

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A TWO-DAY WORKSHOP FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN OGUN STATE ON PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN OGUN STATE, ORGANISED BY THE CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH AND INFORMATION (CEWHIN) IN COLLABORATION WITH BUDGIT, CENGEHE AND TEP CENTRE WITH SUPPORT FROM MACARTHUR FOUNDATION HELD AT GREEN LEGACY RESORT, ABEOKUTA ON 26-27<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2019**

**PREAMBLE**

The Centre for Women's Health and Information (CEWHIN) in conjunction with Budgit, supported by MacArthur Foundation on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> August 2019 organized a two day workshop for Civil Society Organisations in Ogun State on promoting Transparency and Accountability in Ogun State with the objectives of mobilizing CSOs for result-oriented advocacy as a more effective means of ensuring government efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery; further strengthen CSOs capacity for constructive engagement with government and development of an action plan for more effective networking for transparency and accountability.

The two day workshop was attended by thirty five (35) participants made up of representatives of the Civil Society Groups in Ogun State.

**GOODWILL MESSAGES:** Messages were delivered by representatives of The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and that of the Ministry of Special Duties and Inter-Governmental Affairs as well as Budgit.

At the end of the two-day workshop, we therefore have the following as our Action Plan, observation and recommendation and hereby issued as a communiqué:

**Action plan**

**We hereby undertake to embark the following actions:**

- Informed and focused advocacy through developed work plan and the instrumentality of the Open Government Partnership (OGP).
- CSO Mapping
- Capacity building of members in budget tracking
- Transparency and Accountability network (TAN) is hereby formed to promote the interest of Building a strong network on Accountability and Transparency in the state.
- There will be an engagement of the Community Development Councils (CDC) across the local government levels on FOIa as a tool to engage government on Transparency and Accountability in Governance.
- Members will participate at the on-going 2020 budget processes across the three senatorial zones
- The three zonal heads will serve as the steering committee members of the network with a representative from CEWHIN and Tola Adenekan
- Media will be continuously engaged.

## **OBSERVATIONS: The following observations were raised by participants at the meeting:**

- Regardless of the existing legal framework in place in Nigeria, Nigeria still falls short of the standards and requirements expected of an effective anti-corruption regime as recommended in the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).
- No law compels the state governments to publish its budget.
- The penalties attached to corrupt activities are not commensurate with the serious nature of the crimes.
- There is no replica of anti-graft agencies and institutions like ICPC or EFCC at the state governments' level to prosecute corrupt officials and fight against corruption at state and local government levels.
- Most of the enabling statutes are not tough enough to act as serious deterrent.
- There is a mutual distrust between the governed and the political office holders
  
- Indications among government officials show to some extent improvement in the Political will to fight corruption. Observations reveal that this Will is gradually being improved. The result may not be substantial at this stage but clearly there will be continuous improvement once the effort is sustained.
- The Role of the Media: The Nigerian media have a substantial role to play in the war against corruption. They have maintained an effective standing in helping to report suspected corrupt practices and pending cases on corruption, exposing those involved in corrupt practices as well as convictions of those found guilty by the court. These they have done through objective reporting of these cases. However, there is need for restrained use of the social media so as to prevent the spread of fake news.
- Constructive engagement is an essential element of an effective partnership between governance institutions and CSOs who should be seen as a partner in progress for good governance and not as a threat to government.
- Citizens non-challant attitude towards governance
- The majority of Nigerian citizens lack the basic education and human capacity development tools. Poverty and other social incapacities place the citizens in a disadvantaged position. A review of the sentiments and character of the majority of the citizens reveal that an average Nigerian citizen can be easily compromised. There are very few exceptions and the practice cuts across every Sector and position of the economic and political structure. The educational level, religious affiliation, position, etc are immaterial in this regard.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

At the end of the deliberations at the workshop, the following recommendations were arrived at:

- State governments should replicate some of the anti-corruption crusades and measures of the anti-graft agencies.
- Government must accept the principle of genuine partnership in Multi stakeholder initiatives, overcoming mutual ideological distrust with one another.
- Government should strengthen civil society's involvement to lend legitimacy to the Multi Stakeholder initiative process and create an enabling environment for civil society to participate and contribute.
- CSOs to mobilize community members to fight corruption and expose corrupt practices

## **ORGANISATIONS:**

1. Women Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON)
2. Centre for Grassroots and Education , Health Care and Empowerment (CENGEHE)
3. Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre (WARDC)
4. Centre for Womens Health and Information (CEWHIN)
5. Community Education Advancement of Peace & Dev. Initiative (CEAPDI)
6. Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC)
7. Penpushing Media
8. Budgit
9. Ogayemi Merciful Care and Support Initiative
10. Life Agenda Initiative (LAI)
11. Show Care Foundation
12. Youth Future Savers Initiative (YFSI)
13. Child to Child Network (CCN)
14. Brighter Hope Foundation
15. African Foundation for Environment and Development (AFED)
16. Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN)
17. Women's Organisation for Dev. and Empowerment of Communities (WODECO)
18. Rays of Hope Community Foundation (ROH)
19. ADEM Community and Human Development Foundation
20. Peace and Life Enhancement Initiative International(PLEI)
21. Centre for Alternative Development and Self Enhancement (CEADESE)
22. Tobby Emmanuel Foundation and Yemisi Alogi Orphanage Home
23. Gender Development Initiative (GENDI)
24. (JESA FUTURE Foundation
25. Women's Organisation for Peace and Gender Equality Initiative (WOPEGEI)
26. Care Trust Initiative
27. Women Advocacy on HIV and AIDs Prevention WAHPOD
28. MEDIASELL LTD
29. Youth Network on HIV/AIDS, Population and Development (NYNETHA)
30. True symbols

## **MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIQUE DRAFTING COMMITTEE**

- (1) Dimeji Kayode-Adedeji - Chairman
- (2) Adesina Adefolahan - Secretary
- (3) Alhaja Rabi K. Yeni -Member
- (4) Olukunle Adeogun -Member
- (5) Margaret Oviutu-Member