

## Report on 1-day NPHCDA-NSSF grant review meeting

### Background

Nigeria Solidarity Support Fund (NSSF) and National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) entered a partnership in September 2021 to support the COVID-19 vaccination campaign across the country. The goal was to vaccinate a total of 1,000,000 Nigerians in Edo state, Ogun state, Nasarawa state, Adamawa state, Katsina state, and Imo state against COVID-19. Through the actions and commitment of various actors across these states, the goal was not only achieved, but it was also surpassed.

Despite this success, Nigeria has failed to reach its vaccination targets and is not on track to achieving herd immunity. To achieve herd immunity against COVID-19, 70% of the population need to be vaccinated. However according to NPHCDA, only 41% of eligible Nigerians had been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by October 19, 2022.

Considering the above, a 1-day review meeting of the NPHCDA-NSSF grant was conducted in collaboration with NPHCDA.

### Objectives:

- To understand the current COVID-19 vaccination landscape in Nigeria
- To review the project achievements in the 6 supported states
- To review challenges faced by the six states and project in general
- To facilitated shared learnings
- To chart a way forward for next phase of funding support by NSSF

### Meeting highlights

The meeting commenced with an opening prayer by Dr Adejoke. She went on to set the objectives of the meeting. The welcome and opening remarks were given by Dr Bassey, Director of disease control and immunization. Dr Fejiro was thereafter called upon to give the goodwill message.

Following the introductions and remarks, Dr Adejoke made a general presentation on the state of COVID-19 vaccination campaign in the country. During her presentation, she stated that COVID-19 vaccination coverage had increased to 55.6% being fully vaccinated. She also highlighted that the current strategy of the government is One country, one team, one plan, one budget. Nasarawa state was commended as the best performing state regarding COVID-19 vaccination in the country

National challenges identified include the

- integration process of COVID-19 and routine immunization
- vaccine hesitancy in the population
- high drop out rates sometimes due to side effects of vaccines
- short expiration of 2 dose vaccines contributed to wastage of vaccines as teams had little time to utilize the vaccines after clearing and NAFDAC checks

The representatives of the state primary healthcare agencies made presentations on the grant implementation in their respective states highlighting achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. The highlights of the presentations are as follows:

### **Nasarawa**

- The state developed a special task force on COVID-19 vaccination which was chaired by the Executive Secretary, Nasarawa SPHCDA
- Key drivers in the state agency were identified and tasked with leading teams
- Key drivers conducted daily reviews with their teams in the morning to ensure vaccine logistics and availability
- The teams adopted community culture for increased access and acceptability
- Key influencers in community were paid daily allowances, lunch, and transport.
- The Deputy governor was called upon in situations where entry into communities proved difficult
- Incentives were given to community leaders/ members such as food, t-shirts.
- In one instance, incentives led to 2 families mobilizing and vaccinating over 240 individuals

### **Ogun**

- The deputy governors mandated all staff and visitors to be vaccinated to gain entry into the government offices
- Campus, schools, and markets places were engaged
- Monitoring occurred at all levels

### **Adamawa**

- The state government provided initial funding when delays in fund disbursement occurred
- NSSF funds helped meet gaps in strategic activities that had been overlooked and were not budgeted for
- Performance dips in January were due to unavailability of vaccines
- Engagement of traditional leaders helped increase uptake- the Emir instructed all people in the palace to be vaccinated or would be asked to evacuate
- The state conducted a campus drive to reach more youth
- Challenges include inadequate manpower as mobilized population were sometimes more than available manpower leading to missed opportunities
- Youth are being targeted for vaccination now not because of hesitancy in the age group but because of the vaccination campaign design and roll out strategy which prioritized the elderly and gives a false impression of hesitancy in youth when data as analyzed by age group

### **Imo State:**

- The governor, his wife, and cabinet members took vaccines to instill confidence in the public
- Hesitancy was not as much of an issue as logistics

### **Katsina State**

- The CHIPS program was utilized
- The state governor's wife was actively involved in the campaign and provided incentives
- COVID-19 vaccination was integrated in nutrition program in 16 LGAs to help improve vaccine uptake.
- Humanitarian projects going on in the communities were leveraged on to implement the vaccination campaign

### Shared lessons

- Incentives helped improve vaccine uptake however, issues around sustainability arose
- It was advised that non-monetary incentives be utilized
- Poor Civil Society Organization involvement in the campaign
- Logistics and unavailability of vaccines especially for the 2-dose vaccines affected uptake and vaccination completion
- More funding support will be needed to continue to increase vaccine uptake as it is believed that the early adopters had been reached and immunized and so the late adopters and hard to reach will require more effort and funding to accept the vaccine
- Unavailability of vaccines and side effects from immunization resulted in high dropout rates
- Short expiry dates of vaccines resulted in wastage and stock out

### Recommendations

- More funding to the states for COVID-19 vaccination uptake
- Security should be provided for hard-to-reach areas with unrest
- J&J should be used for people due for 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of vaccines where the initial vaccine taken is unavailable as the 2-dose vaccines are being phased out- Dr Bassey

### Next steps:

S/N	Activity	Person responsible	Timeline
1.	States to update presentations and share with Joke	State reps	4/11/2022
2.	Compile presentations, generate a report and share	Dr Joke, NPHCDA	11/11/2022
3.	Edo state to return COVID-19 support funds to NSSF	ES EASPHCDA	18/11/2022