

## DEVELOPMENT POLICY CENTRE, IBADAN

A POLICY DIALOGUE ON ACHIEVING IN NIGERIA THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL ON HEALTH, WHICH IS TO ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES

### COMMUNIQUE

The above Policy Dialogue held on 6 September 2018 by the Development Policy Centre, Ibadan recommended to the Government and People of Nigeria as follows:

A. National Health Insurance Scheme: The National Health Insurance Scheme should be mandatory for all Nigerians. This will make affordable health care delivery available to all the nooks and crannies of Nigeria. The NHIS will improve the health status of the generality of Nigerians and thereby result into improved National Productivity and boost our Gross Domestic Products.

The Federal Government should massively invest in the Total HealthCare Expenditure to produce Essential Medicines locally in Nigeria. Conducive environment should be provided for Private Sector participation in Pharmaceutical Research in Tertiary institutions so as to provide safe, effective, and affordable herbal medicines for Nigerians.

B. Devastating Effect of Climate Change: The Federal Government of Nigeria should as a matter of urgency, combat the devastating effect of climate change in Nigeria. Climatic change has resulted into several health consequences e.g. stress diseases, food shortages and severe droughts. Many Nigerian lives are endangered due to cross infection from Plants and Animals. Coastal areas in the Southern parts of the country should be protected

C. Environmental Pollution Issues: Environmental pollution issues should be seriously addressed by Nigerian Government. In spite of necessary regulatory Bodies and Environmental Laws, the Nigerian space is heavily polluted thereby exposing Nigerians to various health challenges. Environmental Pollution includes Air and Water pollution, Soil Pollution (i.e. land degradation) and Noise Pollution.

Communiqué recognizes that water and soil pollution caused by oil exploration activities in the Niger Delta dominates Environmental pollution issues, there are some other forms of pollution that are equally hazardous to the public. The Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) should be adequately funded so as to improve its Institutional capacity to enforce the laws.

Water Pollution perhaps is the worst form of pollution, since majority of Nigerians derive their domestic and drinking water from ponds and streams, hence any contamination of such water supply poses health challenges e.g. Cholera, Dysentery and Typhoid.

Attention should also be given to air pollution, chiefly the Gas flaring and Oil Spillage in exploration activities and burning of waste in the open. The number of deaths from low quantity air already exceeds death rates from AIDS and Malaria combined. It has also led to the increase in the rate of cardiovascular and respiratory tract diseases.

Noise Pollution is the third most hazardous environmental issue in Nigeria. It is the most underrated and ignored. Noise Pollution is common in all the urban cities in Nigeria from these sources Automobiles, Airplanes and Worship Centres. It is practically shocking that the National

Environmental Standard and Regulation Enforcement Agency (NESREA) set up by FGN have been most ineffective. Various Worship Centres set up in Government Reservation Areas of most urban cities blaring heavy loudspeakers during their day/night services.

Urgent action should be taken by (NESREA) to prevent thousands of Nigerians from Noise Pollution, consequences which include (a) Hypertension (b) Impaired Cognitive Functioning (c) Reduced Performance at work (d) Cardiovascular Disease.

D. Establishment of Smart Cities: The Colloquium also recommended the establishment of smart cities in each of six Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria. These smart cities will help stem migration to the already congested urban cities in Nigeria. Nigeria is ripe for cities which are efficient and functional such that the citizens residing there can conveniently satisfy their social, economic, physical and total wellbeing with less complication in all respects to their living condition with regards to the use of digital elements to improve their daily chores. Government can create Impetus for the Private Sector to take the lead in driving the attainment of Smart Cities in Nigeria.

E. Redressing Gender Inequality: That Federal Government of Nigeria should redress Gender Inequality, Promotion of Women's rights in Domestic Production, Paid Employment, Culture and Religion. Strict sanctions against male violence and genital mutilation should be legislated. Government should stop Girl Child Marriage and Sexual harassment. Highlight should be made by the Federal Government that empowering the girl child implies preparing her for future motherhood challenges, which will affect the family and the larger Nigerian Nation positively in future. All forms of inhuman discrimination and gender inequality must be challenged. A deliberate, sensitive, consistent and systematic approach of gender relations should be adopted, including gender mainstreaming in all aspects of Nigerian life.

#### Lead Speakers:

Professor A.O Kunle Olowu

*Provost College of Medicine, Afe Babalola University, Ado –Ekiti*

Dr Bola Ofi

*Acting Head, Department of Nursing Lagos State College of Medicine, Ikeja*

Otunba Kayode Oduntan

*Pharmacist and Pharmaceutical Consultant*

Chairman: Professor Aderemi Kuku, FAS, OON, NNOM

*Immediate past president, African Academy of Sciences*