatology, and nutrition/infectious diseases specialist clinics at the University

of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital (UMTH) and was an Honourary Consultant Paediatrician at the UMTH, as well as a locum (backup) consultant at Borno state Specialist Hospital Maiduguri, just as he also served as he was also Visiting Consultant to General Sani Abacha Hospital, Damaturu, Yobe state among others.

As an academic, Arab has mentored many doctors and authored and co-authored 47 local and international academic publications.

Arab has served in more than 20 Technical Committees and as a facilitator/investigator to

Government and Non-Governmental Organisations programmes which included the Federal Ministry of Health, Borno State Government on health projects, the World Health Organisations (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Alliance for International Medical Action (ALIMA) amongst others. He has discharged numerous administrative responsibilities relating to healthcare services at UMTH and College of Medical Sciences at UNIMAID.

Since assumption of office as Borno State's Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Prof. Mohammed Arab has brought his incredible wealth

of experience and knowledge, especially in paediatrics in the state's health sector for the improved wellbeing of both young, middle-aged and senior citizens. The Prof's research interest is Paediatric Nutrition and Infectious Diseases.



PROF. MOHAMMED ARAB



How Leadership Competition Will Improve Primary Healthcare Delivery

▶ *Despite the critical role of primary healthcare in healthcare service delivery, Nigeria's primary healthcare system is bedeviled with challenges which are further worsened by lack of commitment by some state governors.*

Some of the challenges are shortage and mal-distribution of healthcare workers, dilapidated infrastructure, and weak referral systems and poor financing. This has further laid pressure on the secondary and tertiary health institutions.

While some government actors at the sub-national levels have made efforts towards provision of quality service delivery as well as mitigating the challenges, others have lacked political will or neglected it thus subjecting their residents to untold hardships accessing care.

According to the Executive Director, National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA), Dr Faisal Shuaib, improvements for Primary Health Care (PHC) service delivery have not been significant.

He said despite the level of investments in primary healthcare at the sub-national level,

there has not been a commensurate improvement in the rate of maternal and child mortality.

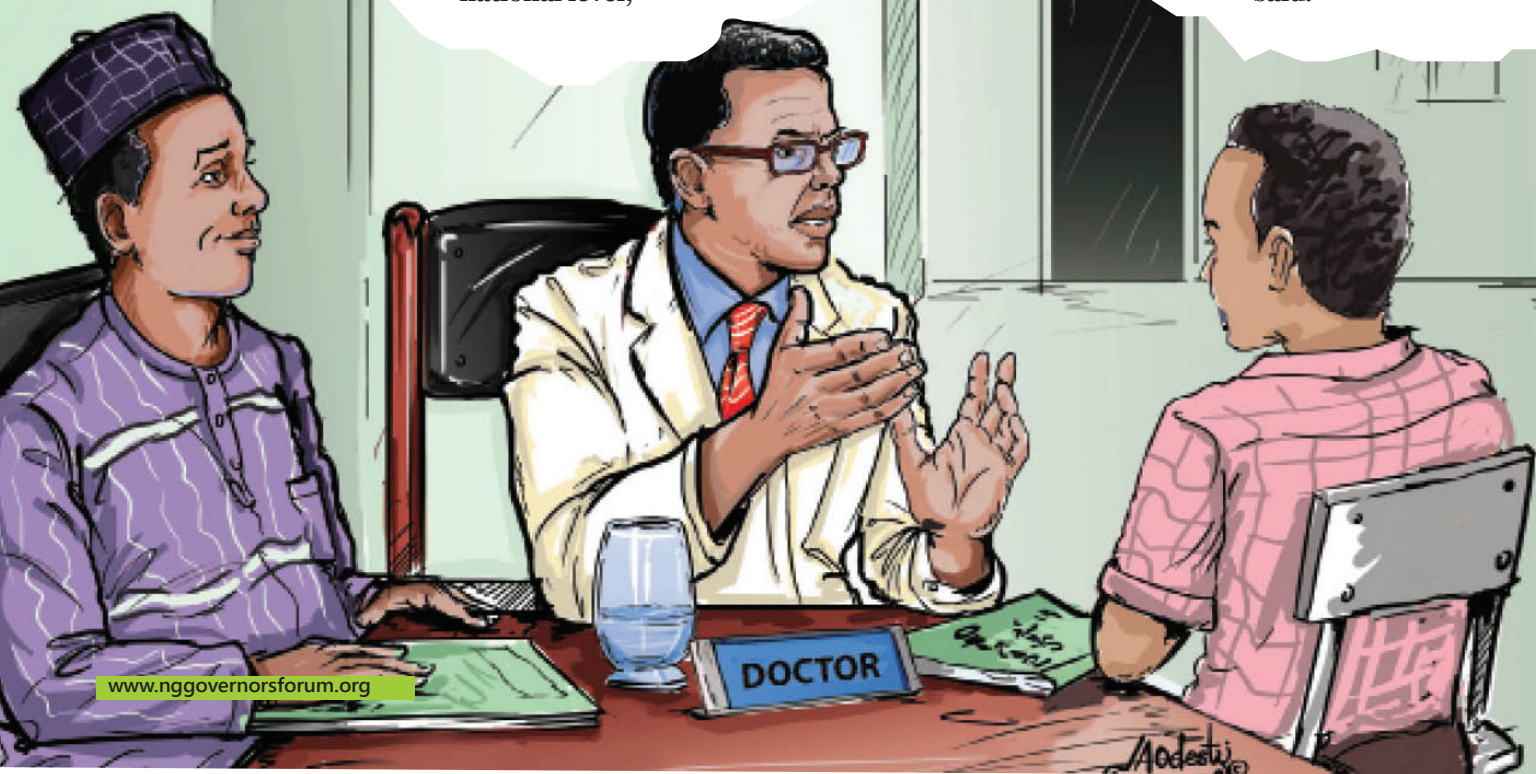
He said strong political will, with a robust and sustained focus on primary healthcare, is vital to ensuring a transformational change in Nigeria's health sector.

Senior Health Adviser of the Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF) Secretariat, Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab, who is also coordinating the PHC leadership challenge for the NGF secretariat, said it is also borne out of the Seattle Declaration which is a set of commitments made by governors to prioritise primary healthcare in their states .

He said PHC is a patient's first contact to the healthcare system and that about 80% of health challenges could be managed at the PHC system where it is well managed.

"So health

PHC is the cornerstone of the system if you get it right," he said.



He said efforts are being made to ensure one very functional and standard PHC in each political ward.

Abdulwahab said a functional PHC should have a minimum service package approved by the government. He said this includes a certain level of human resource, equipment drugs, and other materials.

To shore up primary healthcare delivery in the country, the NGF, in collaboration with the NPHCDA, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF, Aliko Dangote Foundation, and other partners has launched a primary healthcare leadership challenge to access service delivery across the country.

Abdulwahab said the PHC leadership challenge is to help states to get their priorities right. He said indicators for the challenge have been carefully chosen areas to act as enablers that catalyse the services, such as necessary funding, human resources equipment among others.

Speaking during the inauguration of the independent judging panel of the leadership challenge in Abuja, Dr Faisal Shuaib of NPHCDA said, "We are setting up a peer review competition among the states that will follow specific indicators and also be measured by an independent verification agent. The panel of judges will look at the assessment and announce the states that have done well at the national, zonal and state levels.

He said the key indicators for assessment are "how they have been able to improve the policy of Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR), how they financed their PHC system, how they have been able to finance their human resources and also how the governors are able to prioritise PHC. For example, we would like to see that once in a quarter the status of PHC is discussed at the state executive council. Achieving these indicators is a proxy for improving primary healthcare."

Explaining the key indicators, Dr Abdulwahab of the NGF secretariat said,

"The first indicator says the state budget is informed by a plan.

So we are trying to look at how you are planning for your health sector. Is it evidence based? So, if it is evidence based, you will get some score.

"The second assesses the number of certified meetings when PHC performance is discussed. Here we are trying to bring the issue of PHC to the highest level. There is an executive council meeting every week. So, at that meeting, the governors should be able to discuss PHC performance or how PHC is doing in their states to be able to make informed decisions. So if a governor is doing this, he gets the third score.

"Another one is the number of monthly visits conducted by a state governor to PHCs. We want governors to visit PHCs periodically. So, if the governor goes out, every quarter to see how it works, he gets his score.

"So, there are a lot of enablers, like the number of meetings held by the state governor with traditional rulers to discuss PHC. These enablers lead to change."

Chairman of the independent judging panel of the PHC leadership challenge, Prof. Clara Ejembi of the Department of Community Medicine, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, said the role they are going to play is significant, adding that they would assess the performance of state governors in terms of their efforts to reform and finance and implement primary healthcare in their states.

She thanked the team for the confidence reposed in them to accountably, transparently, and apolitically validate the work that the steering committee was doing.

The UNICEF Country Representative in Nigeria, Cristian Munduate, said the organisation was delighted to be part of the historic partnership geared towards driving state ownership and implementation of primary healthcare policies and initiatives.

"This meeting sets the marking and the base and that is why the narration of the independent judging panel will guide and will directly review and validate state performance to ensure that this initiative remains transparent, credible and relevant. I wish to reiterate UNICEF's commitment to sustain the momentum generated by the launch of the leadership challenge back in Lagos. It is important to remember that almost all of the 36 state governors attended the launch in person to rate their earlier commitment to lead the initiative. UNICEF is ready to collaborate with Nigeria and all its partners to ensure that Nigeria has access to a full package of essential and quality health services without suffering financial hardships," Munduate said.

PHC is the
cornerstone
of the health
system if you
get it right



DR AHMAD



DR FAISAL

Prof. Akinola Abayomi

Focused On Changing Lagos State's Health Story



Pr

ofessor Emmanuel Akinola

Abayomi, absolutely needs no introduction. He showed the nation how to be in charge when the Corona virus came to Nigeria. He is the Commissioner for Health, Lagos State, and is an experienced and versatile Medical Doctor who has served as a lecturer and practitioner in Africa as well as the West Indies and written numerous research publications on Cancer, Diabetes and Sickle Cell Anaemia.

He obtained a MBBS degree from the University of London, United Kingdom in 1983 and a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) in Ecology and Environmental Health Management from the University of Pretoria, South Africa in 2006.

Prior to obtaining his MPhil, Dr. Akinola Abayomi was a Consultant Haematologist and Lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe Medical School and Harare Group of Teaching Hospitals, Zimbabwe between 1994 and 1998. He was also Chief Physician at the Princess Marina Hospital, Gabarone, Botswana in 1998.

A Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians

of Edinburgh (2010) and the Royal College of Pathologists of the United Kingdom (2013), Dr. Abayomi was the Consultant Haematologist, Faculty of Medicine & Research, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, University of West Indies, Bridgetown, Barbados from 1998-2006.

Between 2006 and 2008, he was a Bone Marrow Transplant Research Fellow at the University of Stellenbosch as well as a Consultant Clinical Haematologist, Constantiaberg Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, Tygerberg Academic Hospital, Cape Town, South Africa.

Dr. Abayomi held sway as Head of Division, Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, South Africa between 2009 and 2017.

He also was Professor of Medicine at the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, Yaba, and has held various positions in the field of medicine including Consultant, Lagos State Biosecurity and Genomic Project, Lead Consultant to the West African Health Authority (WAHO), ECOWAS and President, Federation of South African Society of Pathology among others.

Abayomi currently serves as Lagos State commissioner for health. He was with the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research in Lagos when he was appointed Commissioner by Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu in 2019. Following the reported index case of COVID-19 in Lagos in March 2020, Abayomi was appointed to lead the response against the virus in the Africa's largest commercial city.

Prof. Abayomi is the arrowhead driving the Lagos State health vision of attaining health service delivery by applying best practices at all levels of care and mission of delivering qualitative, affordable, and equitable healthcare service to the citizenry applying appropriate technology by highly motivated staff. Overall, the fundamental goal is to ensure that every Lagosian enjoys unfettered access to qualitative healthcare without significant geographical, financial, cultural, or political barriers. Akin Abayomi personifies the can-do spirit.

An appreciative President Muhammad Buhari conferred on Professor Akin Abayomi the award of National Productivity Order of Merit (NPOM) in recognition of his hard work and excellence, particularly in the fight against COVID-19 in Lagos State.

Kwara Gets Federal Govt's \$7m Diagnostic Facility

Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority Healthcare Development and Investment Company (NHDIC), has signed an agreement with the Kwara State government on its diagnostics and oncology expansion programme to build, equip, maintain and operate a private modern medical diagnostic centre and catheterisation laboratory in Ilorin, the state capital.

The project is estimated to cost the NSIA around \$5-7 million and is set to commence before the end of this year.

The State's Commissioner for Health, Dr Raji Razaq, signed the agreement with the NSIA in Abuja on behalf of the state government.

Kwara is in the first phase of the programme along with Kaduna and Enugu States, with each centre running as a joint venture between Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA) and the respective States.

The programme is designed to curb

medical tourism by providing Kwarans and Nigerians with access to world-class healthcare delivery.

The result is the provision of high quality, affordable and accessible healthcare to the local market, creation of jobs and development/training on the required clinical resources.

The centre will be located in the existing Harmony Diagnostic Centre Complex along New Yidi Road in Ilorin, according to specifications of the NSIA.

The complex will now be upgraded into what will be called the Asa Dam Medical Village, thereby creating a hub for several medical and pharmaceutical facilities, while positioning Kwara State as a new local alternative for quality healthcare.

Former managing director, Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority, Uche Orji, said at the event that: "The broader goal of the programme is to establish, in two phases, a portfolio of 23 diagnostic centres, seven catheterization labs and two oncology centres across Nigeria."

He appreciated Governor AbdulRahman Abdulrazaq for his cooperation and willingness to partner with the NSIA on this new journey, which will upgrade the existing healthcare infrastructure in the State.



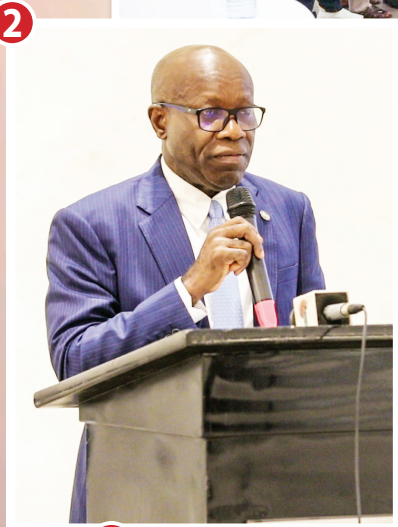
DIGNITARIES AT THE SIGNING OF AGREEMENT ON THE \$7M FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DIAGNOSTIC FACILITY FOR KWARA.



Scenes from Gavi MOU states' Biannual Review Meeting



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PHOTO CAPTION

1. Deputy Governors and State Participants at Gavi MOU States Biannual Review Meeting 2. The Director General of the NGF, Mr Asishana Bayo Okauru speaks at the Biannual Review Meeting

3. Dr Naozi Nwosu, representing the ED of the NPHCDA 4. Dr Oteri, the Immunisation Advisor at the NGF with Sevi Olosunde, UNICEF, Bauchi Field Office

5. The Executive Secretary of Bayelsa Primary Healthcare Agency, Kris Oqbointuwei, Dr Egheabi, UNICEF Field Office, River State, Commissioner of Health, Bayelsa State, Pabara Igwele

Scenes from Gavi MOU states' Biannual Review Meeting

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PHOTO CAPTION

6. Bayelsa State Commissioner for Health, Dr Pabara Newton lawele speaks at Biannual Review Meeting

7. Gombe State Commissioner, Habu Dahiru, with WHO South-South Zonal Coordinator, Dr Koluade Olawunmi with Dr Khedra, WHO

8. Participants at the Biannual Review Meeting

9. WHO Country Office, Claudia Vivas Torrealba, Coordinator Strategic Health Policy and Planning with Dr Khedra, a representative from WHO Nigeria

10. The Executive Secretary of Niger State, Dr Ibrahim Danaana at the Biannual Review Meeting

11. Commissioner of Kebbi State, Ja'far Mohammed and Dr Abubakar Kajoje, the Executive Secretary of Kebbi State at Review Meeting



Scenes from Gavi MOU states' Biannual Review Meeting

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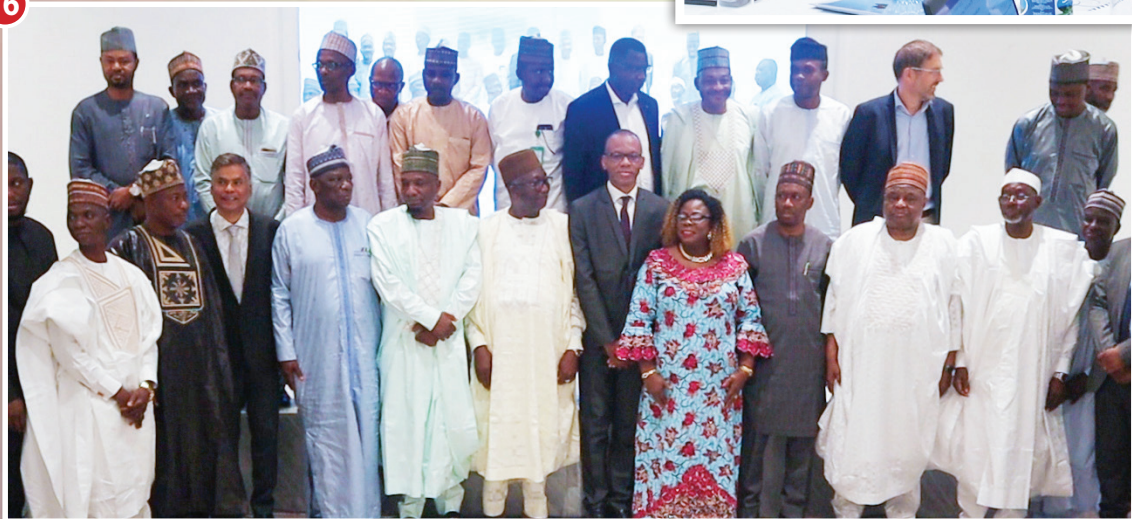


PHOTO CAPTION

12. At the MoU States Biannual Review Meeting, 420 motorbikes as well as 13 vehicles were handed over. The purpose of the vehicles is to strengthen primary healthcare in the states.

13. Mr Anisur Siddique, the UNICEF New York at Biannual Review Meeting

14. Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab, the Senior Health Advisor at NGF speaks at Biannual Review Meeting

15. Walter Kazadi Mulombo, WHO Representative in Nigeria with Oshin Tokuno, Director of GAVI

16. Deputy Governors and State Participants at MoU States Biannual Review Meeting



NEWS

From the states

KECHEMA: BAGUDU DIRECTS 3% DEDUCTION OF CIVIL SERVANTS' SALARIES

Kebbi state governor, Abubakar Atiku Bagudu has approved deduction of 3 per cent of basic salaries of civil servants for the State Contributory Health care Management Agency (KECHEMA).

The acting Head of Service, Safiyanu Garba Bena made this known in a statement recently.

The approval granted by the governor was sequel to the request made by the organized labour for the deduction of 3% Basic Salaries of all Civil Servants in the State to be remitted to Kebbi State Contributory Health Care management Agency (KECHEMA).

According to the statement, the enrollment of civil servants in the

scheme as a formal sector would enable the Agency provide easy access to health care for civil servants at affordable rate.

Furthermore, the deduction shall be with effect from November, 2022 to KECHEMA to enable the Agency commence its services to civil servants in the State.

The true position of Kebbi State Government on Dabai-Mahuta-Koko Road project

Kebbi State Government has given detailed explanation about its request for refund of money of federal roads project executed by the State Government.

Briefing newsmen in his office recently, the Commissioner for Works and Transport, Alhaji Abubakar Chika Ladan said it has become necessary for the government to set the record straight to counter the misinformation, distortion and disinformation bandied about by some persons including the Senator Representing Kebbi Central, Muhammadu Adamu Aliero who described the action of Kebbi State Government as "irresponsible" on the floor of the Senate.

The Commissioner explained that the two roads of which Kebbi State sought for refund of work done were the Dabai – Mahuta – Koko federal road route A.I and the Malando – Garin Baka – Ngaski – Warra federal road, route F. 201.

He said the 91km Dabai – Mahuta – Koko road was constructed between 2006 and 2011 at the cost of 5.07 billion naira awarded by former Governor Muhammadu Adamu Aliero in 2006 but largely completed by former Governor Sa'idu Usman Nasamu Dakingari in 2011.

Furthermore, the 42km Malando – Garin Baka – Ngaski – Warra road was constructed by the administration of former Governor Sa'idu Dakingari along with 6 spans bridge (90m) at the cost of 2.2 billion naira from 2008 – 2013.

Alhaji Chika Ladan explained that on assumption of power in 2015, the incumbent administration discovered that the Federal Government was reimbursing State governments for federal roads constructed by them in their states.

ECOWAS lauds Bagudu, commits \$350,000 to Kebbi

The Economic Community of West Africa States, ECOWAS, has lauded Governor Abubakar Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State for his unrelenting commitment to the development of agriculture particularly pastoralism to enhance livestock production.

The Governor has also been commended for ensuring the success and integration of Ecowas members states of Niger, Benin and Nigeria on cross border cooperation as it affects transhumance and pastoralism.

The commendation was made by ECOWAS representative, Mr. Alain SY Traore at the official commencement of validation meeting on holistic program for the development

KAD0 cross border regions of Kebbi State, Nigeria, Dossou, Niger Republic and Alibori, Benin Republic held at the conference

hall of Shagalinku, hotel, Birnin Kebbi on Monday.

He said last year during the same meeting hosted by Kebbi State, the three-member countries made a commitment to develop a holistic investment plan on cross border issue concerning transhumance and pastoralism as well as kick start infrastructural investment.

According to him, the outcome of that meeting resulted in the draft resolution which participants from the three member countries would look at and validate before the meeting of governors in the tripartite agreement endorsed.

'If the draft resolution is validated as agreed by the three countries, ECOWAS would be committing 1.5 million dollars yearly for infrastructural development.

'Out of which Kebbi State, Nigeria, Dossou, Niger Republic and Alibori, Benin Republic would earn 350 thousand dollars each yearly for the same purpose", he averred.

The action he stressed, would facilitate peace and economic development at the cross border zone as well as reduce terrorism and banditry in the region.



Soludo presents appointment letters to 5,000 newly recruited teachers in Anambra



Gov. Chukwuma Soludo of Anambra State recently presented appointment letters to 5,000 newly recruited teachers in the state.

Soludo, while presenting appointment letters to no fewer than 5,000 newly recruited teachers in Awka said that the future of youths of Anambra lie in the hand of teachers.

The governor said the issuance of the appointment letters was in fulfillment of one of the components of his manifesto which was repositioning the education sector for quality manpower development.

"Today, we are keeping one of our promises; we promised to position Anambra as a centre of excellence for human capital development and proactively leapfrog our students/youths as Africa's digital tribe.

"We have come to end the era of schools without teachers in our primary and secondary schools, with the recruitment and deployment of 5,000 new teachers.

"It marks yet another milestone in Anambra's bold march towards a liveable and prosperous smart mega city, one that is the preferred destination to live, learn, work, invest, relax and enjoy.

"My fellow teachers, the future of our children and the next generation is in your hands. Anambra, the Light of the Nation, is known for excellence," he said.

Soludo said he was happy with the process of the recruitment but pointed out that no exercise of such magnitude would go without some complaints.

He said it was a near perfect process which was designed from the outset to be unique, transparent with integrity.

"My instruction was that only merit can get anyone a placement in the recruitment exercise, the phenomenon of well-placed persons being given "slots" to nominate candidates for recruitment should never happen.

"To demonstrate my commitment to this, I instructed that even if I were to give them any name(s) for employment, they should throw such

away.

"Teaching is not just a job, it is a vocation and no one should be employed as a teacher on any consideration other than merit.

"We should never in good conscience sacrifice the future of a generation on the altar of favoritism, and state of origin was not a disqualifying factor.

"Our children need the best teachers irrespective of where they come from," he said.

The governor congratulated the newly recruited teachers including candidates from the Parents Teachers Association teachers for being among the best out of the over 40,000 applicants.

He said those without prior teaching qualification would be made to pass through intensive training which would serve as Anambra's teacher certification standard.

"Let me suggest that educating our next generation is our collective responsibility, Public-Community- Private Partnership (PCPP) is the winning model for the future," he said.



Governor Godwin Obaseki rejigs cabinet

As part of the restructuring of the State Executive Council for greater efficiency, Edo State Governor, Mr Godwin Obaseki, has approved the redeployment of Engr Jonathan Lawani as Commissioner for Special Duties with immediate effect.

In a statement, Secretary to the Edo State Government, Osarodion Ogie Esq., noted that Engr Osasere Evboumwan, formerly Commis-

sioner for Special Duties, has been moved to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainability.

He noted that the move was in line with the Governor's resolve to improve efficiency in public service and optimize capacities to deliver optimal results in service of Edo people.

"The Governor wishes the commissioners the best in their new assignments," Ogie added.



Gov. Yahaya Bello

of Kogi has reiterated his commitment to providing quality education in Kogi

Bello made the pledge at Salem University, Lokoja, 962 students graduated.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that 58 out of the 962 graduates made first-class honours in its four sets of academic session.

Bello was represented by his Commissioner for Education, Science and Technology, Mr Wemi Jones.

The governor also pledged to partner the university's management to provide quality education to the young and old.

He commended the Vision Coordinator of Salem University for the giant strides in the education sector.

Bello said that his administration has dedicated 30 per cent of its annual budget to the education sector to improve the standard of education in the state.

Also speaking, Justice Stephen Jonah-Adah, Acting Chancellor of

the University said that the vision of the university was driven by its spectacular and glorious mission of delivering to Nigeria and the world an impact university.

"Salem University has the vision to be a centre of excellence for the production of graduates who are worthy in learning and character as well as sound in mind, body and spirit for outstanding leadership and global impact.

"We offer them qualitative Education that guarantees a balanced and comprehensive curriculum for full development of their spiritual, intellectual and social character as our future leaders," he said.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Alewo Johnson-Akubo, said that Salem university has made its way into the first 2000 Universities in the world by the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2022.

Johnson-Akubo described it as a well deserved feat as "only 48 Nigerian Universities made this cut."

The VC commended the sacrifice made by the Visioner of the varsity, Archbishop Sam Amaga in the last 16 years at "ensuring that the university is nurtured into a force to be reckoned with in the league of universities both within and outside Nigeria."

Miss Amarachi Nwachukwu from the Department of Natural Sciences (2018/2019 set) broke the record by graduating with 4.80 CGPA.



GOV. YAHAYA BELLO

Gov Bello approves 65 years retirement age for Kogi teachers, N172.9 billion total budget estimate

Kogi State government has approved 65 years as the new retirement age for teachers in public primary and secondary schools in the state.

The Kogi State Information Commissioner, Kingsley Fanwo, said the approval arrived at the weekly executive council meeting.

This is at variance with the 60 years retirement age for all civil servants at all levels in the country.

The commissioner explained that the domestication of the 65years retirement age has put the state teachers at par with their counterparts at the federal level.

"The development will enable students to draw from the wealth of experience

and expertise of teachers to better their academic pursuits." He noted.

Fanwo said the meeting approved the purchase of thirty-two seater buses each for the Kogi United Football Team and Confluence Queens football clubs.

He added that the executive council also approved the transmission of a bill for a law to amend the Kogi State Utility Infrastructure Management and Compliance Agency to create an enabling environment with the required law for the government to impact more on the lives of the people.

The Executive Council also approved the establishment of the Kogi Roads Tax Management and Administration Board to improve the quality of roads

in the State as well as a bill for a law to establish the Kogi State Rural Roads Agency (RARA) to be saddled with the responsibility of handling rural roads," he said.

The State Commissioner of Finance and Economic Planning, Asiawaju Idris Asiru, while also speaking to journalists said the executive council approved the 2023 budget estimate.

He said the state executive council approved N172.9 billion as the total budget estimate for 2023.

He said N250 million was also approved as a counterpart fund for the Adolescent Girl Initiative for Learning, a World Bank-funded program to help the adolescent girl in Kogi State.

Urban Agriculture

growing greener cities

had the honour of speaking at an interactive session, titled: "Urban Agriculture: Growing Greener Cities" during the 2022 Brazil-Africa Forum in São Paulo, Brazil.

The Forum is taking place at a time when the world is experiencing a food crisis of unprecedented proportion, the largest in modern history, as a result of several interlocking factors including ongoing conflicts, climate change, the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, and since February 2022, the avoidable Russia Ukraine crises.

According to the latest statistics presented by the 2022 Edition of The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, as many as 828 million people go to bed hungry every night: an increase of about 46 million since 2020 and 150 million since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women and girls are disproportionately impacted. Globally, an estimated 60% of undernourished people are women or girls particularly in low-and middle-income countries.

Rising urbanization has become one of the major megatrends that is shaping the world today. Currently 56% of the world's population – about 4.4 billion inhabitants – live in cities. This trend is expected to continue, with the urban population more than doubling its current size by 2050, at which point nearly 7 out of 10 people will live in cities, mainly in low and middle-income countries in Africa and Asia.

Nigeria has the largest economy in Africa and is also the most populous with over 200 million inhabitants. Agriculture is a significant contributor to GDP, and it employs about 70% of the population. It is a fact that many towns and cities in Nigeria grew out of farming and fishing communities where agriculture had, in the past, been the major occupation of the inhabitants. However, since the advent of western education and white-collar jobs coupled with the discovery of petroleum in commercial quantity a lot of Nigerians especially the youth have abandoned the farms for the city in search of jobs.

As the population of cities like Lagos, Abuja and Port-Harcourt continue to grow with the attendant increase demands on food and shelter, many people are now turning to what is called 'urban farming'. Urban farming is also a good source of food security options for households in the cities in the face of serious unemployment crisis in the country. Urban farming can easily be noticed in Lagos, being Nigeria's commercial nerve centre with the greatest concentration of manufacturing and service industries.

LAGOS, A CASE STUDY

Lagos is 1 out of 36 States in Nigeria and being the commercial heart of the country, attracts people from all over. Lagos is also the economic hub of West Africa and is known to be the leading tech hub in Africa where there are various innovative start-up companies. Lagos state is also known to have a fast adoption of technology and innovative techniques to solve economic challenges in various sectors including agriculture. The Lagos economy is larger than that of Kenya and Ghana combined – and its 22 million or so inhabitants consume around EUR 10bn annually.

Currently Lagos produces just 20-24% of the food it consumes. The Lagos State Government with various partnerships, has set itself the target to increase this to 40-50% by 2025 exploring several techniques such as vertical farming in urban gardening to expand the city's economic base by creating economic activities through the production, packaging, and selling opportunities for food, vegetable, herbs, and fruit products. As a result, jobs are created, the cost of food goes down, and people consume more quality foods.

The speed and scale of urbanization poses several challenges, including increased poverty, malnutrition, high cost of living and food insecurity, particularly to the urban poor. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic and the increasing climate crisis is forcing us to rethink how we produce, process, and distribute food in cities to avoid interrupted supply chains.

Urban agriculture is being progressively recognized as a key player in supplying safe and nutritious food from different types of crops and animals to urban dwellers in the face of rising urbanization and population growth.

Studies have highlighted the potential for urban agriculture to contribute further to food security, food system resilience and sustainability. The role of urban agriculture is, however, specific and complementary to food supply from rural areas, as it helps meet local demand and contributes to short, efficient supply chains, thus reducing food loss and waste.

The agricultural sector is currently a major contributor to climate change and environmental degradation. It is estimated that between 21% and 37% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions are linked to the global food system. Modern agricultural practices also account for more than 70% of water withdrawals at the global level and contribute to the acidification



KAYODE FAYEMI

and eutrophication of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems via the intensified use of agrochemicals. Land expansion for food production is also associated with widespread deforestation, soil degradation, biodiversity loss and habitat fragmentation. Urban agriculture has been touted as a potential remedy to some of these ills.

HOW WE HAVE URBANIZED AGRICULTURE

It is estimated that between 5% and 10% of the global production of legumes, vegetables and tubers is currently delivered by urban agriculture, while between 15% and 20% of global food is produced in urban and peri-urban environments.

According to FAO Sourcebook, urban agriculture contributes to the greening of cities, helps reduce food miles, protects biodiversity, supports green infrastructure, builds a resilient local food system (via a short supply chain, low food loss during distribution), and mitigates the impact of shocks on local food systems. In Nigeria, most of the urban agriculture practitioners largely produce for home consumption, a few of them do so for income generation through marketing of harvested or surplus farm produce. The Direct impact of urban farming on the Nigerian households includes guaranteed food supply or food supplementation, employment and income generation, environmental hygiene, and social relation build-up.

Despite these, urban food production is expected to be more resilient than conventional agriculture because of its short supply chain for urban dwellers and diversified farming activities. In terms of environmental sustainability, urban food growing delivers a wide range of ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, and reducing air pollution, as growing food where it's consumed can cut down transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. Urban agriculture can also help grow greener cities that are better able to cope with social and environmental challenges, from slum improvement and management of urban waste to job creation and community-development.

However, urban agriculture has some drawbacks. It has to compete with other sectors such as housing, infrastructure and industry for the use of scarce resources, (land, water and labour). Contamination of water used in urban agriculture may pose potential health risks to both producers

and consumers.

Risks are most often related to the use of untreated wastewater but may also be related to the use of water contaminated by other sources such as industrial pollution, runoff of chemicals into drains from domestic and commercial use, or overuse of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture. Furthermore, limited finance and narrow access to credit can constrain the sustainability of urban agriculture.

HOW DO WE SCALE UP URBAN AGRICULTURE?

Despite the growing literature on urban food production, our understanding of urban agriculture is in relative infancy when compared to conventional rural contexts. Urban agriculture is still poorly, or at best intermittently, acknowledged by politicians and urban planners, who are inspired by visions of "modern" cities where agriculture is rather a negligible activity. This is the situation in most of Africa except few cities like Nairobi in Kenya, Kampala in Uganda or Dar es Salaam in Tanzania where urban agriculture policy is gradually taking root.

We also have had situations where cities pushing for urban agriculture also run into obstacles such as national governments that impede their efforts, because city-based agriculture does not fit within the national government's concept of a modern city.

Urban agriculture is a vital strategy for building the resilience of cities' food supply, reducing poverty and increasing employment, improving nutritional outcomes, and mitigating environmental degradation of urban spaces. While it is no silver bullet, when combined with effective city-region planning, the food system can more efficiently meet the needs of diverse actors in urban areas.

In order to scale up urban agriculture and support farmers, a variety of roles are expected from different actors. We must acknowledge the lacunae in knowledge and data gap on urban agriculture and invest in effective, systematic and regular reporting and measurement. Governments at all levels must create urban agriculture-friendly policies to support urban farming. Like in Nigeria, the Federal Government in a bid to achieve sustainable agriculture, introduced the Agriculture Promotion Policy, which ran from 2016-2020.

Policies about urban agriculture must be improved for the enhancement of urban agriculture benefits as well as the reduction of the risks associated with public health and environmental hazards. Policy integration should pay attention to issues such as urban land use planning, health, waste management, social housing, slum upgrading, park and nature management.

African cities can also draw useful lessons from the experience of Nairobi. Once reluctant to formally support urban agriculture, Nairobi is now one of the most advanced cities in the sub-continent in its promotion of laws, policies and programs to protect and support urban food production. Nairobi's promotion and protection of the right to farm in the city has inspired other cities and the national government to promote and protect urban agriculture.

Finally, more cities need to sign up to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) that was launched in October 2015 as the first international protocol through which city leaders committed to developing sustainable food systems that are inclusive to grant healthy and accessible food to all, protect biodiversity, and fight against food waste while adapting to and mitigating impacts of climate change. The MUFPP has established regional forums for Europe, Africa and Latin America. It hosts an Annual Gathering and Mayors Summit for signatory cities, to share best practices from cities.

So far, it has been signed by over 200 cities, and is open to any city globally. As President of the Forum of Regions of Africa, a sub-entity under the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, I commit to encourage our members to sign up to it.

Urban agriculture is a vital strategy for building the resilience of cities' food supply, reducing poverty and increasing employment, improving nutritional outcomes, and mitigating environmental degradation of urban spaces



RAAMP Launch

Inuwa Speaks For Colleagues, Says Governors Committed To Improving Livelihood Of Rural Dwellers

Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya has observed that the important role played by rural dwellers in food and livestock production presupposes that no effort should be spared by Governments at all levels to incentivize them by providing connectivity and access to boost their morale for sustainable economic growth.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya stated this at the launch of \$575 million Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project, RAAMP, to provide roads for farmers and boost rural economy, which took place at the nation's capital, Abuja.

The project was officially launched by President Muhammadu Buhari, represented by Borno State Governor, Professor Babagana Umara Zulum.

RAAMP is an initiative of the Federal Government aimed at improving rural access and agriculture marketing in participating States and to strengthen the financing and institutional base for effective development, maintenance, and management of the rural road

network.

The project is supported by the World Bank, French Development Agency (AFD), and International Development Association (IDA).

During the flag-off ceremony at the main auditorium of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs Governor Inuwa spoke on behalf of his colleagues from the participating states.

He noted that about 80 to 85 percent of Nigerians, especially in the North live in rural areas with agriculture as their major preoccupation.

He said that the ripple effect of Agricultural activities on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country is indispensable, assuring that Governors across the 36 states of the country will continue to give support to agricultural marketing and accessibility to farmers at the rural areas.

"We have given this commitment and we shall continue to do so, and we are happy that the project will be scaled up to all the remaining states so that it can cover the whole of the country which I believe the benefits are going to be enormous, especially in agricultural production which is an area that people are really engaged in".

The Governor remarked that in Gombe State, his administration

initiated a road revolution project- the network eleven hundred which seeks to provide at least one hundred kilometers of roads in each of the eleven Local Government Areas of the State.

He explained that the initiative, which started in 2020 has so far covered a total of 320 kilometers of roads, criss-crossing the length and breadth of the State, opening up rural areas for increased agricultural and socio-economic activities.

Governor Inuwa Yahaya however observed with concern how roads across the country are left to deteriorate without a sustained action on maintenance and rehabilitation.

The Gombe State Governor assured that the 36 states Governors will commit to smooth implementation of RAAMP in order to ensure food sufficiency and create employment opportunities.

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mahmood Abubakar said "the project will be jointly financed by the International Development Association, IDA, with a contribution of \$280 million; French Development Agency (AFD) is contributing \$230 million, and the Government is contributing \$65 million respectively".

There were goodwill messages from the French Ambassador to Nigeria, Country Directors of World Bank and AFD among others.



Gov. Ugwuanyi has given Police robust support to discharge its duties in Enugu – AIG

- - Says existing security architecture in the state exciting
- - Expresses hope that government's measures will end farmers/herders clash

The new Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG) in charge of Zone 13, AIG Abutu Yaro, has expressed satisfaction with the robust support the administration of Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi in Enugu State, since its inception in 2015, has given to the state command of the Nigerian Police Force to effectively discharge its duties in the state.

AIG Yaro also applauded Governor Ugwuanyi for the remarkable efforts of his administration in enhancing the security architecture of Enugu State through community policing mechanisms such as the formation and operation of the Neighbourhood Watch and Forest Guard, stressing that they are “very functional and effective.”

Speaking when he paid a courtesy visit to Governor Ugwuanyi at the Government House, Enugu, on Wednesday, the new AIG, who oversees the functions of all the police formations in Enugu and Anambra states, disclosed that the existing security architecture in Enugu State is exciting and worthy of emulation.

He added that the governor's supports have “actually given leverage to the moderate and satisfactory security atmosphere we now enjoy albeit the occasional hiccups and other destructions which we witnessed recently.”

AIG Yaro stressed that they are satisfied with Governor Ugwuanyi's leadership role “especially in leading from the front when the situations call for”,

adding: “Your recent visits to some of the local government areas impacted by security challenges in Enugu State were commendable.

“We have watched and followed your interventions with delight. We are equally delighted that your personal interest in coordinating security has made the Police and other security agencies to be at home and it is worthy of emulation for other governors.

“Since my assumption of duty, we have taken a methodical look at the security architecture of the two states and I found the existing structure in Enugu to be more exciting.

“Exciting in the sense that right from the rural areas to the state level, the different layers of the security that exist are similar to that I experienced when I was the Commissioner of Police in Edo State.

“And we have to note that the Enugu State Neighbourhood Watch exists in a very functional and elaborate manner. The Enugu State Forest Guard also exists in a very functional and effective manner.

“We, at the zone, are delighted to notice this (feat in Enugu State) and we will be preaching that it should be replicated in some other states or other zones in our neighbourhood.”

Pointing out that the issue of farmers/herders clash is of special concern to the Police and other security agencies, the new AIG expressed optimism that “with the measures we have taken as govern-

ment, the recurrence will be minimal in the years to come.”

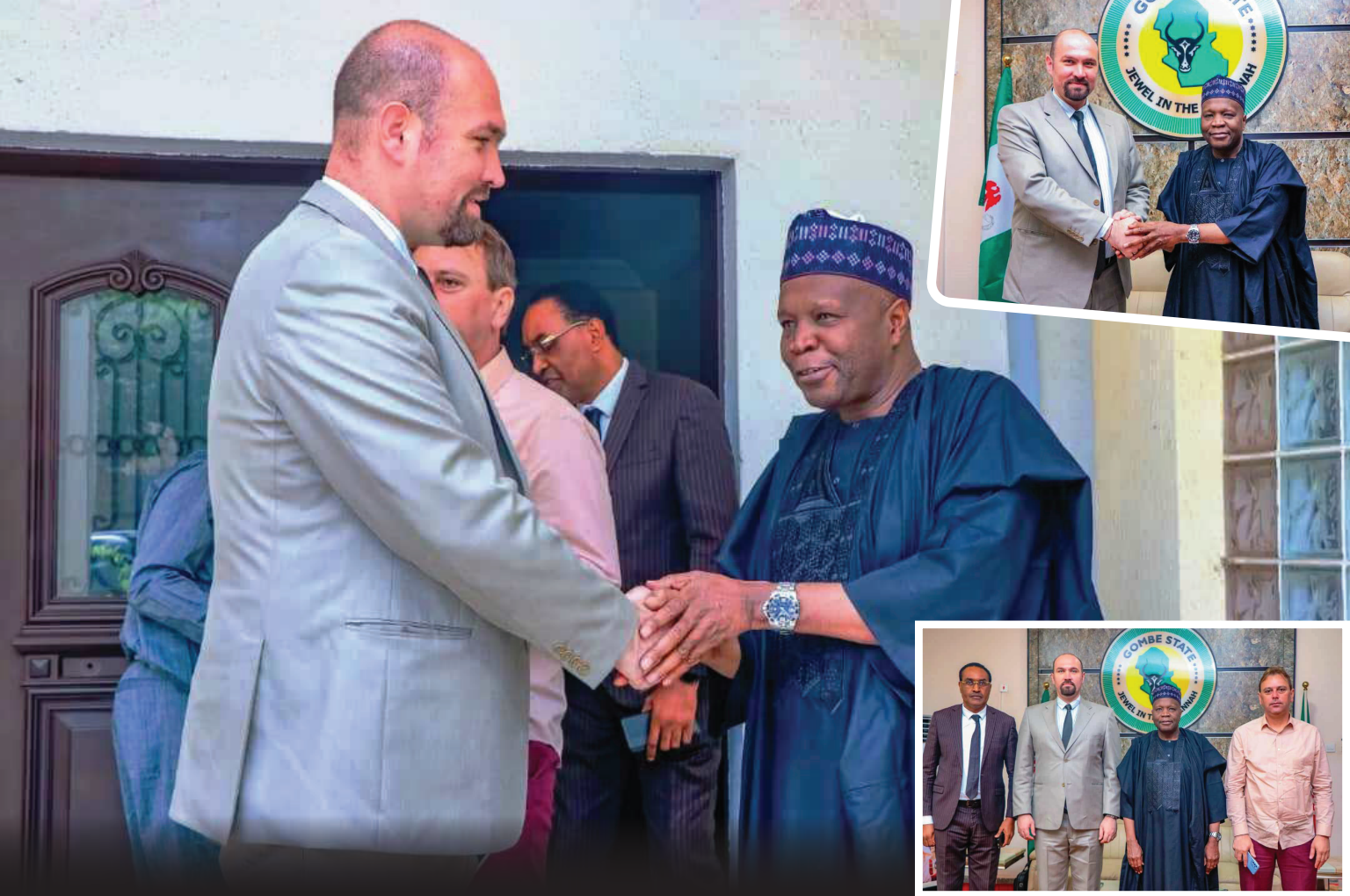
He assured that “we will help to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms are continuously put in place particularly when it comes to policy reforms or legislation with respect to the role to be played by each stakeholder, farmer, herder or hunter so that compulsory peace should be in place in much better form.”

AIG Yaro equally commended Governor Ugwuanyi for his administration's community-security management approach “by ensuring that many stakeholders in Enugu State are always brought together to discuss security, proffer solution and present possible outcome of peace,” adding: “That alone has helped the Police and other security agencies to have very formidable impact in the discharge of their duties. As a zone, we will continue to follow up whatever security policy and design that are initiated in the state so as to have effective security coverage.”

He, therefore, assured Governor Ugwuanyi of the zone's determination to support his administration and the Enugu Police Command to succeed in the onerous task of safeguarding life and property in the state.

Welcoming the AIG and his team to the Government House, Enugu, Governor Ugwuanyi expressed confidence that the visit to the state will go a long way in addressing recent security challenges in the state.





INVESTMENT DRIVE

Governor Inuwa Meets Bulgarian Ambassador To Nigeria

Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya has received in audience, His Excellency, Yanko Yordanov, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Bulgaria to Nigeria.

The Envoy, in company of other Bulgarian diplomats, held talks with Governor Inuwa at the Gombe Governor's lodge, Asokoro, Abuja where they exchanged views on ways to ride on the excellent Bulgaria-Nigeria bilateral ties to explore areas of mutual interest in trade, industry, agriculture among others in Gombe State.

Governor Inuwa has been basking on Gombe's reigning position as the number one in the ease of doing business in Nigeria to woo investors and partners to take advantage of the conducive environment, incentives, facilities and opportunities provided by his administration to drive sustainable development.

Recall that recently, Governor Inuwa hosted the maiden Gombe Investment Summit, tagged 'GoInvest 2022' with the theme: Industrialization, the pathway to Innovation, Transformation and Development of Gombe State," where he reeled out numerous economic potentials of the state.

The Governor was quoted as saying, during the summit, that "our position is boosted by Gombe's strategic location at the center of the north-east subregion and proximity to neighboring countries around the Lake Chad basin, enterprising and peace-loving population, unity in diversity, comparative advantage in agriculture, commerce, and abundance of natural resource like limestone, gypsum, uranium, coal, crude oil, kaolin, etc. Gombe also boast of great potentials in irrigation and hydropower generation through the Dadin Kowa, Balanga and Cham dams".

Gombe is open for business.



Female Persons Right Of Inheritance Of Property Law

Ikpeazu grants assent to Bill

Governor Okezie Ikpeazu of Abia State has granted assent to the Bill which guarantees the right of female persons to inherit and own property in their father's family, thereby making it Law in Abia State.

It will be recalled that the Abia State House of Assembly passed the Bill some weeks ago to bring Abia State in conformity with international best practices in the area of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.

While appending his signature on the Law, Governor Ikpeazu made it clear that his administration shall at all times lean on the side of reason and common sense in the discharge of its obligations to the people of Abia State, noting that it has become anachronistic to continue to treat women as second class citizens even in

their own families.

The Governor thanked the State Assembly led by the Speaker for dredging up enough courage to pass this Bill which he described as historic, positively disruptive and capable of setting our society on the path of equal opportunities and sustainable development.

The Governor is of the firm view that this is about the most important legislation passed by the State House of Assembly.

He congratulated Abia women for this feat and assured them that the Abia State Government will continue to support them.

The proper citation of the Law is THE FEMALE PERSONS RIGHT OF INHERITANCE OF PROPERTY LAW, 2022, while the Long Title of the Law is "A Law to provide for the Right

of a Female Person to Inherit and Own Property and for other Matters Connected Therewith".

By this, Abia State has become one of the first states in Nigeria to have this Law fully in place.

The Honorable Speaker of the State Assembly, Rt Hon Engr. Chinedum Orji, the Permanent Secretary/Clerk of the State House of Assembly, Sir John Pedro Irokansi, PhD, Secretary to Government, Barrister Chris Ezem and the Chief of Staff to the Governor,

Chief Okey Ahiwe witnessed the event.



Ikpeazu:

No hiding place for criminals in Abia

Abia State Governor, Okezie Ikpeazu, says his administration places the highest premium on security of lives and property, saying criminals will no longer find any hiding place in the state.

Ikpeazu said this at the commissioning of the Eastern Ngwa Divisional Police Headquarters building in Umuobiakwa, Obingwa Local Government Area of Abia State recently.

According to a statement issued by his Chief Press Secretary, Onyebuchi Ememanka, the governor, who appreciated the commanders of the various security services in the state for their cooperation and hardwork, urged the IGP to continue to encourage police officers for optimal performance.

Governor Ikpeazu, while recalling that his administration completed and handed over the brand new Zone 9 Police Headquarters Umuahia to the police, assured that it would continue to provide logistics to security agencies to enable them discharge their duties

effectively.

He stated that the cordial working relationship between the state government and security agencies has yielded positive results, adding that the prevailing peace in the state was over the robust working relationship with all security agencies in the state.

Speaking at the event, Baba, who described the police station of being up to international standard, noted that it was furnished with 24 hours power which will aid the job of the police officers.

The IGP said Governor Ikpeazu has through the facility brought motivation and encouragement to the Nigerian Police Force, saying the officers will justify the gesture with improved performance.

GOV. IKPEAZU

WHAT I'LL DO AS OSUN GOVERNOR

— ADEMOLA ADELEKE

Newly sworn-in Osun State Governor, Sen. Ademola Adeleke, has revealed what he would do in office as the governor of the state.

Adeleke made this known while speaking after he was sworn-in as governor in Osogbo, the Osun State capital recently.

INAUGURATION ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE GOVERNOR OF OSUN STATE, HIS EXCELLENCY, SENATOR ADEMOLA JACKSON NURUDEEN ADELEKE ON SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27TH, 2022

Today, I stand on the podium of history with a sacred pledge to God and the good people of Osun State that my intellect, passion and strength will be devoted to nothing but the welfare, peace and security of our people.

As I accept the mantle of leadership entrusted upon me by the people of our dear State, I am conscious of the enormous challenges and responsibilities ahead of me and will begin from this hour work day and night with deep sense of purpose to be a servant to you all.

Our gathering here to witness the materialisation of a new era is not an accident of history. We are all programmed by the Almighty God to be what we have been, what we are and what we will be in future.

Let me use this occasion to salute the founding fathers of our dear state, all the past administrators and Governors of Osun state as well as everyone who has contributed one way or the other to the growth, stability

and progress of our state in the last 31 years.

I equally salute our fallen heroes both at the national and state level for the great sacrifice they have made to have a country and a state to call our own.

I am well aware of the fact that my responsibility as the Governor and Chief Security Officer of Osun State entails meeting the legitimate expectations of our people. Therefore, I promise that those expectations of the workers, traders, artisans, farmers, business owners, students, pensioners, traditional and religious leaders and indeed all residents of Osun State will be met by the grace of God and the cooperation of everyone.

Under my watch as the Governor of Osun State, I will boldly correct all past injustice, corrupt acts or policies by any previous administration which are against the collective interest of our people.

Let me state here that from the education, health, mining Sector, agriculture, road infrastructure and supply of portable water, let it be known to all that it is no longer going to be business as usual. And I repeat, it is no longer business as usual.

Our administration will demonstrate a high sense of urgency, transparency, justice and innovation to tackle and solve the problems of poverty, illiteracy, disease, and poor infrastructure.

Your Governor will be a people's Governor. I will be accessible, responsive, consultative and proactive in handling small and big matters of State Governance.

I know that as a product of the collective will of you my people, there is a heavy weight of history on my shoulders and I accept the urgency of your expectations, the depth of your aspirations and your conviction in me to build a better State.

DEVELOPMENT AGENDA FOR OSUN STATE

Ladies and Gentlemen, you will recall that our party, the Peoples Democratic Party campaigned on a five point agenda namely:

- Welfare of workers and pensioners;
- Boosting the state's economy
- Home-grown infrastructure policy;
- People-focused policy on education, affordable Health Care, Security and Social Welfare;
- Agro-Based Industrialization for Wealth and Job Creation.

While a detailed programme of action will soon be unveiled on each of these 5-point agenda, let me quickly give you some insights into our policy

direction.

EDUCATION

It is disheartening to see our State at the bottom of the national educational ratings especially in public primary and Secondary schools examinations. My administration will launch reform with direct focus on improvement of learning environment and outcome.

Our target is to reverse the poor performance of students in public examinations within the next few years.

To achieve this

target, we will prioritise in-service training and welfare of teachers, enhancement of school environment, entrenchment of discipline in the school system as well as involvement of the Parents-Teachers Association in our school administration system.

Our administration will soon convene an emergency Education Conference to articulate our blueprint on the restoration of the state's education glory.

AGRO-INDUSTRIAL

We regard as critical the need to boost wealth creation, job opportunities and food security through

innovative agricultural reforms covering all the agricultural value chains.

Aside the introduction of modern agricultural practices, we will shift attention to agriculture for export to take advantage of global markets.

While we target agriculture export earnings, we will establish modern farmers' markets where producers and off takers can transact businesses.

TOURISM

In our desire to diversify Osun economy, my administration will target the tourism sector to boost our GDP and create new jobs.

Osun State is the historical capital of the Yoruba people and it is my intention to develop a strong business model to transform this rich historical heritage into huge tourism. We will encourage and partner with the traditional institutions, business organisations and foreign partners to develop the culture and tourism industry which includes our beautiful waterfalls, the Osun Osogbo World Heritage site and many cultural festivals across the state.

Aside the introduction of modern agricultural practices, we will shift attention to agriculture for export to take advantage of global markets

WOMEN AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Women and youths are important segments in our development programme. I had earlier set up a youth advisory council which has produced an impressive blueprint for youth development in Osun State. I plan to ensure speedy implementation of their recommendations. More importantly, let me assure our women that our administration will be gender-sensitive in all appointments.

HEALTH

The health sector in Osun State is in need of urgent attention. Our government will give premium attention to improvement of the Primary Health care services. We will improve the working conditions of health workers and expand the coverage of our health insurance scheme. We plan to establish a standard diagnostic centre using the Public Private Partnership model and adopt measures that will retain medical practitioners in Osun state.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ICT

Our administration will collaborate with Development partners to address problems of environmental pollution and Climate Change. We will equally promote digital literacy, tech innovations and create opportunities for our teeming youths in the ICT sector.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

In line with our campaign manifesto, our government will ensure local government autonomy in line with the provisions of the Nigeria constitution.

We will restore the lost glory of our local governments in order to make them more responsive to the needs of the people at the grassroots.

All policies that are not favourable to the growth of effective local government administration will be reviewed in accordance with the law.

No form of illegality will be allowed to stand and all acts of impunity committed by the immediate past administration on local government administration will be reversed following due process.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE

My administration will restore the integrity of the civil service which has been bastardised through favouritism and political considerations.

We will give the civil service a better orientation with a view to restoring its professionalism. In doing this, we will be fair and firm as we act only in pursuance of public interest.

Let me therefore announce an immediate return to





status quo of all fresh appointments, placements and other major decisions taken by the immediate past administration with effect from the 17th of July, 2022.

I wish to assure all labour unions in the state of our administration's willingness to protect workers interest and promote their welfare at all times. We will be a labour friendly government.

SECURITY

We will embark on a security sector reform that will target crime prevention, detection, neighbourhood policing and better synergy among security agencies. The Amotekun Corps will be strengthened while our administration will ensure operational linkage between local hunters and the Amotekun Corps. A "Know Your Neighbour" security initiative will be implemented. By the grace of God, very soon, Osun will return to its old nature of being a haven of peace.

EXECUTIVE ORDERS

My Good People of Osun, since you elected me as your Governor on the 16th of July 2022, which the INEC announced on July 17th 2022, the former Governor, Alh Isiaka Gboyega Oyetola maliciously started putting road blocks to make things difficult and almost impossible for the new administration to serve you.

Mass employment were carried out without budgetary provisions for salary payments for the new employees; even when the state was struggling to pay salaries and deliver other services. Various hurried and criminally backdated Contracts were awarded and again without budgetary provisions.

Appointments of several Obas were hurriedly done without following due process, just to mention a few.

All efforts to get the Governor set up a Transition Committee and submit hand-over notes in line with best practices proved abortive.

It is therefore my desire to ask for your patience and understanding to give my administration a few weeks to review and sort out all the actions and malicious confusions which the immediate past administration has created since July 17th 2022. Those actions were indeed vindictive measures against the people of Osun State for voting them out of office.

Consequently, I hereby issue the following directives which will be backed up with appropriate Executive orders:

- Immediate freezing of all government accounts in banks and other financial institutions
- Immediate establishment of a panel to carry out an inventory and recover all government assets
- An immediate establishment of a panel to review all appointments and major decisions of the immediate past administration taken after the 17th July, 2022
- An immediate reversal to the constitutionally recognised name of our state, Osun State. All government insignia, correspondences and signages should

henceforth reflect Osun state rather than State of Osun which is unknown to the Nigerian constitution.

APPRECIATION

As I conclude this address, let me express my appreciation to the President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR for allowing a conducive atmosphere for a peaceful, free and fair election in Osun state.

I thank the national leadership of our party, the Peoples Democratic Party under the able leadership of our Chairman, His Excellency Sen. Iyorchia Ayu and his National Working Committee for their immeasurable support.

I also thank our presidential candidate, His Excellency Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, GCON, Vice presidential candidate His Excellency Sen. Ifeanyi Okowa, CON, all PDP state Governors, the Minority caucuses of the Senate, House of Representatives and Osun State House of Assembly and other party stakeholders who stood by Osun state to reclaim our mandate which was stolen four years ago.

Let me also thank the state chapter of the PDP under the able leadership of Dr. Adekunle Akindele, the immediate past leadership under Hon. Sunday Bisi and all party leaders in the 30 local government areas and Ife East area office. I thank you for your steadfastness, loyalty and commitment to the ideals which the Peoples Democratic Party represents.

My deep sense of appreciation goes to my immediate family members beginning with my elder brother Dr. Adedeji Adeleke, my immediate elder sister Yeye Modupe Adeleke-Sanni, my wives Titi and Ngozi, my children, nephews and nieces especially David Adedeji Adeleke A.K.A. Davido for their love, support and sacrifice towards ensuring that we got this far. May your sacrifices never be in vain. I assure you that the selfless services of our late father Sen. Raji Ayoola Adeleke, our mother Prophetess Esther Adeleke and our late scion of the Adeleke family, the first Governor of Osun state, His Excellency Alhaji Isiaka Adetunji Adeleke will always guide my actions as I serve the good people of Osun state.

I must not end this address without appreciating the Nigerian judiciary and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) for their uprightness, neutrality, professionalism and courage in protecting our democracy without fear or favour.

I commend our security agencies for providing a peaceful and conducive atmosphere before, during and after the electoral process.

Finally, I extend my thanks to party men and women,

friends, associates, supporters across party lines, the Media and the courageous Osun voters who have stood resolutely to give and defend this mandate. I am most sincerely grateful.

CONCLUSION

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have a grand vision of a new Osun state. But I cannot do it alone. I therefore seek the support and cooperation of everyone to make this happen.

I hereby extend a strong hand of fellowship to the other arms of governments, the Legislature and the Judiciary. As a former lawmaker and a graduate of Criminal Justice, I appreciate the importance of collaboration among the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.

I call on all political parties to unite in the best interest of the state. Election is over. Now is the time for governance. We are open to fresh ideas in line with our manifesto.

For the purpose of emphasis, I will be a Governor for all Osun people regardless of differences in language, faith, political affiliation or any other considerations.

Welcome to a new Osun State,
The State of The Living
Spring.

Thank
you and
God bless
you all.



GOV.ADEMOLA ADELEKE



"Keep Up The Good Work", Fashola Thumbs Up Inuwa

- Peruses Gombe Governor's 3rd Year Scorecard

Gombe State Governor, Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, recently visited the Minister of Works and Housing, Babatunde Fashola at the Ministry's headquarters, Mabushi, Abuja and both leaders discussed behind closed doors.

The meeting came on the heels of an earlier one by the Governor in September last year during which he drew the attention of the Federal Government to the deteriorating

condition of some federal roads in Gombe and other 5 linked states, especially the Bauchi- Gombe, Gombe- Dukku- Darazo, Gombe- Biu and Gombe Potiskum roads among others and sought for quick intervention.

Gombe is at the centre of the North East with all the other 5 states of the subregion linked to it.

Governor Inuwa had told the Minister during their previous meeting that "for any meaningful development to take place, infrastructure is the key. And out of all the

basic infrastructure, you need the roads to connect. Virtually every facility need road and this Ministry handles roads; so we need to synergise and work together. That is why we are working to see that what we have as a blueprint is really working in synergy with the federal government on short and long terms".

Meanwhile, Governor Inuwa used the visit to bring the Minister up to speed with developments in Gombe State, particularly as it relates to infrastructural and socio-economic strides of his administration.

The Governor also presented his 3rd Year Scorecard and Progress Report of his administration to the Minister.

Impressed by the superlative performance of the APC-led administration in Gombe, the Minister thumbed up the Governor and urged him to keep up the good work.

Project Update: Ongoing Rehabilitation, Expansion and Upgrade of Gombe Regional Water Supply Scheme

- Contractor Expresses Commitment Towards Maintaining Standard, Pledges Timely Completion Of Project

The contractor handling the rehabilitation, upgrade and expansion of Gombe Regional Water Supply Scheme, Jidadu Ventures Ltd has restated strong commitment towards ensuring high standard and timely completion of the project.

The assurance came from the site Engineer of the firm, Mr Abubakar U. B. while briefing newsmen shortly after conducting them round the project sites.

Engr. Abubakar said in order to fast-track the completion of the projects, the firm mobilised all the needed facilities, personnel, and resources to the sites, maintaining that

construction works had since begun in all the major sites of the project and are undertaken simultaneously.

"At most of the sites, work has reached significant level. We reached between 60-80 % at Tumfure mega Booster Station along western bypass and the other booster station adjacent Gombe International Hotel. In few weeks we hope to complete the work in these two sites", the Engr noted.

He said the company has already finished rehabilitation of the overhead reservoir close to Ministry of Women Affairs which has 1 million litre capacity and work is going earnestly at Wuro Juli facility which if completed can supply about

5 million litres of water to the neighborhood.

At the Tabra site where the company is constructing a mini borehole-based water project and treatment plant with 500,000 litre capacity, the site engineer said after suspending the work for sometimes due to rainy season, work has resumed earnestly.

Commenting on the quality of work, Engr. Abubakar said, "we are closely working with our consultants and other relevant stakeholders who monitor the project to ensure all terms and conditions of the contract are adhered to. And from our side, quality is our number one priority; we don't compromise quality or standard.

WHY ARE OUR STATE GOVERNORS IN THE DOCK

By Dele Olowu

One of the curious features of the confused federalism we operate in Nigeria, is that the various layers of government tend to treat each other as rivals. Oftentimes, in this traffic of abuse produced by this strain, state governors and sub nationals are left with the dirty end of the stick. In general terms, governments and incumbents in Nigeria are treated with routine resentment. It is sometimes said in explanation that the repressive character of colonial governments and the requirement for an appropriately hostile response from the citizenry produced this model. This legacy of resentment and hostility has settled down, and has over the years established a convention which formulates popular response to governance. This however does not fully explain the peer hostility between the Federal government and subnationals. And in particular it fails woefully to legitimise our habit of regarding our governors as real or potential felons! The Nigerian union has had a varied experience of administrators, some exemplary, others hideous beyond description. But there would never be a need nor would it serve any useful end to hold out the derelict administrator in our imagination as the Nigerian governor. But this has become a fairly popular distraction. When bored or in need to fend off a fight with the missus, pick up Governors and give them a generic tongue lash. You can not go wrong. Speaking recently after

a Federal Executive council meeting in Abuja, the little known Minister of State for Budget and national planning who goes by the name Clem Agba, accused governors of building flyovers instead of investing in projects which can improve life in the rural areas. He explained that 72% Of poverty can be found in rural areas and that governors have not done enough at this level. The minister also announced, sounding as if he had just discovered a new planet, that he has travelled around the 109 senatorial districts and that all Federal initiatives have amounted to throwing water into a pond owing to insufficient support from state governments. This song of lamentation has given a bit of face to this otherwise fringe figure. Now he has also earned more prominence and headwind as the President has also weighed in on this matter. President Buhari has decried the tendency of state governors to encourage corruption in the local governments and consequently, retard development in the jurisdiction. Buhari was speaking at a meeting with members of the senior executive course of the national institute for policy and strategic studies in Kuru. The statements of the head of state and the minister of state have come together in close confluence. But these are not a revelation. In fact they constitute part of a continuum of broad infirmities which have historically hobbled public governance. These issues are innumerable and it will be unfair to label gubernatorial failures as



either unique or more common than others. Several aspects of our national life have been and continue to be undermined by malfeasance. This is a continuing shame and we require to summon a national resolution to make our stream of governance purer. One of the caricatures being peddled around concerns the alleged corporate and academic bareness of several Nigerian Governors. This is hogwash and is meant to prevent a concentration of minds on the real issues. State governors in Nigeria are an impressive parade of outstanding academics, solid professionals, accomplished civil servants. The cerebral net worth of some of these governors can perhaps compare in terms of acuteness with those of well established think tanks. Even though this quality is no guarantee against moral failure, it nonetheless helps refute the notion that the Governors Forum is a gathering of village idiots. Is it possible for people so competent and highly qualified to post no returns of service after 4 or 8 years in the saddle? Is it possible that they retarded development by failing to provide land for federal government initiatives? Is it possible as alleged that they ate up local government resources and left the jurisdiction to stagnate? By 2023, 17 Governors are most certainly not coming back to the saddle. They have completed their full eight year terms. There is some historicity therefore in inviting a more dispassionate review of the work of these servants of the people without regressing into damaging hyperbole or uncritical veneration. Electorates,

particularly those in Nigeria tend to be seduced by the establishment and expansion of civic infrastructure. Of course the sight of a new road opening up and changing the neighborhood is a noisy and dramatic method for any Governor to take his bow. Nigeria needs over 800 billion dollars over the next ten years to fix our infrastructure deficit. So there is enough window in this area for governors who seek eminence and distinction to operate. But it must be however understood that states are neither built nor transformed by bricks and mortar alone. Building the bridge of understanding as well as cultivating a sense of union amongst the people of a state is a more existential commitment than turning the sod every now and again. Managing people and enabling them to live in peace and work for a common transformation is no mean feat. Our governors working with other levels of power have been able to make our countrysides livable. If we do not give credit to our governors on this account, to whom is the credit due. It is easy to recall how difficult and different things were in the past in parts of the country. In 2013 the Ombatse juju shrine rumpus ravaged Nassarawa state and led spectacularly to the killing of 70 policemen. Even during the civil war Nigeria did not experience this level of carnage in one day. It was a disconcerting set back and its aftermath affected civic and political life in the state. But one governor after the other, they have been able to keep a lid on the ethnic dysfunctions enabling the state to march on merrily into a sunny future. Such difficulties once faced the delta state as ijaws and Itsekiris fought between 2003 and 2007. It was internecine affecting local life and crude resources. The crisis is over but not many would understand how successive governors, sometimes at great corporate and personal cost, have managed to maintain the peace. The imperative of maintaining peace is as important in the south as it is in the north. In the north, from the quizzical challenges in Kaduna to the cauldrons in

Zamfara and katsina, the peace challenge has taken a huge toll on the assets of the Governors. But they have stood their ground. They will all be remembered for their exertions in this line of work. But it is at the level of Infrastructure that our governors have performed most memorably. And even here, someone is on hand to spoil the banquet! Clem Agba the minister for budget and national planning says that state governors are building flyovers instead of developing projects that will improve the rural areas. He also says this neglect has raised poverty levels in the rural areas. To sniff so maliciously on the work of a long line of Governors from across party lines who have valiantly changed the face of Nigeria is to be guilty of unmitigated cynicism. It is only such cynicism that can ignore the massive work that has now made Lagos a development model; the transformation of Ogun into a growing industrial hub; the restoration of Kaduna as a destination for international investment; the promotion of civic peace and a new concern for expanding private initiative; the revamping of infrastructure in the eastern states just to name a few. All these are important strides for which our governors deserve applause. Those who lag behind should be urged to keep apace. We need not be delayed by Minister Agba's notion that the rural areas are more populated and therefore deserve more attention. Even if that were so, the ration by which development has been deployed to the rural areas can not be described as odious. But the demography is changing and many state capitals alone are by themselves more populated than the rest of the state. Edo, Enugu and Oyo are examples of this emerging reality. But ultimately, whichever way we choose to go, it is important to acknowledge how we hang our pearls. Our state governors, or at least many of them have worked hard and well. We destroy idealism when we mistake it for greed or self-help. There is a mountain of malfeasance around. But a lot of it comes from across the horizon. When next you meet a governor tell him something positive.



Lagos government unveils app to tackle domestic, sexual violence cases

The Lagos State Government has unveiled a digital application to tackle domestic, sexual, and gender-based violence cases in the state.

Speaking during the unveiling of the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Case Management System (DSVCMS) on Tuesday, the Executive Secretary of the Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (DSVA), Titilola Viviour-Adeniyi, said the platform would ensure that cases were managed optimally.

Viviour-Adeniyi said the COVID-19 pandemic, with all its challenges, also presented an opportunity for service providers and the state to look inwardly, identify the lacunas in the system, and re-strategise on ways to enhance service delivery.

She said in view of the need to standardise response mechanisms in Lagos State, the Joint EU-UN Spotlight initiative provided support to the Lagos State Government.

"The support was provided through the development of the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Unified Response Protocol and Referral Pathway Document (the first of its kind in Nigeria), and was ratified in 2021," the DSVA boss stated.

Viviour-Adeniyi said part of the support was toward the development of a Case Management Mobile Application, which was both mobile (Android and IOS) and

web portal, adding that at the moment, the handling and management of sexual and gender-based violence cases, end to end, was done manually.

"From the filling of complaint forms to printing referral letters to other referral/responder agencies, to dispatching letters, following up of cases, and other related manual processes.

"This slows down the process of providing services, especially as sexual and gender-based violence responders are duty-bound to respond to incidents timeously.

"By virtue of the DSVCMS, we would be able to attend to cases, make necessary referrals to responder agencies, and manage cases digitally, thereby optimising our operational efficiency.

"In essence, DSVCMS digitalises management of cases, end to end, across the relevant responder agencies.

"At the touch of a button, relevant responder agencies are able to input details of cases and also update information of action taken.

"This information would be accessible to the entire ecosystem thereby increasing accountability and transparency," she said.

Viviour-Adeniyi stated that the app would enhance the ability to follow up on cases and ensure all relevant responder agencies, including the police, health care, social services, and Non-Governmental Organisations were able to discharge their roles optimally.



Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum on SGBV

Back of the Book

Mainstreaming Fempowerment

Sexual and gender-based violence was already a global crisis before the Covid 19 pandemic.

But the abuse intensified with the outbreak, due to lockdowns and other restrictions which left many women trapped with their traducers, isolated from social contact and support networks. Poor economic depravity also further limited many women's ability to leave abusive situations.

It was reported widely that social difficulties also heightened the risk of child marriage, female genital mutilation, and trafficking.

Even in structured environments like business and politics, women are exposed to gender based violence. At some point in their careers, women suffer a backlash, threats, abuse and harassment both at work and out of it and both online and offline. Violence against women leaders can prevent them from performing their duties regardless of the position they occupy. And these are not restricted to physical abuse alone. They can be verbal and emotional as well.

These torture women in a magnitude that is better imagined than experienced.

The Back of the Book, this novel initiative of the Executive Summary, is designed to assist the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum to adequately identify, assess, and document the prevalence of SGBV in their localities. This is for effective measures to be taken against the perpetrators of the crime. In the words of the Chairman of the NGWF Dr Mariya Tambuwal, Wife of the Sokoto State Governor, the NGWF is showcasing the contributions of its members towards mitigating SGBV; to show solidarity with women and the organizations that support them; and to use the media to attract attention to GBV issues.

The Overall goal is to sustain the fight against SGBV through an annual flagship event for NIGWF as an organization." And the goal of the Executive Summary is to help propagate it everywhere.

Dr Tambuwal explained that, addressing SGBV is a significant, long-term development challenge adding that, "non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are

well-placed to develop grassroots initiatives to prevent violence and support victims. For which the first ladies decided to champion the fight collectively in states, through NGWA-GBV.

Therefore, the question, what can governors do, becomes absolutely imperative. One suggestion is for Governors to take ownership of this crusade, to Increase resources for shelters, hotlines and other services so that they can meet the demand to protect women from violent men.

This should not just begin and end with women in politics, but it must consider women in all public roles, including the civil service and elsewhere.

Governors must consider the communication needs of vulnerable women, and older women with limited access to protection, by setting up community emergency warning systems such as is done in developed countries where protection is available in pharmacies and grocery stores. It is also not impossible, for information and media channels for women to pervade the environment. A stitch in time they say, saves nine. .

Finally, Governors should facilitate the scaling-up of information dissemination, particularly those targeted at men and boys and implement measures to address cyber-bullying.

Over time, empirical studies show that the strength of women's organizations is one of the biggest factors in driving positive policy changes, anywhere in the world. By ensuring women's economic independence, governance will become meaningful to the people and will be appreciated by all.

Even as the saying "prevention is better than cure" still endures, concrete measures have been taken by helplines like the United Nations to pick up those who have been unfortunate to have been victims. These include Improving access to essential services for survivors, justice and policing, including funding and support services, like gender-sensitive training for law enforcement personnel.

Prompt assistance to survivors of domestic violence will make fempowerment a done deal in the country. It is not too much for wives to ask of their hard-working husbands. These efforts are documented in text and visuals in the pages sequel-ling this one!


NGWF

Raising Scarfs Against SGBV

First Ladies of the 36 states under the aegis of the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum (NGWF) put on the front burner the imperative of 'Sustaining the State of Emergency Against Gender Based Violence (GBV)' at its Third High-Level Policy Dialogue on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, held at the Shehu Musa Yar'adua Centre, Abuja, on December 5, 2022.

Beyond the unmistakable elegance, refinement and verve, the detectable vibrations of energy and sheer purpose subtly warn that these focussed queens behind the thrones of the thirty-six states' chief executives indeed mean business. The Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum (NGWF) laid out an action plan of "Sustaining the State of Emergency Against Gender Based Violence," to galvanize action to end gender-based violence in Nigeria, through its dialogue themed "Awareness, Accountability & Action."

Dr. Mariya Aminu Tambuwal, First Lady- Sokoto State and Chair, NGWF, in her presentation clarified who the dialogue convener is, collaborating groups and its specific objectives. According to her, "This policy dialogue is convened by NIGWF in collaboration with the Nigeria Governors' Forum, The Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, & EU/UN Spotlight Initiative & UN Women.

"The objective of this summit is to among other things to bring stakeholders together for a high-level advocacy forum on SGBV to commemorate the Global 16 days of Activism campaign against Gender-Based Violence; to launch our projects such as the SGBV Accountability Tracker, SGBV Standard Operating Procedures, SGBV Service Providers Directory & State First Ladies Handbook; to showcase the contributions of NIGWF members towards mitigating SGBV; to

show solidarity with women and the organizations that support them; and to use the media to attract attention to GBV issues, Gender Empowerment and NIGWF's role.

The Overall goal is to sustain the fight against SGBV through our annual flagship event for NIGWF as an organization."

Settling into the beef of her presentation, the NGWF Chair explained that, addressing SGBV is a significant, long-term development challenge. According to her, "In addition to governments' efforts, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are well-placed to develop grassroots initiatives to prevent violence and support victims. And it is for that reason, that we the first ladies decided to champion the fight against SGBV collectively and in our various states, through our flagship programme NGWA-GBV.

"To demonstrate our commitment to address SGBV we provide leadership in our states by chairing the SGBV response committees because we recognise that as humanitarian actors there was need to better prioritize gender-based violence (GBV) to create and implement scaled-up responses that better address women's and girls' rights and needs.

"As part of our initiative to terminate SGBV at the subnational, we developed a State of Emergency tracker in form of a dashboard and identified some key indicators to track our progress and to carry out peer review. This tracker is updated every six months and presented to the first ladies at our quarterly meetings.

"We can consistently dedicate on-the-ground efforts to mitigate SGBV risks and deliver comprehensive, quality services for women and girls in our various states. We realize





from the SGBV indicators that the fight against SGBV requires government, donors, and humanitarian agencies to publicly state and consistently meet their commitments to implement strategic and programmatic actions to address SGBV.

"We also realize that to effectively combat gender-based violence, we need to understand the issue and collect relevant data which is key to implementing successful prevention measures and providing survivors with the right support. As gender-based violence spiked during COVID-19, the gaps in gender sensitive data collection became more glaring than ever. We therefore call on the government to collaborate with our Forum and to invest in the collection of data on gender-based violence."

The above admonition introduced the relevance of the NGWFs partnership with Invictus Africa.

Weighing in, Bukky Shonibare, Executive Director of Invictus Africa commended the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum and explained that "At Invictus Africa, we are a social enterprise that uses data and evidence to promote human rights and gender equality and what we do is use the data and stories to be able to advance issues relating to women and girls. This is all towards ensuring we have a gender-equal society.

"I recall a lot of the issues that we identified then. At the time, we had a lot of states that were yet to pass the VAPP Law and the Child Rights Act and commitments were made on the day by the First Lady of Nigeria and

Bisi Fayemi who was then the head/Chair of the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum.

"So there have been changes between December 2021 and now, rapid changes. Now, we can say that 34 states have passed the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act and over 22 states have passed the Child Rights Act. So, we must commend that all of that is being done.

"There is still more work that needs to be done. That is where the work with the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum would come in. They must ensure that the remaining two states pass the VAPP Act and the remaining four or five states pass the Child Rights Act. Beyond that, the work that we have partnered with the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum to launch today is the National Directory of Service Providers.

"At Invictus Africa, we launched the orange pages in July of 2021 which was launched by Erelu Bisi Fayemi and the Nigeria Governors' Wives launched their own which is unique to their state. What we did then is to provide the technical support and most importantly, the methodology for how we develop the pages which is to first collect the data through a google form that we send out, then we sort and collate and then verify and validate, and after we publish.

"The same process has been followed. Every contact is one that has been verified and validated. What that means is that we have a list of over 200 contacts but you know Nigeria has a population of over 200 million which is where more work needs to be done and where we can come in.

"We currently have 32 sexual referral centres in Abuja. We know that is not enough to cater to the over 200 million population. The standard

The Overall goal is to sustain the fight against SGBV through our annual flagship event for NIGWF as an organization





practice says there must be 1 to 10,000 population. There must be one shelter for 10,000 population and there must be one rape crisis centre to 200,000 population. "We will continue to provide support and collate this information and produce more directories. Now, that we have created this directory, people need to know that it exists. That is why we need to do massive publicity for this. So, for us, we would work with the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum to make sure that the dashboard would incorporate the data from the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum.

To underscore the importance of the event in the Nigerian social order, important dignitaries including Governors, ministers and civil society kingpins lent their voices to the day.

In his remarks at the conference, Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal of Sokoto State commended the Nigerian Governors' Wives Forum (NGWF) for their collaborative effort towards ensuring the safety and protection of women and girls from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence adding that most importantly for setting up a structure that would outlive every First Lady and the institutionalisation of the Forum's initiative would undoubtedly ensure sustainability.

According to Governor Tambuwal who was represented at the conference by NGF Director General, Mr. Asishana Bayo Okauru, "Gender-based violence is a global challenge which requires a global response. Despite the scale of the problem, gender-based violence is preventable, making it essential that we reaffirm our commitment to end this violence, and support all women and girls in fully realising their potential.

"The NGF made a commitment to ensure that tackling sexual and gender-based violence in our respective states would be a priority. We committed to ensuring that the Violence Against Persons Law (VAPP) and Child Rights Act would be effectively passed and implemented in our respective states. As of November, of this year, 34 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have domesticated the (VAPP) Act and 32 states have domesticated the Child Rights Act.

"It is no doubt that despite the commendable progress we have made as a country, there is still more that needs to be done to achieve our goal of eliminating Gender Based Violence against Women and Girls.

"This conference represents a further step in an ongoing process: putting the rights of women and girls at the heart of the Nigerian Government and taking on the existing and emerging challenges that we see in this field. We must UNITE in the campaign to end this scourge. The NGF would continue to collaborate with NGWF to drive their initiatives at the subnational.

Indeed, reflective of the scope of stakeholders that graced the conference, the Hon. Minister of Women Affairs of Nigeria, Mrs. Pauline Tallen, provided special insights into the nature of the subsisting GBV challenges.

In her words: "I commend the EU and the UN for the great work they are doing to support the Ministry and all partners to ensure that we address the high spate of gender-based violence in our states. At the local government area levels, we still rely very much on you because you are the ones that are working directly with wives of Chairman at the local level. That is where most of the atrocities are happening, at the local, state and national levels.

"Sometimes, I feel like breaking down when I receive a high number of reports of gender-based violence from the situation room. Not only that but gory pictures of where you see the wickedness of man against man. Women beat their mates to death. It's gory and we must stand to condemn this wickedness of man against man which is unacceptable.

"I want to acknowledge and commend all members of our diplomatic corps, all our female ambassadors, the EU, the American Ambassador, the British Ambassador and all the other female ambassadors that have stood by the Ministry to work to address the problems of gender-based violence.

"I want to commend the British government for organising the first global conference to support and stand by survivors of gender-based violence. I just returned from London last week and this program was amazing where you see survivors coming out to speak and the need for all of us to stand by them and lift their hands. It's everywhere.

"There is no country that is free of gender-based violence. It happens everywhere. We have heard it from our sisters that have spoken before me. It is a problem that is across the continent. I want to acknowledge the UN Women Representatives for the great work they are doing and to specially acknowledge all our commissioners at the state level who are here.



“Ending violence against women requires that key institutions work together, provide services, and ensure that the different bodies in society are held accountable, especially those that are responsible for law enforcement

“I want to use this opportunity to thank the entire Governors’ wives for working closely and supporting these commissioners that are the ones that are working with you at the state level and acknowledge all our female ministers especially the humanitarian minister who is represented for supporting the fight against gender-based violence.”

On his part, Ambassador of the European Union to Nigeria and to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Samuela Isopi commended the combined efforts of the authority at the federal and state level, civil society and expressed pride to be part of this joint endeavour and hoped to sustain the momentum.

His words: “I am pleased that the Spotlight Initiative together with the Nigeria Governors’ Wives Forum and the Ministry of Management Committee has worked together to develop the GBV Accountability tracker that would be launched today. This is a live platform for taking stock of the state of GBV in Nigeria and providing a one-stop shop for all GBV-related information.

“With the spotlight initiative in the last phase of implementation, this accountability tracker would help us to take stock of the progress and also identify key priorities looking ahead. This is the last 16 days of activism against gender-based violence under the current federal administration which gives us the opportunity to commend the Nigerian Government and the Nigerian authorities for the strong political commitment, for the efforts and the results and I would like to commend the leadership of our sister of Women Affairs, so much has been achieved, thanks to you.

“Our hope is that the new administration would continue to prioritise gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence.

We count on the Nigeria Governors’ Wives Forum to continue to lead the way in the fight against gender-based violence for all the states of the country.

The European Union would remain strongly engaged and the Spotlight Initiative running into its last phase of implementation, we are now

mobilising new funds, and we will continue to work together with you and all stakeholders to stop gender-based violence and advance gender equality.

Nigeria’s First Lady, Dr. Aisha Buhari captured the essence of the conference and set the ball rolling with her keynote address at the event. Her words: “Gender-based violence is a global challenge which requires a global response. Despite the scale of the problem, gender-based violence is preventable, making it essential that we reaffirm our commitment to end this violence, and support all women and girls in fully realising their potential.

“The journey towards equality and the empowerment of women remains a significant one. Nigeria has already made great strides – most notably in the passage of legislations such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act which has now been domesticated in 34 states.

“Ending violence against women requires that key institutions work together, provide services, and ensure that the different bodies in society are held accountable, especially those that are responsible for law enforcement.” However, the high point of the day was the representation by the First Lady Hajiya Aisha Buhari.

The First Lady of course did not forget to acknowledge the notable efforts of NGWF in the unfolding anti-GBV advocacy. Hear her: “I would like to commend the Nigerian Governors’ Wives Forum for their collaborative effort towards ensuring the safety and protection of women and girls from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence.”

Concluding with an endorsement, she said, “I would like to emphasize that the Nigerian Governors’ Wives Forum is committed to keep working tirelessly with our partners and other stakeholders to see that gender-based violence is reduced to the barest minimum. Together, let us commit by making certain that every woman and girl counts, to ensuring that every girl in Nigeria can grow up in a world feeling secure and protected.”





16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM Hajiya Lami Leads a Walk in Yola

Her Excellency Hajiya Lami Ahmadu Fintiri organized a walk in collaboration with Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum to commemorate the 16 Days of Activism, in Yola, November 26th, 2022. The 9-kilometer walk began at Mubi Round-about and ended at Mahmud Ribadu Square





Gender Based Violence SHUN STIGMATIZATION, EXPOSE VIOLATORS, AKEREDOLU'S WIFE ADVISES VICTIM

the promulgation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition VAPP law, in the state, to wage war against violators of women, but said that more ground needed to be covered.

According to her "we gather every year we speak on gender based violence. But what has been the outcome.

"Violence against women and the girl child is the most heinous Human Right abuse.

"We talk too much, its time to be intentional, deliberate, there should be a policy against gender based violence meted to women and girls.

She therefore called for more participation of women in politics, noting that this will help in protecting their interest when decisions and policies are made.

On this year's theme: 'Unite to End Violence Against Women', Akeredolu, said that the "VAPP law was passed into law, simplified and translated into Yoruba language for ease of understanding.

The Women Affairs and Social Development, Dr. Mrs. 'Bunmi Osadahun, lamented that "almost all women are affected by these violence which can come in the form of battering, rape, domestic violence among others."

Osadahun noted that "a society that fails to pay attention to gender issues is endangered.

Also speaking, the Executive Secretary of Ondo state Agency Against Gender Based Violence, OSAA-GBV, Bolanle Afolabi, said that gender based violence "has continued to be problem all over the world and increasing despite all effort to end it.

The Senior Special Assistant to the governor on Gender, Mrs Olamide Falana, lamented that "going by available data, one in every 3 girls suffer gender based violence in their life time and such crimes are usually perpetrated by close family.

Falana said that "the time has come to unite and stem the ugly tide of gender violence in the society.

She appreciated the First Lady for the enactment of the VAPP Law, which, according to her would wage war against gender violence in the state.

The wife of the Ondo state governor, Mrs Betty Anyanwu-Akeredolu, has said that violators of women and girl child should be exposed in the society and not shielded for any reasons whatsoever.

Mrs Akeredolu said this at a Press Conference, in Akure, the state capital, to commemorate 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in the state.

According to her "its high time people speak out, there should be no hiding place for violators of women and the girl child.

"Those violated should speak out not minding the stigmatisation, they should allow the law to take its full course." Why hide violators from facing the consequences of their heinous action. People should stop shielding them. This will serve as deterrent.

Mrs Akeredolu challenged groups, Oloris, Iyalojas and other stakeholders to sensitise the people on the need to speak out so as to end violence against women.

The First lady, who noted that a lot of grounds have been covered through



A SOCIETY THAT FAILS TO PAY ATTENTION TO GENDER ISSUES IS ENDANGERED

NIGERIA
GOVERNORS'
FORUM



Happy Birthday

The Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat wishes to felicitate with its one-time Chairman, former Governor of Kwara State and Senate President of the eighth assembly, Dr Abubakar Olubokola Saraki, who turns 60 today 19th December 2022.

Turning sixty is indeed such a privilege that only very few people get in good health. Now that you are here, the NGF Secretariat trusts that you appreciate that 60 is just a number that you have attained with several accomplishments that others can only dream of.

The NGF wishes you more success in all your endeavors and a life full of joy, peace, and a brighter future to crown the heaps of successes that you have already achieved.

*Once again,
Happy Birthday*

Dr. Abubakar Olubokola Saraki

Signed:

Asishana B. OKAURU
DG, NGF

