



ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 11th COVID-19 TELECONFERENCE MEETING OF THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 24th JUNE 2020

We, members of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), at our meeting held today, Wednesday, June 24, 2020 deliberated on a set of issues affecting the country, especially the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, not just on the citizenry but on the economy as well.

1. The NGF Chairman provided an update on:
 - a. The Forum's conscious intervention in ending the strike action of the Nigeria Association of Resident Doctors (NARD), who had commenced a nationwide strike on Monday 15th June 2020 over unpaid salaries, improved hazard allowances, the unavailability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for frontline workers and those of their colleagues working in high-risk areas, non-domestication and non-implementation of Medical Residency Training Act.
 - b. The harmonization of Right of Way (RoW) charges across States and bilateral discussions with the Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Isa Ali Pantami, geared towards promoting investments in broadband infrastructure in the country.
2. The Forum received further updates and presentations from:
 - a. The Governor of Edo State, Mr. Godwin Obaseki, Chairman of the NGF State Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability (SFTAS) Sub-Committee interfacing with the World Bank to facilitate the provision of Additional Financing for States to support governments' response to the COVID-19 crisis.
 - b. The World Bank Task Team Leader for the SFTAS program, Yue Man Lee who provided an update on the 2019 Annual Performance Assessment and preparatory arrangements for the US\$750 Additional Financing.
 - c. The Honourable Minister of Health, Osagie Ehanire, who presented a newly developed 3-year Health Sector COVID-19 Response Action Plan which is aimed at repositioning the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic over a medium-term outlook. The Minister also assured State governments of the availability of about a million Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for health care workers in the various facilities throughout the country.
 - d. The Honourable Minister of Health, supported by the Executive Secretary of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Professor Mohammed Sambo and the Executive Director/CEO of National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) Dr Faisal Shuaib also provided clarifications on observations raised by the states on the new guidelines on the implementation of the Basic Health Care Provision Fund and the need to fast track its release in the light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, when increased health response is required and when State governments are experiencing financial strains that threaten their ability to meet counterpart obligations.



- e. The President of the National Association of Resident Doctors, Dr. Sokomba Aliyu also made a presentation conveying the concerns of resident doctors including, among others, the non-implementation of residency training in most States of the federation, non-payment of salaries and the use of inappropriate salary structures in some States. Dr. Sokomba Aliyu also told Governors about a particular state where a 25% salary cut across board also affected resident doctors most of whom continued to work, arguing that there was no basis for slashing the salaries of his members who instead of staying at home are encountering even added challenges at work.

Thereafter, members of the Nigeria Governors' Forum Resolved as follows, to:

1. Congratulate State governments since the creation of the Nigeria Governors' Forum for their contribution to the delisting of Nigeria from the global polio map as Nigeria on June 18, 2020 attained the status of being Wild Polio-Virus-Free. The Forum commended the commitment of all stakeholders, including the Federal Ministry of Health, the Dangote Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for their strong domestic and global financing support which was instrumental to strengthening the country's capacity for surveillance and routine immunization. The achievement is a great milestone for the public health history of the country.
2. Engage with the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning to take on the new SFTAS Additional Financing as grants to States following the momentum on fiscal accountability and sustainability generated by the current SFTAS programme and the need for sustained funding for State governments in the wake of the fiscal pressure that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Recommend that the Federal Ministry of Health and its agencies engage with the National Assembly Health Committee and State Commissioners of Health to harmonize a workable strategy that will facilitate the speedy release of the BHCPF to fund primary health care activities at the subnational level.
4. Review the concerns of the Resident doctors and interface with the Federal and State Ministries of health to address the concerns of resident doctors in the country, by settling backlog of salaries where such exist, reintegrating residency training in State Hospitals where they have been suspended, providing protective equipment and ensuring sustainable pathways to uphold the welfare of doctors in an effective and efficient manner.

Governor Kayode Fayemi
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum
24th June 2020