



Legislative Network for Universal Health Coverage

COMMUNIQUE OF THE 4TH ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT ON HEALTH.

Theme: Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Health Security (HS): Two Sides of a Coin for an Efficient Health System.

Venue: Lagos-Osun Hall, Transcorp Hilton Abuja

Date: 23rd-25th May, 2021.



FOURTH ANNUAL SUMMIT OF THE LEGISLATIVE NETWORK ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE (LNU) HELD ON 23rd – 25TH MAY, 2021

A COMMUNIQUE OF ACTIONS

Preamble

We, the members of the Legislative Network for Universal Health Coverage, held our **Fourth Annual Summit** from 23rd – 25th May, 2021 at Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja, with the theme **“UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE AND HEALTH SECURITY: TWO SIDES OF A COIN FOR AN EFFICIENT HEALTH SYSTEM”**. The Summit was held under the Distinguished Chairmanship of Senator Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan, President of the Senate, Federal Republic of Nigeria, represented by Senator Dr. Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi, the Deputy Whip of the Senate.

The conveners of the Summit are the Chairman Senate Committee on Health (Secondary & Tertiary), Senator (Dr.) Ibrahim Yahaya Oloriegbe, the Chairman Senate Committee on Primary Health Care and Communicable Diseases, Senator Chukwuka Utazi and the Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Healthcare Services, Honourable Tanko Sununu.

Commendations

We recognize and commend the efforts of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) at all levels and acknowledge the continuous support provided by the Development Partners (European Union, World Health Organization, UNICEF, USAID, Global Health Advocacy Incubator, Stop TB Partnership Nigeria, LISDEL, DGI Consult, African Health Budget Network, PharmAccess, Health Watch, CAAID, Lafiya Program, FCDO, World Bank e.t.c), Civil Society Organizations and other stakeholders towards achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and delivery of technical support.

Observations

We recognize the need to strengthen the mechanism for coordination of the Legislative Network for improved support to the health sector; we therefore resolve that the meetings of the different levels of coordination will be scheduled as follows:

- State Meetings – As may be required
- Zonal Meetings – Four times in a year
- Steering Committee meetings – Twice in a year
- National Legislative Summit – Once in a year

To ensure sustainable funding of the activities of the Legislative Network for Universal Health Coverage, the following resolutions were made:

FUNDING FOR PARTICIPATION IN LNU ACTIVITIES:

- A. Legislators at the national and state levels should create budget line(s) and appropriate funds for conferencing costs for all participants and accommodation for national legislators for the Annual Legislative Summit and Bi-Annual Steering Committee meetings.
- B. State Houses of Assembly should create budget line(s) and appropriate funds for the participation of the four members of Legislative Network in the states, including their travel logistics in zonal meetings and the annual Legislative Summit; and
- C. The state that is hosting zonal meeting should appropriate funds for conferencing as appropriate.

We have equally **OBSERVED** some critical issues affecting achievement of UHC in Nigeria, such as:

1. Despite the Abuja declaration of allocating at least 15% of countries' annual budget to health, Nigeria still allocates only 4-6% of its annual budget to health. Further to this sub optimal funding of the sector there is a need to generate more funds for health and such sources of funds need to be diversified;
2. That the allocation to Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) is now implemented as a statutory transfer in the Federal Government Appropriation Act, however there is a need to increase this beyond the stipulated 1% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) as legislated in the National Health Act 2014;
3. While the BHCPF was designed to expand service coverage at the frontlines especially at the primary healthcare levels it is observed that such additional funds are now becoming substitution rather than incremental fund at the state and local government levels;
4. The products such as tobacco, sugar and alcohol are detrimental to health and needs to be de-incentivised; furthermore, raising more funds through pro-health/sin taxes at this point in time is politically acceptable and should be seriously considered as additional earmarks for the health sector;
5. Low implementation of health laws and policies at all levels;
6. Weak oversight mechanisms at all levels;
7. Weak, variable, inequitable health systems performance;
8. Instances of leakages at state level in funding to LGAs;
9. TB is the number one infectious killer disease in the world and Nigeria is one of the countries with highest TB burden, killing about 18 Nigerians every hour. The TB control efforts in Nigeria is grossly underfunded especially by the government with a funding gap of about 70%.

Resolutions

In view of the above, we **RESOLVE** to:

1. Increase funding for the health sector by exploring diverse sources of funds.

2. Improve governance and accountability for earmarked funds to ensure judicious utilization of earmarked funds.
3. Continue to provide the required support for improving the provision of quality health services to Nigerians at all levels.

Next Steps

To achieve this, we **COMMIT** to doing the following:

• **LEGISLATION**

1. Support pro health tax reforms through significant simplification and increase in tobacco and alcohol excise taxes, sugar sweetened beverages, mining; and the earmarking of revenue increases to fund universal health coverage objectives in Nigeria.
2. Amend the National Health Act to split the allocated 5% for emergency into 2.5% for National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) and 2.5% for medical emergencies.
3. Ensure availability of accountable and institutional frameworks; States CDC and States ambulance services required for efficient specific policy or program implementation.
4. Ensure Health System is strengthened with appropriate legal framework to build a resilient health system.
5. Ensure Health Security is supported by strong legal framework for adequate epidemic preparedness and response at all levels; and support the establishment of State CDCs.

• **APPROPRIATION**

1. Ensure that the current National Assembly's target of allocating 8-9% of the country's annual budget to health is achieved before the end of its tenure.
2. Ensure that at least 1% of the CRF is appropriated to the BHCPF and ensure funds for its implementation.
3. Ensure that in collaboration with relevant committees in the National Assembly earmarking from pro health taxes does not suffer long term reductions of other revenue sources due to the ability to offset or shift funds to other priorities and reprioritization of general government revenue for health. Similarly, expenditures from such revenues will be linked to UHC priorities which allows for expansion of coverage of services to Nigerians.
4. Ensure that state health insurance budget is on first line charge.
5. Ensure appropriation of adequate fund for health security at the state level through the State CDCs and Emergency Medical Services.
6. Funding of the Steering Committees: Funds should be appropriated for conferencing costs for all participants and accommodation for national legislators for the Annual Legislative Summit and Bi-Annual Steering Committee meetings. State Houses of Assembly should create budget line and appropriate funds for the participation of the four members of Legislative Network in the States.

• **OVERSIGHT**

1. Ensure that the National Health Act is holistically implemented and extended to States.
2. Ensure that the states key into all the health policies particularly full implementation of State Social Health Insurance Schemes and Primary Healthcare revitalization policy.
3. Put in place mechanisms to ensure that the funds that are sent to the states are having additional effect, and not used as substitute for funds expected to be raised by the states.
4. Engage state governments to ensure that they release equity funds for the State Social Health Insurance Scheme in order to increase coverage.
5. Ensure participation and full implementation of Legislative Health Agenda (LHA) at National, States and Local Government Area (LGA) levels.
6. Ensure annual evidence-based performance assessment of UHC and Health Security, noting that anything that cannot be measured does not get implemented.
7. Through the Nigeria Parliamentary TB Caucus launched in 2018, strengthen the capacity of parliamentarians to effectively engage in processes targeted at ending TB at the State and National levels including establishment of State Stop TB Partnerships.

- **ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. Hold relevant institutions accountable for policy implementation and value for money in health investments.
2. Provide effective governance and accountability mechanisms for earmarked funds to improve citizens' confidence in the government.
3. Ensure performances of relevant institutions are regularly evaluated and held to high standard.
4. Gather evidence to drive accountability; IGR of States to be accountable.

- **REPRESENTATION**

1. Promote citizen's voice, participation and accountability.
2. Ensure Health Reforms are informed and guided by the needs of the population.

The Summit further notes:

The crises in the Human Resources of the Health Sector occasioned particularly by the Brain- Drain; and

Expressed concerns on the state of Human resources for health and therefore, calls for urgent national conversation and intervention to stem the decimation of our Health Human Resources.

The Summit also:

Calls on the States to improve the population of Human Resources for Health while putting necessary measures in place to discourage acute chronic brain drain in the health sector.




The Summit accordingly Resolves to unanimously adopt this Communiqué.

Dated this 25th Day of May, 2021.


Signed on behalf of the LNU, by:

Name: *Sen. Dr. Ibrahim Ounepbe* Signature:  Date: *25/5/2021*
Designation: *Chairman Senate Committee on Health.*

Name: *Hon. Dr. Yusuf Tomiko Sumonu* Signature:  Date: *25/5/2021*
Designation: *Chairman House of Representatives Committee on Healthcare Services*

Name: *RT-HON WASIL ESTILOKUN SAMI* Signature:  Date: *25-05-2021*
Designation: Deputy Speaker Lagos House of Assembly

Name: *RT. HON. DR. OLIVER O. OSI* Signature:  Date: *19/7/2021*
Designation: Ebonyi State House of Assembly Health Committee Chairman

Name: *RT Hon Dr Ekpo Ekpo Bassey* Signature:  Date: *12/07/2021*
Designation: *Chairman, House Committee on Health, Cross River State House of Assembly.*

Name: Hon. Nanbol Listick Signature:  Date: *25/5/21*
Designation: Chairman, Plateau State House of Assembly Health Committee Chairman