



CEWHIN

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

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Town Hall Meetings: Platforms for Constructive Citizens' Engagement with Government in Ogun State

In seeking to promote government/citizens' engagement, CEWHIN organized town hall meetings in each of the three Local Government Areas where it monitors the implementation of the Ogun Home Grown School Feeding Programme (OGHGSFP). The Town Hall meetings were held in Abeokuta South LGA on July 10, 2018, Odogbolu LGA on July 12, 2018 and in Yewa South LGA on July 18, 2018. A total of 230 women and men attended the 3 meetings. The meeting at Odogbolu was hosted by the Alaye of Odogbolu, HRH Oba Adedeji Onagoruwa in his palace.



The stakeholders that participated in the meetings were drawn from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), community leaders, local government officials, local government education officers, cooks, religious leaders, traditional rulers and members of staff of the OGHGSFP. The Special Assistant to the Governor on Special Duties and Programmes Manager of the OGHGSFP was present at all the

Continue of page 2

CEWHIN ORGANISED ACCOUNTABILITY FORUMS FOR MONITORS OF THE HOME GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME IN 3 LGA'S of OGUN STATE

With the support of MacArthur Foundation, CEWHIN organized accountability forums in each of the three Local Government Areas (LGA) where it monitors the implementation of the Ogun Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP). The accountability forums took place on July 9, 11 & 17 in Abeokuta South, Odogbolu and Yewa South LGAs respectively with a total of 72 participants. The forums provided an opportunity for receiving feedback from the members of School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) and Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs) that were trained and are actually monitoring the implementation of the school feeding programme in different communities within 3 LGAs in the state, where CEWHIN works.



Mr. Fatai Akinsanya reporting on observations made during the monitoring exercise at the Accountability forum held in Abeokuta South LGA.

The accountability forums were also avenues to re-train the monitors on their role in ensuring the successful implementation of the HGSFP. Participants' knowledge were refreshed on the qualities of a good monitor and the appropriate response that they are expected to give to different case scenarios that they may encounter in the course of monitoring the programme.

Town Hall Meetings as Platforms for Constructive Citizens' Engagement with Government in Ogun State

meetings across the 3 LGAs to address the issues and questions raised by the stakeholders. The meetings created opportunities for the monitors to present their findings at the Town Hall meetings and to receive necessary information and responses from the officials of the OGHGSFP. In the same spirit of collaboration, monitors also reported some of the gaps that were identified, in the implementation of the programme and these were clarified by the officials of the OGHGSFP,

Other stakeholders were also able to ask questions about issues that were not clear to them. The sessions were highly informative and interactive. The sessions enhanced citizens' knowledge of the entitlements and duties



Issues mentioned and addressed followed the same pattern across the LGAs and bordered on service delivery by the cooks, quality and quantity of food served to the beneficiaries, protein content of the food, operations and banking issues, sharp practices by some of the cooks and sustainability of the project. Others revolved around logistics, especially in the rural communities like Yewa South LGA where roads are poor and transportation is a challenge.

At the end of the meetings, stakeholders were more enlightened about the programme and expressed their gratitude to the federal government for taking the initiative to implement the such a laudable programme. Stakeholders also expressed their interest in being a part of the programme as they became more aware of their roles in ensuring the effective implementation of the programme for its success. Participants called on government to ensure that it continues even after the term of office of the current administration..

They also urged the government to extend the benefit to pupils in higher classes (Primary 4 – 6) who are presently not included in the programme.

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CEWHIN's Programme Officer – Tolulope Aderibigbe, explaining to monitors, the procedures for recording observations on the Food Vendors' register.



CEWHIN's Senior Programme Officer – `Sumbo Oladipo, facilitating a refresher session on the responsibilities of a good monitor.



Alhaja Adijat Kayode sharing report of observation in one of the communities at the Accountability Forum held at Alaye of Odogbolu's Palace in Odogbolu LGA.

The reports collated during the accountability forums are being used by CEWHIN to engage the officials of the Ogun Home Grown School Feeding Programme, towards improved service delivery, especially the attainment of the a corrupt-free school feeding programme.

Continue on Page 4

Photos from the CSOs Workshop on Anti-corruption

Capacity Building Workshop for CSOs on Anti-corruption & Constructive Citizens' Engagement with Government



CEWHIN collaborated with BudgIT to organise a 2-day capacity building workshop for civil society organisations on anti-corruption and constructive citizens' engagement with government on June 20th and 21st, 2018 at the Conference Hotel, GRA, Ijebu Ode, Ogun State

The workshop was designed to enhance participants' knowledge of the dimensions, status, effects of corruption, and current anti-corruption laws and mechanisms in Nigeria. It was also aimed at enhancing their skills for effective and constructive engagement with government as well to sensitize them on the need to support the monitoring efforts of the HGSFP in Ogun State.



The workshop was delivered through different learning approaches and it was highly participatory. There were lectures, brain storming sessions, group work, two video screening sessions on living with corruption in Africa etc. Participants also had a practical session on how to use the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) to demand information from

government officials and agencies. Many of the participants expressed the fact that although they knew that corruption was a big issue for Nigeria, the presentations gave it a deeper meaning.

Monopoly and the culture of inequality among citizens were highlighted as some of the reasons corruption thrives in Nigeria. The weak law enforcement system was also seen as a major factor which in fact makes many people accomplices in the crime of corruption. In the words of some of the participants, "... it is the environment that made it so, if you say you won't give bribe to the police they would delay you and some of the passengers in your bus will tell you, you are too stubborn, give them and let us go. We are running for time"

"Having a system that checks corruption is highly important, if not anybody can fall victim. If the people start insisting on doing what is right, corruption will be reduced"

The workshop recorded the following achievements:

- Enhanced capacity for recognizing and responding more effectively to corruption
- Enhanced capacity for demanding information from government using the Freedom of Information Act
- Skills acquisition for tracking and reporting corrupt practices using BudgIT TRACKA
- Commitment of CSOs to monitor implementation of the Home Grown School Feeding Programme
- Sustainable development network to advocate for the HGSFP to become a policy across Nigeria
- Piqued interest of CSOs in the implementation of the HGSFP, which has led to CSOs identifying government owned primary schools in their areas and ensuring that food is delivered in accordance with HGSFP standards.

With the skills acquired in demanding information from the government using the Freedom of Information Act, there is high expectation that engagement with the Ogun state government will ensue in earnest.

OUTCOMES OF CEWHIN'S TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT SO FAR

Below are some of the achievements of CEWHIN'S Transparency and Accountability project so far:

- A comprehensive data-base of stakeholders connected to the 40 schools where CEWHIN is monitoring the HGSP in the 3 LGAs where it is working is available

- A total of 78 members of PTAs and SBMCs (49 men & 29 women) have been trained to monitor the HGSP in 40 schools and the monitors are working effectively to ensure that the pupils are served their daily meals

- Through the activities of the project, leaders of 25 CSOs and CBOs have acquired skills for recognizing and responding more effectively to corruption. They had their capacity enhanced for demanding information from government using the Freedom of Information Act.

- The Project has secured firm community and stakeholder buy-in. This is evident in their participation in the project working group meetings, close monitoring of the programme without being paid to do so and the hosting of one of the town hall meetings held during the year by the the Alaye of Odogbolu, HRH Oba Adedeji Onagoruwa.

- The project has also contributed immensely to bridging the gap between the community and the government. Community people had the opportunity of engaging with government officials at different levels. Speaking in Yoruba language in appreciation of the knowledge acquired after one of the training sessions for monitors in Odogbolu, a participant said "e so wa di eniyan pataki l'a wujo". In other words CEWHIN has made us hounourable people within the community.

- Citizens in the LGAs where the project is being implemented now have better knowledge of their rights, entitlements and responsibilities. The project has brought the government of the state closer to the people and the people are yearning for more of such initiatives.

The project has clearly demonstrated the fact that with a little support and the right leadership, community people will make the necessary demands in order to access what they are entitled to.

Service delivery has become more effective with implementing officials making positive responses to identified gaps in procedures. Following complaints regarding lack of clarity about loan repayment, Cooks were called to a meeting with the operating bank officials and were given adequate information on their payments and the arrangement is now transparent; cooks now receive bank alerts on every transaction made on their accounts; The suppliers of protein content of the meals have also adjusted the size that they supply in reaction to feedback from project monitors

Erring cooks are constantly being counselled and sanctioned where the need arises, all to ensure quality service delivery to the beneficiaries.

CEWHIN ORGANISED ACCOUNTABILITY FORUMS FOR MONITORS OF THE HOME GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME IN 3 LGAS of OGUN STATE

Continues from page 2



Mr. Oludeyi Sunday, a monitor sharing report of observation in one of the communities at the Accountability Forum held in Yewa South LGA.

There is no doubt that the OGHGSP is being well-implemented. Reports from monitoring highlighted some success stories within the schools as well as the host communities. In **Baptist Primary School, Bode Ijaiye** (Abeokuta South LGA), the cooks were described as *fantastic and doing great...ever neat!* The cooks assigned to **Baptist School II, Idi-Aba** (Abeokuta South LGA), were said to be cooperative and in the words of the monitor, *even my children testify that the food is good!* In **St. John's African Church School, Odo-Epo** (Yewa South LGA), the cook, **Bisi Ogunde**, bought serving plates for all the pupils being served, out of her pocket. In **Olorunda, Irogun** (Yewa South LGA), the community provided a house within the host community, for the cook serving at United African School, Olorunda, Irogun, in order to bring her closer to the school. The cook has since relocated and now resides within the community, thereby ensuring timeliness and better service delivery. A personal engagement with a cook in Yewa LGA revealed that the cook has been able to save a substantial sum of money for herself in one year of enrollment on the programme, simply because she buys her food items in bulk. Many more stories abound of how cooks and other stakeholders along the supply chain have been empowered by the programme.

Yet others have been praised for their neatness and timeliness in service delivery. There are many more reports of diligent cooks as well as those who changed their service delivery and attitude after counseling engagements with the monitors. Most of the monitors testify to a great improvement of service delivery since the monitoring exercise began.

It is pertinent to mention that the programme is gaining popularity in the state and we laud the efforts of implementers and encourage them to put in more effort to ensure enviable success of the programme in the state.

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