



# CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH AND INFORMATION (CEWHIN)

*CEWHIN promotes improved quality of life through empowerment strategies and programmes that enable individuals to actualise their rights*

Date: MAY, 2018

## CEWHIN KICKS OFF ITS TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

**CEWHIN** kicked-off the implementation of its Transparency and Accountability Project in Ogun State at a well-attended meeting held at the MITROS Residences, Ibara Estate in Abeokuta on Friday, 13th April, 2018. Among the 78 participants at the meeting were dignitaries from different organisations across the country, including agencies of government in Ogun State; the Honourable Commissioner for Special Duties; Barrister Adeleke Adewolu, the programme manager of the Ogun State Home Grown School Feeding Programme; Mrs. Tinuola Shopeju; Amina Salihu, Senior Programme Officer, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; and Mrs. Egunjobi of the Ogun State Universal Basic Education Board.



## LET'S RID NIGERIA OF CORRUPTION

*Monopoly + Discretion – Accountability = Corruption (Klitgaard)*

### Introduction

Although Nigeria is one of the oil producing countries of the world, it is ranked 152 out of 188 countries in the UN Human Development Report (2016) which puts it in the low human development category. The level of inequality among its citizens is high and corruption continues to widen the inequality gap, resulting in deeper levels of poverty across the country. Nigeria is ranked 148th out of 180 in the world's least corrupt countries.

*Continue on page 2*

## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT WORKING GROUP MEETING

The Project Working Group is a multi-sectoral technical committee and a major accountability mechanism built into the Transparency and Accountability Project of CEWHIN. It is an important component of the project as it plays the role of a monitoring and quality assurance organ. The group will meet quarterly to address technical issues and take policy decision on the different aspects of the project. The Group held its inaugural meeting on Thursday April 12, 2018 at MITROS Hotel in Abeokuta, Ogun State. *Continue on Page 3*



Other stakeholders within the 3 local government areas where CEWHIN's project will be implemented were also invited to the meeting. The stakeholders include head teachers, cooks, members of Parents Teachers Associations and Schools Based Management Committees (SBMCs), Civil Society and Community Based Organisations as well as the media.

Speaking at the meeting, Mrs. Adebanke Akinrimisi, the Programmes Coordinator of CEWHIN stated that the Transparency and Accountability Project builds on the Anti-Corruption agenda of the present administration. It is a three-year project, and one of the projects being supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation under its **On Nigeria** project. The On Nigeria project seeks to “promote an atmosphere of accountability, transparency and good governance in Nigeria by reducing retail corruption and strengthening Nigerian-led anti-corruption efforts”.

CEWHIN's project is aimed at addressing the problem of apathy on the side of citizens in relation to demanding effective and efficient services that they are ordinarily entitled to. It is to ensure that the beneficiaries of the program can access what has been earmarked for them. Many citizens have lost hope in government and therefore abdicate their rights in many areas. This project will contribute to citizens' re-awakening to their rights and duties. It will create an avenue for equipping citizens with skills for constructive engagement with government towards demanding accountability and improved services.



## What is Corruption?

Corruption is simply the abuse of public office for private gain. Corruption is a behaviour that deviates from formal duties because of private gains (Mishra, 2016) Nepotism is also a form of corruption. In other words, granting favours to a family member, friend or colleague against other citizens or specific groups of people because of the relationship as opposed to doing so on the ground of merit. There is a thin line between corruption and fraud. While corruption is improper use of influence to favour one above others, fraud is misleading others to obtain benefit/gain or to avoid an obligation.



## Effects of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption promotes unequal access to public facilities, opportunities and services; It leads to poor service delivery across different sectors, especially education, power, health, water, sports, roads etc. Where there is corruption, often times there is high rate of loss on investments. Corruption robs the nation and the citizens of integrity. It drives high level of insecurity, poor access to justice and high level of impunity. Corruption promotes poverty, it drives inequality and aids the manifestation of powerlessness especially among poor citizens.

## How Can We Rid Nigeria of Corruption?

The constitutional provision on equality of persons must be understood by all and applied in the development of all policies, laws and programmes of government. Many Nigerians have slept over their rights for too long. Citizens engagement with government is at its lowest ebb. All these need to change if the country must move forward. Civil servants at all levels should be paid realistic salaries and should be made to work for such income. Jobs should be created for the unemployed and social protection mechanisms should be institutionalised to address poverty and reduce inequality among citizens. The operational of agencies of government should be computerised in order to promote transparency and accountability. The capacity of Anti-corruption institutions should also be strengthened for effective and efficient performance of their functions.

## Conclusion

CEWHIN will continue to contribute to building the capacity of citizens for effective participation in governance and constructive engagement with government at all levels. .



## CEWHIN KICKS OFF ITS TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

CEWHIN will work with citizens in the project communities to ensure that leakages in government expenditure are identified and plugged. It will also work with citizens to ensure that absenteeism, inefficiency, inequity, ghost workers, delays and other vices are reduced to the barest minimum.



During the life of the project, CEWHIN will build the capacity of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs) and School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) for monitoring the HGSFP and other programmes of government that they may come in contact with.

According to the Programmes Coordinator, "this is one of the sustainability mechanisms built into the project". The idea is to work with existing structures within the education system such that after the life of the project, they would have acquired the skills to monitor any programme in their schools and even in the communities where they live.

The project is designed to raise change agents. The PTA and SBMCs members to be trained as monitors will not be paid to monitor the project as this is seen as a part of their primary responsibilities to ensure that the schools are well managed and that pupils good services.

## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT WORKING GROUP MEETING

Members of the group include representatives of the Ministries of; Special Duties and Agriculture; Executive members of the SBMC/PTAs of selected schools from each of the 3 LGAs (Abeokuta South, Odogbolu and Yewa South) where CEWHIN works , the Education Secretaries of the Local Education Authorities (LEA) in the 3 LGAs, one associate of CEWHIN, the Project Coordinator and the Snr. Programme Officer of CEWHIN.



The meeting afforded CEWHIN the opportunity to share with the members, details of its Transparency and Accountability Project on the Home Grown School Feeding Programme. Members were given information about the objectives and strategies for implementing the project as well as the role of the Working Group. The findings of the baseline survey that was conducted at the inception of the project was also shared at the meeting. An integral focus of the meeting was to get the buy-in of the various stakeholders and to give them an opportunity to serve as think-tanks and also to make constructive contributions to the implementation of the project.



Findings from the baseline survey were shared with members of the Working Group and some of the lapses identified in the implementation of the programme were discussed at the meeting. The findings brought to the fore the need for the implementers of the HGSFP to take some strategic decisions in order that the beneficiaries of the programme (school pupils) are able to access what has been earmarked for them by the government.

The first meeting was a huge success as it presented an opportunity for the team to make their input and to share ideas across the different sectors that were represented.

## CEWHIN CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY WITH SCHOOL GIRLS

With the high level of decadence in the society, and the high level of abuse of the fundamental human rights of citizens, CEWHIN sees young people as the hope of the future of Nigeria. Working with young people at their early ages and equipping them with knowledge and skills on positive values and their rights are critical to building a better future for the nation.

CEWHIN seeks to contribute to building the capacity of young people by engaging them in educational and interactive sessions on basic social values as part of their extra-curricular activities. The modern life-style of parents being at the work place the better part of each day trying to fend for the family translates to the absence of quality time to teach young people good values. Some parents might even have the time but lack the knowledge and skills for engaging effectively with young people.

In line with this vision and to commemorate this year's international women's day with the theme #PressForProgress, CEWHIN visited Reagan Memorial Baptist Girls Secondary School and Aje Comprehensive Junior High School both in Sabo, Yaba, Lagos. The aim was to impact the lives of the girls through life skill discussions on self-esteem and to help them to imbibe positive character that will transform them into well-respected and valuable citizens of the country. A key message that was left with the young girls is: to achieve progress hard work is important; but believing in oneself is key.

The students and teachers were very pleased with the sessions and looked forward to more of such opportunities



## TRAINING OF SBMC AND PTA REPRESENTATIVES FOR EFFECTIVE MONITORING OF OGUN HOME GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

A crucial aspect of CEWHIN's transparency and accountability project supported by McArthur Foundation is the training of members of School Based Management Committees (SBMC) and Parents Teachers Association (PTA) in 40 schools in Abeokuta South, Odogbolu and Yewa South LGAs. A 2-day training workshop was held in each of the LGAs between the 1st and 9th of May 2018 with a total of 79 participants. The goal of the training is to promote good governance by building the capacity of SBMC and PTA representatives to imbibe the culture of transparency and accountability, and to constructively engage with the government towards the delivery of better services in the communities. The training was jointly facilitated by the staff of CEWHIN and staff of the HGSFP. The trainees were indeed happy to be part of the training as it featured several



forms of participatory learning methodologies. The content of the training include understanding transparency and accountability, community building, citizens' constructive engagement with government and guidelines for effective monitoring of the Ogun

HGSFP. Participants were thought about the qualities of effective monitors and the reporting lines for the school feeding programme. Their roles as monitors were clearly defined. The fact that they are monitors and not police officers was clearly stated at the meetings.

The action points that evolved immediately from the trainings were the re-awakening of the members of SBMCs to the realities of their duties, and how strategic their position is in engaging government for better service delivery in their schools and communities. They also came to terms with the role of disseminating information received at the training to other SBMC and PTA members in their various communities who did not partake of the training. The essence of this, is to build a formidable team that is well equipped to make demands from the government on how well public resources are used to better the life of the citizenry. The training is a major step towards effective collaboration between CEWHIN and other strategic stakeholders in ensuring that the entire process of implementing the HGSFP is transparent and that all personnel and government agencies involved in the delivery of the programme both at the state and federal levels are accountable for the judicious use of the public resources committed to the programme.

It is our hope at CEWHIN that using the monitoring of the Ogun State HGSFP as a pilot, will provide an opportunity to better equip SBMCs and PTA of the various communities to track other government projects in their communities and demand transparency and accountability from the government in the delivery of such services.

**For more information:** Contact the Publications Unit of Centre for Women's Health and Information (CEWHIN), 34 McNeil Steet by Akintoye Street, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos.

**Tel:** +2349074187490 **Email:** info@cewhin.com, or cewhin@yahoo.com

**Website:** www.cewhin.com

This publication is supported by: **John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation**