



**CENTRE FOR
FAMILY HEALTH
INITIATIVE
(CFHI)**

...promoting health, protecting well-being

NEWSLETTER **VOL. 4** **EDITION 6**



Dear friends and family,

We welcome you to another interesting edition of our Monthly Newsletters.

The world is forced into a compulsory holiday due to the Corona Virus pandemic. The outcomes of this pandemic, very much point to the future of work and possibly human interactions. People have been compelled to incorporate safety protocols into their daily lives to mitigate the transmission of this virus. But as those who work in the field of menstrual health know well, periods do not stop in pandemics. Menstrual health Management especially in resource limited settings, where access to water, hygiene and sanitation facilities is yet a great concern is further impeded by primary and secondary effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several millions of those who menstruate are vulnerable so they cannot manage their periods in a healthy and dignified manner. Their vulnerability is further heightened by this COVID-19 era.

Centre for Family Health Initiative joined the rest of the world to commemorate Menstrual Health Day on 28th May, 2020 through a webinar themed “Menstruating in the COVID-19 Era”. This webinar featured several distin-

guished panelists to enhance the awareness of CFHI’s online audience on menstrual health management among vulnerable populations. Some of the topics treated include the place of technology in advancing the cause of menstrual health and hygiene management; male involvement in promoting menstrual health; the intelligent choice for menstrual management; and menstrual disorders, consequences and management. Read the article on “Menstruating in the COVID-19 Era” and the webinar report for details.

CFHI reports on two of its Orphans and Vulnerable Children Projects; Catalyzing Accountability for Maternal Death In Nigeria (CAMDIN); and Capacity Building and Community Awareness Project (CCAP) are featured in this publication to keep you abreast of CFHI’s progress.

Do have a pleasant reading.

Kind regards,

Princess Osita-Oleribe

MENSTRUAL HEALTH DAY 2020



On the 28th of May 2020, CFHI joined the of the world to celebrate Menstrual Health Day (MHD).

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Continuation from Page 1... The organisation hosted a webinar tagged “Menstruating in the Covid-19 Era” with four guest speakers as panelists. Dr. Ariyo B.O a consultant and family physician spoke on Menstrual disorders, consequences, and menstrual management. Aminka Belvitt who is the president for Us Girls Foundation and the CEO of Wofemtech addressed the place of technology in advancing menstrual health and hygiene management. The CEO Real Relief Trine Sig, discussed the intelligent choice of Menstrual Management. Dr. Ifeanyi Nsofor, the Director of Policy and Advocacy Nigeria Health Watch explained male involvement in promoting menstrual health. Among the panelists was the Executive Director of CFHI Princess Osita Oleribe, who talked about menstrual hygiene management among vulnerable persons. Questions were raised by the audience and, schools, offices, isolation/quarantine Centres, IDP/Refugee camps be better structured to serve those that menstruate? Why is clean water, female-friendly private toilets and hygiene facilities crucial to managing menstruation properly? What should governments, development partners and private sectors actors do to improve menstrual hygiene for women and girls in Nigeria, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic? What can be done at household, community and national levels to break the silence, taboos and stigma around #Menstruation? The audience provided pertinent answers to these questions ...

MENSTRUATING IN THE COVID-19



Menstruation is the shedding of the womb lining monthly in form of blood and tissues through the vagina. The reproductive cycle of a female begins the moment she experiences menarche. Every month, 1.8 billion persons menstruate globally according to World Health Organisation. Menstruation is not a choice (for most who menstruate) and it is not unclean/dirty/impure or shameful. Menstrual management requires menstrual hygiene products or clean management materials to absorb the blood, facilities to wash, change and to dispose used menstrual materials, dignity and privacy for those who menstruate and education and care for their particular cases. Several millions of those who menstruate are vulnerable and so struggle managing their periods in a dignified and healthy manner... **Continue on Page 4**

CENTRE FOR FAMILY HEALTH INITIATIVE (CFHI) ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2020

On May 15, 2020, CFHI celebrated International Day of Families themed “Families in Development”. A thread was made on twitter to address issues on how much a family affects the outcome of people’s personality, highlighting that toxic families create toxic citizens.



... such as: providing sanitary materials in public places as well as facilities to change and dispose menstrual management materials, cleanliness is paramount in promoting menstrual hygiene management, ...

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PROJECT REPORTS

ACHIEVING CONTROL OF HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC THROUGH EVIDENCE (ACHIEVE) ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN (OVC) REPORT



SILC Group meeting



Financial Literacy Training

With the ease of the nationwide lock down, Centre for Family Health Initiative's Achieve team, resumed its community activities. The team provided grants for a total of 123 beneficiaries across 13 communities: Apo Dutse, Deidei, Gosa, Iddo Pada, Jahi, Jiwa, Kabusa, Sabonlugbe, Sauka, Sheretti, Tundun Wada, Waru and Wumba for the Household Economic Strengthening program (HES). Each HES beneficiary was provided with a microenterprise grant to either start a business or to expand an existing business particularly, food and food related businesses. To enhance the culture of saving and the financial literacy of all the HES beneficiaries, they were required to be new or existing members of a Savings and Internal Lending Community (SILC) group based in their community. Furthermore, a total of 50 in-school and 50 older out of school adolescent girls across communities were assessed for various school skills acquisition during this period.

The team hosted 296 Children and adolescents (M-164, F-142) across communities who participated in both kiddies and adolescent clubs. The children were educated on Covid-19 preventive measures. Proper hand washing method and adequate way of wearing face mask was demonstrated. Each participant were provided with facemask and hand sanitizer.

Across the communities, OVC team continued with the activities of sensitizing caregivers and had ninety-three (93) (M-6, F-87) participants educated on better parenting skills, gender norms, and the importance of monitoring children especially during the lockdown period. The team was able to serve a total of 4820 (M= 3124, F=1698) beneficiaries and responsibly graduated 28) beneficiaries (8 Caregivers, 20 Vulnerable Children} who met the graduation bench mark. 734 (M=482, F=252) new beneficiaries were further enrolled into the program. Psychosocial Support Services (PSS) were conducted across fifteen (15) communities. Across the communities, OVC team continued with the activities of sensitizing caregivers and had ninety-three (93) (M-6, F-87) participants educated on better parenting skills, gender norms, and the importance of monitoring children especially during the lockdown period. The team was able to serve a total of 4820 (M= 3124, F=1698) beneficiaries and responsibly graduated 28) beneficiaries (8 Caregivers, 20 Vulnerable Children} who met the graduation bench mark. 734 (M=482, F=252) new beneficiaries were further enrolled into the program. Psychosocial Support Services (PSS) were conducted across fifteen (15) communities.

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Continuation from Page 2... These vulnerable ones are confronted with several challenges that pose a barrier to their menstrual health. With or without the COVID-19 pandemic, menstruation is a taboo topic in many cultures so ineffective, uncomfortable and unhygienic practices go unnoticed and unattended to. In some cultures, those who menstruate are made to eat and sleep separate from the family (physical exclusion), isolate from gatherings and worship places (social exclusion) or associate with their husbands while in their period. Lack of/poor access to clean water and soap and lack of/poor access to sanitary products and facilities pose challenges for these persons and for many others who menstruate.



The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the concerns for those who menstruate because it also has secondary impacts on menstruation. The anxiety caused by this pandemic may spur the stress hormones into action, causing hormonal imbalance that may disrupt the menstrual cycle. The biological process may come too late, too early or not at all. Kate Deniston says “When we are in a state of perceived stress, our system prioritizes safety over ovulation”. For so many people, this may be their “cross” during the pandemic, but they should not be left to go through it alone.

The pandemic also presented an economic challenge for many families as a result of increase in joblessness and drastic reduction in wages. The implication of this is that purchasing menstrual health management materials will not be prioritized in families where there is reduced income or loss of income. For those

Continuation from page 2... ensuring that all isolation, testing and treatment centres have safely managed, reliable and inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene facilities to meet female workers and patient needs during this pandemic, and breaking the silence and challenging stigmas around periods by dropping euphemisms and erroneous beliefs around menstruation.

CFHI was hosted by Centre for Children’s Health Education, Orientation and Protection (CEE-HOPE) on their tweetchat tagged “Menstrual Hygiene Management for Girls in the Time of COVID-19”, and later was hosted by Centre for Children’s Health Education, Orientation and Protection (CEE-HOPE) on their TweetChat tagged Menstrual Hygiene Management for Girls in the Time of COVID-19.

Also, CFHI Executive Director, Princess Osita-Oleribe was featured on a WhatsApp Webinar organized by Real Relief to sensitize participants to the importance of menstrual health management.

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who can afford the menstrual materials, there may be disrupted access or stock out of materials because of the government’s order of restricting movement and supplies. For some of these people improvised menstrual products and materials are used which include: torn pieces of clothing/rags/socks, torn foam materials, cotton balls, toilet papers, newspaper, receipts, soil, grass, leaves, animal dung, free bleeding – sitting on tins/cans.

One of the ways of promoting MHM is having access to good facilities and shelter to wash. Those who menstruate that have no access to clean and portable water sources use water from other sources or do not use water at all. This makes them prey to Reproductive Tract Infections.

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IMPROVING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS APPROACH IN STATE PROJECT (CCAP) REPORT

During the course of the month, the CCAP team was able to prepare the need assessments analysis report and sent it to the policy and research unit for data cleaning and data analysis, The CCAP team worked on translation of the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials from English language to Igbo language and Pidgin English, though field activities were pursued

due to COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. The team continued to follow up with reviews and corrections on the training manual and prepared the pre and post training assessment for the training, prepared a data collection tool for the technical visits after the training. Mobile numbers of traditional birth attendants were collected to ascertain their availability and out of 428, 209 were confirmed to still be in practice.

The team also prepared agenda and attendance sheets for capacity building and registration of trainees to be used in the training of traditional birth attendants.

CATALYZING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MATERNAL DEATH IN NIGERIA (CAMDIN) PROJECT



Catalyzing Accountability for Maternal Death in Nigeria (CAMDIN)) Catalyzing Accountability for Maternal Death in Nigeria (CAMDIN)) Project is a project funded by EpiAfric and Africare to monitor and sensitize the locals to the dangers of giving birth at home. In the month of May, the team rounded up its implementation of the project by making a comprehensive presentation of the achievements of the CAMDIN project across the communities of its intervention, Gudun Karya, Orozo and Byazhin communities of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

These stakeholder meetings were held in compliance with the Federal Government guidelines on COVID-19. These meetings were focused on the progress/achievements of the project, reviews and development of sustainability plan for the project. There, the stakeholders acknowledged that the rate of maternal and child mortality significantly reduced due to the proper sensitization done by the CFHI team

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GLOBAL ACTION TOWARDS HIV EPIDEMIC CONTROL IN SUB-NATIONAL UNITS IN NIGERIA (4GATES) ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN (OVC) PROJECT REPORT

The 4GATES team continued with the rapid enrolment of target beneficiaries into the OVC programme across the 4 LGAs (Owerri North, Owerri West, Owerri Municipal and Mbaitoli). Despite the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, the team was able to align her strategies to the safety measures within the state and enrolled 870 caregivers and 1,976 vulnerable children totaling 2,846 addition-

al beneficiaries enrolled into the OVC programme. The enrollments were done through facility engagement, support group engagement, brothel engagement, identification of hotspots, clinic day meetings and the use of the snowball approach. Furthermore, the team provided services to the beneficiaries with one hundred and four (104) persons with unknown HIV status provided with HIV Testing Services (HTS) and six (6) new cases successfully linked to ART. Finally, the team also continued with stakeholders' engagement at various communities to get the support of gatekeepers towards the overall implementation of the programme.

Continuation from Page 3... The team received, a total of eight (8) referrals from referral coordination activity across assigned facilities due to the team's success story from other referrals in time past, including follow up on reports from community volunteers. The capacity of the fifty-seven (57) of the community volunteers who participated in the volunteer review meeting were built on facilitating community engagement forums and effective strategy for OVC service delivery. The ACHEVE team also continued to supervise Savings and Internal Lending Community and a visit was paid to KOIKA office to further discuss the distribution of palliatives to communities. The Achieve team embarked on an advocacy visit to Idu/Karimo PHC with an IHNV staff to strengthen the OVC referral system at the facility.

The team furthermore, followed up on a pregnant teenager who was said to have been sent away from home, she was newly initiated into Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) at Kabusa CHC. They also participated in some trainings and zoom meetings during the course of the month with funders and partners for better service delivery



Adolescent Club Meeting – Gishiri

Continuation from page 5... that made most pregnant women in the communities opt for antenatal care at the hospitals. They also appreciated CFHI and its partners for the CAMDIN Project while urging CFHI to continue to support communities like theirs.

Continuation from Page 4... Cleanliness is a critical factor not just for menstrual health management but also for curtailing the spread of the virus. Clean water is essential for washing hands regularly, cleaning surfaces and even washing face mask to fight COVID-19. The absence of clean water further exposes them to the risk of contracting the virus because they cannot practice these guidelines to protect themselves.

For millions who menstruate, they do not have good shelter for privacy to keep and change menstrual materials. Additionally, they do not have good facilities to dispose these materials. With the movement restrictions necessitated by the pandemic, their less than ideal residences have become the only place to be for most of their time. Thus, their struggle with Menstrual Health Management is further exacerbated by the pandemic.

Additionally, people who menstruate are also frontline health workers fighting the war against COVID-19. They face additional challenges managing their menstruation while wearing the personal protective wears against the virus. These gadgets make it difficult for them to change menstrual materials even if there are adequate facilities in the COVID-19 treatment Centres.



CAMDIN stakeholders meeting in Byazhin



Menstrual Health DAY 2020



CAMDIN stakeholders meeting in Orozo

Interested in helping in any aspect of our work?

Persons interested in donating to our activities, offering volunteer services or partnering with us, are always welcome. All CFHI's projects are community based and family-centred, so that our beneficiaries are reached with activities that proffer sustainable solutions.

Therefore, individuals or groups concerned with improving community health, sustainable socio-economic empowerment and the development of family-centred policies should kindly do so through the channels below.

For Donations and/or others:

Account details:

Name: Centre for Family Health Initiative

Number: 5080117843

Bank: Fidelity Bank PLC

Swift Code: FIDTNGLA



CAMDIN meeting with MPDSR secretary, Dr.Rukayyat Wamakko

Or Contact us:

Address: Plot 508, Excellence & Friends Road, off Liberty Road (Arab Road), Cadastral Zone, Kubwa Extension II, Abuja (FCT) Nigeria.

P.M.B. 12 Kubwa, Abuja-Nigeria.

Mobile numbers:

+234809 608 3336

+234 809 049 2227

Emails:

director@cfhinitiative.org,

info@cfhinitiative.org

website:

www.cfhinitiative.org

Twitter: www.twitter.com/CFHInitiative

YouTube: Centre for Family Health Initiative

Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/CFHInitiative.org/