

GFMER Country Activity Report 2016-2018

Nigeria: Activities, partnerships and Participant summary

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BACKGROUND OF GFMER in Nigeria

The Oxford Maternal and Perinatal Health Institute (OMPHI), Oxford University in collaboration with Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research (GFMER), a WHO Collaborating Centre in Education and Research in Human Reproduction and Community Health and Research Initiative, Nigeria had organized a free training for health professionals to improve their knowledge on Evidence Based Management of Pre-eclampsia and Eclampsia in December 2011. Thirty five professionals that included doctors and midwives participated and 34 successful ones were issued with certificates in a pilot training in Nigeria that was held in Sokoto State. It was funded by MacArthur Foundation through the Maternal Health Task Force in Engender Health. The training was led by the then Country Coordinator for GFMER- Nigeria; Dr Aminu Magashi.

Following the appointment of Dr Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq in 2015 as a country advisor and then a country coordinator effort were intensified to increase participant recruitment and partnerships with both Governmental and Non-governmental organizations. During a one week training on the Kaduna HIV/AIDS indicator survey (KADAIS) at the Nigeria Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Programme (NFELTP) office in Abuja 7th-11th December 2015. Dr Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq presented on the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research (GFMER). She introduced the GFMER and its various online study programmes. Emphasis was made on the 8 month Sexual and reproductive health research course (SRHR) and its various modules on adolescent health, sexually transmitted infections etc. Also a summary of the Geneva one week workshop for 15 awardees of the SRHR training course was presented with emphasis on selected research topics. In attendance were Faculty members, graduates and residents of the NFELTP. Questions included; the cost of the study Programme, possibility of deferring admissions, flexibility of assignment submission and partnerships available to residents.

Main activities

1. Recruitment of eligible candidates for the course

1. Implementation of the **50% fee subsidy** for Registered Nigeria Medical Doctors and **refund of funds** to Participants with wrong vouchers by fionna (head office)
2. Conducted 2nd Annual scientific session with Top Policy Makers in the healthcare sector; Commissioner of health, President Nigeria Medical Association (NMA), Zonal Director UNICEF, Director Reproductive Health from Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) and Reproductive health officers at state and National Levels in attendance
3. Distributed Course Guides SRHR-GFMER to tertiary Hospitals and Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologist (SOGON)
4. GFMER-SRHR Graduates involved in planning and dissemination of course schedules and presentations on country activities

5. Publication of GFMER-NMA Nigeria update of activities and Memorandum of understanding (MoU) in NMA newsletter distributed at the Annual General Meeting for Medical Doctors

Summary of GFMER-Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) meeting for collaboration in sexual and reproductive health research (SRH) online training

On 14th June 2016 the Nigeria co-coordinator for GFMER Dr Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq accompanied by Dr Oumie Jagne and Dr James Okafor (post-graduate residents of ABU, Zaria) attended a meeting at the Nigeria Medical Association head office, Abuja, Nigeria. Representing the NMA, Nigeria were the National Chairman; Prof Ogirima (Consultant orthopaedic Surgeon) and the Secretary General; Dr Tanko Yusuf Sununu (Consultant Gynecologist/ obstetrician). The meeting was held to discuss collaboration between NMA, Nigeria and GFMER, Switzerland for online training of medical doctors in sexual and reproductive health research. Monogrammed GFMER Gift bags containing: A leather Notebook, Towel and Pen and Key ring sets plus e-copies of the course brochure were given to all executives of NMA. The GFMER website was accessed and navigated to show where information, lecture notes and Graphic files could be located. GFMER had proposed to NMA the following:

1. Confirmation of registration status of all Nigerian Medical Doctors admitted into the SRH Online course using Folio and MDCN registration numbers.
2. Awarding Continuum Credits (CME) by the NMA, Nigeria to all Graduates of the SRH 7 month online course.
3. Subsidization of SRH Course fee for all Nigerian Medical Doctors confirmed to be registered by NMA through the country co-coordinator.
4. Placement of advertisements on the GFMER courses on the NMA website and dissemination of information via other channels to all its members.

The terms proposed by GFMER, Switzerland were accepted on behalf of all Nigerian Medical Doctors by the National Chairman and an agreement signed and handed over to the country co-coordinator GFMER, Switzerland. The signed agreement was forwarded to GFMER, Switzerland with NMA agreeing to all terms and any future collaboration with the foundation.



Advertisement of course to local training and research institutions

Advertising the study course and foundation's activities to the entire Country especially healthcare training and research institutions involved the concept of Annual Scientific sessions. Also Non-Governmental organizations who provide volunteer services in women and child's health were partnered with to provide health education on sexual and reproductive health issues. Thus far 3 Annual Scientific sessions have been held from 2016- 2018, each with themes revolving around the core modules of the online course. Guest Lecturers are invited from Teaching Hospitals and Medical Schools to augment the papers presented by the Country coordinator and Graduates of the Programme. See below a summary of all 3 held sessions:

1st Annual Scientific Session

Since 2003 the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research (GFMER), in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other partner institutions, has organized a training course on sexual and reproductive health research. The course focuses on research methodology and attracts participation of health professionals from different countries and particularly from developing countries. Selected Participants from the GFMER online course in sexual and reproductive health research (SRHR) spend one week in Geneva at an intensive research workshop. Some graduates continue with the foundation as country advisors and co-coordinators responsible for supporting training and dissemination of information on the foundation and its training programmes. The foundation in 2011 in partnership with the MacArthur foundation organized a training session for healthcare workers in Sokoto state, Nigeria ([The Oxford Evidence-based Management of Pre-eclampsia and Eclampsia Training Course in Sokoto, Nigeria, December 10, 2011](#)). The session on management of eclampsia was well received with requests for future collaborations in training.

This one day scientific and information session served to further training and research opportunities for health care workers in the field of human reproduction through provision of a forum to discuss relevant scientific developments/research in the field, ongoing community level interventions and introduce the online training course of Sexual and reproductive health research. The session was organized around the core modules of the training course with presentations on

maternal/child health, research, community genetics and adolescent health (see workshop agenda).

The main objectives of the one day session were to; introduce the health care community in Nigeria to the online training course, Provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss projects on relevant key areas, to establish and strengthen linkages between public and private practitioners in the reproductive health field and to encourage open and interactive discussions on realistic challenges in reproductive healthcare provision.

Keynote address: ‘Reducing maternal mortality through high impact interventions: Emerging challenges and opportunities’

Associate Professor Abdullahi Randawa

Subtheme: ‘Introducing online sexual and reproductive health training (SRHR)’

GFMER Country Advisor/ state epidemiologist: Dr. Aishatu Abubakar-Sadiq

Workshop agenda for GFMER scientific/information session

- Opening Prayers
- Opening remarks: Dr. Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq
- Reducing maternal mortality through high impact interventions: Emerging challenges and opportunities - Dr. Abdullahi Randawa (ABUTH)
- Overview of GFMER/SRHR - Dr. Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq
- Reaching adolescents through health-workers/peers - Dr. Obafemi Babalola (NFTELP)
- Clubfoot: Establishing surveillance and providing care in Kaduna State - Mrs Wunmi (Sure steps Nigeria)
- Group discussion
- Closing: Dr. Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq

Profile of the participants

Eighty participants who attended the workshop were selected from departments of obstetrics & gynecology in health facilities, departments of pediatrics in health facilities, UNICEF, WHO, MNCH2, UNFPA, SUNMAP, Federal ministry of health, State Ministry of health, media, Public/private hospitals, Nursing/midwifery council, Nigeria Medical association (NMA), Kaduna State University (KASU), Nigeria Field epidemiology and Laboratory training Programme (NFELTP), Federation of Muslim women’s association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Midwives service scheme (MSS), National Primary healthcare development Agency (NPHCDA), State Primary healthcare development Agency (KSPHCDA) and Kaduna State Action committee on Aids (KADSACA). Participants comprised of Medical Doctors, Nurses and reproductive health officers from Key organizations. A representative of the Emirate council was present on behalf of the traditional leaders in the State. There were 41 women and 39 men in attendance for the session.

Performance and end of session feedback

The session lasted from 9:30am-4:30pm with presentations in the morning and discussion groups around the core module topics after lunch. Participants were divided into groups of 12 to discuss challenges in all assigned areas; Adolescent health, maternal/child health, community genetics and sexually transmitted infections. Group leaders presented conclusions from each discussion group to the audience.

Each participant received a monogrammed “GFMER” gift bag containing hard copies of the SRHR course brochure, SRHR Course guide, letter bound notebook, monogrammed key holder/pen and a monogrammed face towels. E-copies of all presentations and SRHR materials were sent to participants on conclusion of the workshop.



Conclusions

Main conclusions arrived at the end of the day include:

1. Need for funding/sponsorship of interested staff by their organizations to undertake the online course in sexual and reproductive health research.
2. Graduates of the SRHR course from Nigeria should assist potential applicants in the application process to increase chances of selection into the course.
3. The Nigeria Medical Association (NMA) enroll GFMER as a provider of continuum medical education (CME) certifying participants with appropriate credit scores.
4. The Ministry of health organizes more scientific sessions with graduated of the GFMER course to disseminate their research findings and those of practitioners working in the field of Human reproduction.
5. A database is to be created of all participants and a Google group/ what's app group for sharing relevant information on trainings, publications and workshops for greater in-country collaboration.
6. Future scientific and information sessions are held during weekends to enable maximal attendance, as some participants had to juggle multiple work related commitments to attend.

7. The foundation GFMER organize more information sessions in partnership with teaching hospitals to introduce residents in related specialties; OBGYN and pediatrics to the course. In order to fill the absence of intensive research training in their residency programmes within Nigerian Teaching Hospitals.

2ND Annual Scientific Session Background

In 2016 a one day scientific and information session was organized in Kaduna State in Partnership with the Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of health. It focused on maternal mortality and Adolescent Health topics. Participants were drawn from Ministries of Health, Health facilities and Partner organizations involved in sexual and reproductive health within Nigeria. Participants at the Scientific meeting proposed certain recommendations; thus far the following have been achieved: CME certification by NMA for all graduates of the 7 month SRHR course who present certificates of completion, Awarding of CME Credits at scientific sessions, Subsidization of course fee (from 500 dollars to 250 dollars) for all registered Nigerian Medical Doctors with proof of registration at course commencement and lastly scheduling of scientific meetings to weekends to ensure full attendance/participation.

The 2nd Annual Scientific session of GFMER-SRHR in Nigeria will serve to further training and research opportunities for health care workers in the field of human reproduction through provision of a consistent forum to discuss relevant scientific developments/research in the field, ongoing community level interventions and introduce the online training course of Sexual and reproductive health research. The session was organized around the core modules of the training course with presentations on Congenital Anomalies, Maternal Mental health in Nigeria, Early Child Development (ECD), Preterm Project and Group discussions on research Methodology. (See Appendix 1 for workshop agenda).

The main objectives of the one day session were to; provide a forum to discuss emerging topics in sexual and reproductive health, encourage free exchange of ideas among participants, establish and strengthen linkages between public/private institutions involved in SRH in Nigeria.

Keynote address

TOPIC 1: Congenital Anomalies in Nigeria: Challenges and ways forward
Dr Isa Abdulkadir (Consultant Pediatrician/neonatologist)

Guest Speaker: Assoc. Prof Abdullahi Randawa
TOPIC 2: Maternal Mental Health in Northern Nigeria: A neglected Reality

GFMER Presentations:

TOPIC 3: Early Child Development (ECD)/ Preterm Project

TOPIC 4: Introduction to Online Sexual and Reproductive Health Training (SRHR)

GFMER Coordinator: Dr Aishatu Abubakar-Sadiq

Profile of the participants

70 participants who attended the workshop were selected from departments of obstetrics & gynecology in health facilities, departments of pediatrics in health facilities, UNICEF, WHO, National Blood Transfusion Service (NBTS), UNFPA, Reproductive Unit-Federal ministry of health, State Ministry of health, media, Public/private hospitals, Nursing/midwifery council, Nigeria Medical association (NMA), Kaduna State University (KASU), Nigeria Field epidemiology and Laboratory training Programme (NFELTP), Federation of Muslim women's association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Midwives service scheme (MSS), National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Malaria Control Program (MCP), State Primary healthcare development Agency (KSPHCDA) and Kaduna State Action committee on Aids (KADSACA). Participants comprised of Medical Doctors, Nurses, Program officers and reproductive health officers from Key organizations. A representative of the Emirate council was present on behalf of the traditional leaders in the State. There were 38 women and 32 men in attendance for the session.

3rd annual scientific session

This one day scientific and information session served to update information on new certificate courses available with GFMER, Switzerland, provide further training and research opportunities for health care workers in the field of human reproduction through provision of a forum to discuss relevant scientific developments/research in the field and create support from Partner NGOs In country in financial support for Reproductive health officers to study the online course. The session was organized around the themes; Family Planning, Leadership & Management for health research and Child Health.

The main objectives of the one day session were to; introduce stakeholders to new certificate courses with GFMER, provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss projects on relevant key areas, to establish and strengthen linkages between Reproductive and child health officers in Government and partner NGOs and to encourage open and interactive discussions on existing challenges to in country research in sexual and reproductive health.

Keynote address

1. Topic: “

Changing Population Dynamics and Utilization of Family Planning Options in Nigeria”

Dr Stephen Bature

Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist, HOD Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Barau Dikko Teaching Hospital, Kaduna State

Subthemes

1. “Introduction to GFMER, Switzerland and Restructuring Online courses for sexual and reproductive health research Training” Dr Aishatu

Abubakar Sadiq- Country coordinator GFMER, Switzerland

2. “Leadership & Management for Health Related Research in Nigeria”

Dr Waziri Garba Dahiru

Site Coordinator University of Washington Training course in Leadership/management for health/ Consultant Pathologist- ABUTH, Zaria

3.‘’ Review of Early Child Development (ECD) in Nigeria:

Any Progress made so far? Dr Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq, CC GFMER, Nigeria

Profile of the Participants

40 participants who attended the workshop were selected from departments of obstetrics & gynecology in tertiary health facilities, WHO, MNCH2, CHAI, UNICEF, NURHI, UNFPA, State Ministry of health, media, Nursing/midwifery council, Nigeria Medical association (NMA), Kaduna State University (KASU), Federation of Muslim women’s association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Midwives service scheme (MSS), National Primary healthcare development Agency (NPHCDA), State Primary healthcare development Agency (KSPHCDA) and Christian Health. Participants comprised of Medical Doctors, Nurses, Child Health and reproductive health officers from Key organizations. There were 28 women and 12 men in attendance for the session.

Performance and end of session feedback

The session lasted from 9:30am-2:30pm with presentations along thematic areas; Child health, Family planning and Leadership & Management for health related research. The main points raised in discussions following the Keynote address included:

- Female Partner refusing Male partner sterilization as a means of permanent contraception in Nigeria
- The existence of differences in fertility rates among the country’s 6 geopolitical zones and the need for zone specific interventions to address the high fertility rates.
- The relationship between family planning, poverty and HIV/AIDS
- Family planning is a developmental and Not a social issue.
- The role of Family Planning in PMTCT, its being one of the 4 elements
- The need to increase utilization of post-partum contraception, use of IUCDs especially among multiparous women with a history of short inter-pregnancy intervals.
- The role of Husband’s consent and male partner involvement in Family Planning Choices
- The role of religion and perception of right to fertility choices for women in Sub-Saharan Africa.

On conclusion of the Review of early child development, the following were raised by participants:

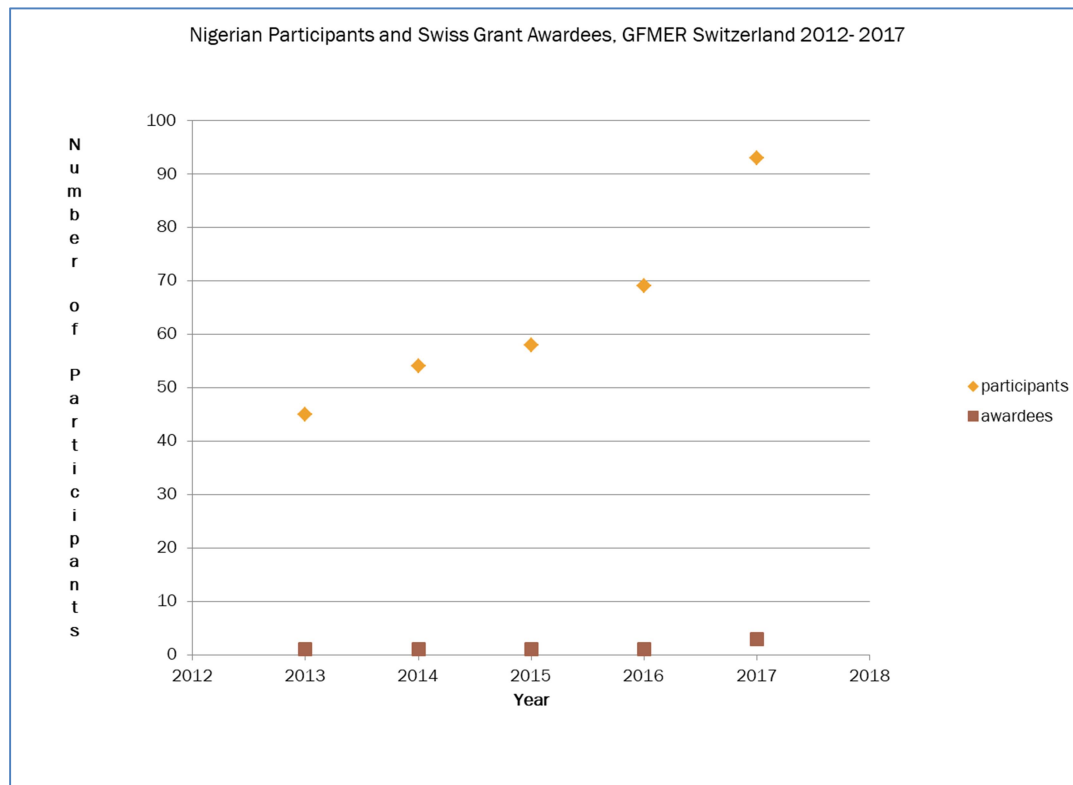
The need to ensure the lectures were presented to educationists and Parents of Young Children in order to draw attention to entry points during child development critical to molding adult behaviour and productivity in country.

- The relevance of early child development in utero and role of disadvantages inherent in the mother e.g. nutrition in subsequent child health and development was highlighted.

Participants commended GFMER’s commitment to improving sexual and reproductive health training

Students' coaching

This is provided by the Country Coordinator ; Dr Aishatu Abubakar Sadiq and assisting Country Supervisors; Sabaatu Danladi and Emeka Nwachukwu **(3)**. A steady increase in enrolment and number of graduating Participants has been recorded from 2016- 2018 illustrated below:



Networking among students /meeting with students

This occurs through the use of emails, Skype, phone calls and Whats app messaging.

Meeting with students/follow up of students of the course

A meet and Greet was organized with Graduates in the FCT, Abuja at Ajuji Hotel in June 2018. The graduates discussed their appreciation of the opportunity to study sexual and reproductive health with GFMER and a willingness to participate in future meetings. They requested establishment of Annual gatherings for the Programmes graduate revolving round the six geopolitical zones in the country. The CC GFMER informed them of upcoming events such as the trainings with Oxford Maternal/ Perinatal institute and Future scientific sessions. A suggestion was made to include abstract submission and Oral/poster presentations in subsequent scientific meetings. An expansion of partnerships to involve the Society of Obstetricians and

Gynaecologist of Nigeria (SOGON) was raised. Future meetings planned in other geopolitical zones of the State

Institutional partnership

Thus far a **MoU** signed with **Nigeria Medical Association (NMA)** for 50% fee subsidy to registered Medical Doctors and **CME awards (20 Credits)** by NMA to all graduates With certificates of completion. Partnerships have also been successfully established with **Friendz Unite**; an NGO providing free sexual and reproductive healthcare and Free cancer screening. The organization conducts annual health walks and lectures on cancer prevention, screening and treatment. Ongoing partnerships with the **Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH)** department of Family/ Reproductive health will include collaboration in holding a Country level training on the OMPHI Modules in September 2018. **The Medical Women's Association of Nigeria (MWAN)** has entered a partnership agreement with Country representatives to assist with Trainings, provision of residents from **departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology**, award CME Credits and advertise GFMER courses at their meetings/ trainings. Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology (OBGYN) and Pediatrics in Armed Forces health facilities and Teaching Hospitals also attend and support all activities held in country. Negotiations are ongoing to establish a partnership with **UNICEF, Nigeria Office** in providing financial support for adolescent health counselors employed by UNICEF to take the online adolescent health course.

- Deliberations ongoing with National Nurses Council for continuous learning credits and possible fee subsidy
- Discussions ongoing with Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Nigeria (SOGON) for inclusion of the training courses among approved post-graduate courses