



## STEERING THE RUDDER IN UNCHARTED WATERS

## From the Editor



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The year 2020 which marked the beginning of a new calendar year and decade, started with the visit of some key officials from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to IntegratE project intervention sites in Alimosho Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos state. The visit was an opportunity for the donor to engage with some of the trained providers, see the progress made thus far and get a sense of how other family planning projects funded by the foundation in the state collaborate and leverage resources.

The quarter witnessed the Pharmacist Council of Nigeria (PCN) taking a monumental step towards kick-starting the Tier Accreditation System with the signing of Memorandum of Understanding with the various schools of health technology selected and approved as training centres for the Mandatory Entry Point Training Programme (MEPTP)/Tiered accreditation training.

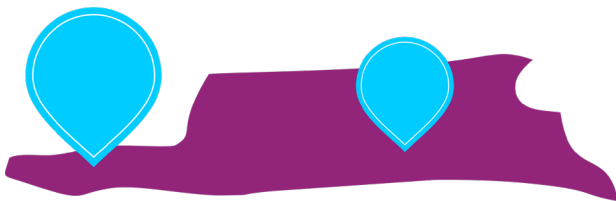
There were also several high-level advocacy visits and engagement with key stakeholders including an advocacy visit to Dr. Amina Baloni who was recently appointed Commissioner for Health for Kaduna state. This edition also captures the highlights from the male involvement session held in Rafin Guza community, Kaduna, where the role men play in supporting their wives to adopt family planning services were openly discussed.

# Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation leadership visits some grantees in LAGOS STATE



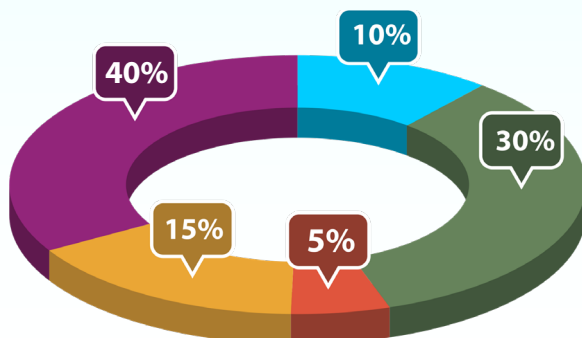
Early in the year, the leadership of the BMGF visited some of the grantees' projects in Lagos to see how each project is leveraging resources to optimize delivery within the communities. The visit presented an opportunity to demonstrate how the innovative digital capacity building platforms like the **NaijaCare** by Every1Mobile and the cutting edge vendor managed inventory (VMI) system of **M-pharma** is able to transform the operations of PPMVs to make them more attractive and enhance their profitability.

Some of the outlets visited were **Gbebol PMS** and **Lady B PMS** all in Ikorodu area of Lagos. The providers who had benefited from the **NaijaCare**, **M-pharma** and **IntegratE projects** were quite happy with the impact of the projects on their business. They were grateful for the opportunity to be trained as family planning provider which has also built their confidence to provide other primary healthcare services. They confirmed that their clients now have confidence in their services and have recorded more profit as result.



# PCN SIGNS

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) with Schools of Health Technology



During the quarter, precisely in March, PCN took a giant step towards the commencement of the tier accreditation system with an MOU signing ceremony and Master trainers' orientation meeting in Lagos.

The meeting had in attendance, the Provosts and representatives from the Schools/Colleges of Health technology in Lagos State approved by PCN as centers for the Mandatory Entry Point Training Programme (MEPTP).

The schools include: Lagos College of Health Technology, Yaba, Nigerian Army School of Medical Sciences (NASMCS) Ojo, and O'mark School of Health Technology Igando. Other participants include the IntegratE Project team, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) representatives, PCN zonal and state officers from North West Zone, Lagos Zonal Office, Kaduna, Kano and Katsina States as well as staff of the Pharmacy Practice department of the PCN in Abuja.



PCN handing MOU to the provost Nigeria Army School of Medical sciences Ojo.

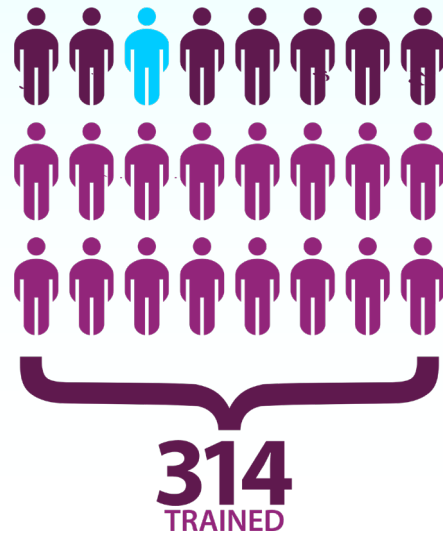


Participants at the event

# Building Capacity of **COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS** on Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives



Community Pharmacists during the FP training.



Competency assessment at PHCs

The project continued the training of CPs on Long acting reversible contraceptives. About 93 additional Community Pharmacists were trained across the six implementing LGAs- Alimosho, Kosofe, Mushin, Shomolu, Lagos Mainland and Amuwo Odofin. This brings the total number of Community Pharmacists trained in the state to 314.

The training which was part of the pilot to assess their capacity to provide a wider spectrum of family planning services was attended by representatives from Lagos State Ministry of Health, Lagos state primary healthcare board and the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria. At the end of the six days training and in line with national guidelines, the providers were posted to various primary health care centres to commence the mandatory two-week post training competency assessment with the support and supervision of the state master trainers and the FP managers at the various LGAs.

## SUSTAINING THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN KADUNA STATE

The IntegratE Project team paid an advocacy visit to the Honorable Commissioner for Health, Dr. Amina Baloni, to introduce the project and update her on the activities carried out from inception in 2017 to date. The project Director during his presentation, congratulated the Honorable Commissioner on her recent appointment and solicited the state government's continued support to ensure a successful implementation.

He highlighted all the key achievements recorded in the past three years of implementation and how the state government has supported the project from the granting of waivers for CPs and PPMVs in the pilot to participating in monitoring of implementation through the Integrated Supportive Supervision. The Hon. Commissioner in response, pledged the continued support of the state and reiterated the need to continue to support and supervise the trained providers particularly the PPMVs to ensure they remain within their scope and that quality of services is not compromised even as their capacities are enhanced.

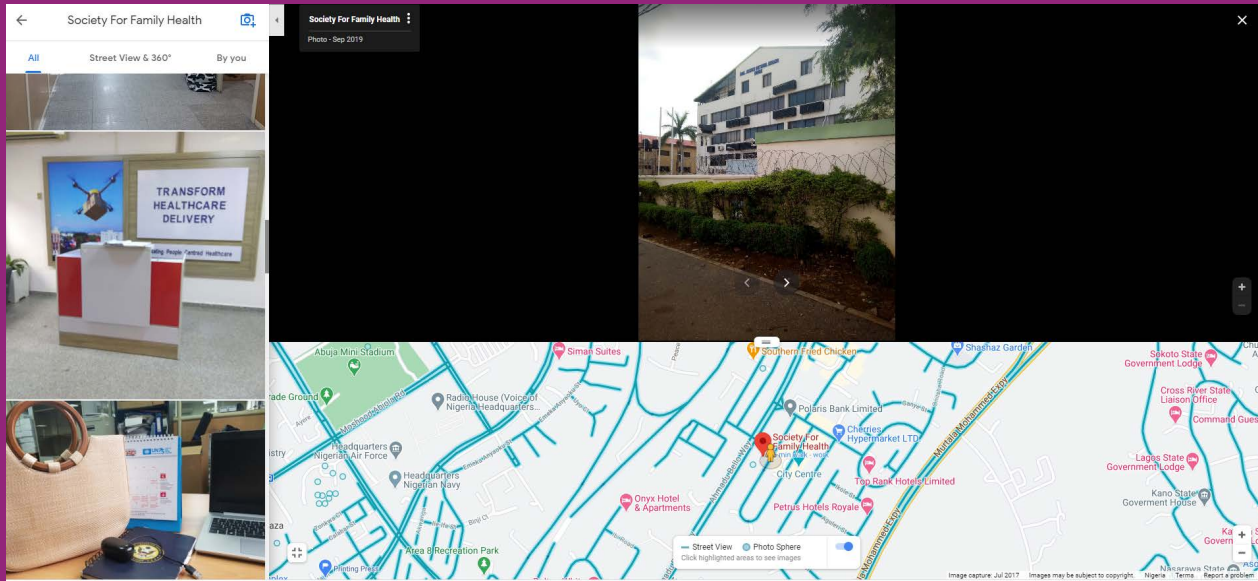



Visit to the Hon. Commissioner for Health Kaduna State MOH Dr Amina Baloni.

## INVOLVING MEN TO AMPLIFY THE VOICE OF CHILD SPACING WITHIN COMMUNITIES

Recognizing the crucial role men play in building the necessary social support for women to adopt and continue with child spacing services especially in the northern part of the country, the project held a town hall meeting on male involvement in child spacing in Rafin Guza community, Kaduna North LGA. During the open discussion, which involved Community leaders, Influencers, gate keepers and members of the community, issues around the role of men during pregnancy, childbirth and after delivery as well as family planning were discussed. Lots of very interesting insights were shared and it is hoped that this platform will continue to be used to change perspectives and increase support to women to adopt family planning services either for child spacing or birth limiting.

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