



The W4H Foundation Year Programme

The Challenge

The shortage of trained female health workers in Northern Nigeria is due to a number of factors. These include not only socio-cultural and religious factors, but also the failure to attract and train sufficient numbers of girls from rural communities.

The low educational attainment of girls in rural areas of the North means that very few rural indigenous adolescent girls and women are likely to have the five senior secondary school examination credits required for entry to the schools of nursing, midwifery and health technology.

Coupled with that is the fact that there is high demand for admission in the urban areas and limited recruitment spaces available in the Health Training Institutes (HTIs).



Response

The Women for Health (W4H) Programme established a Foundation Year Programme (FYP) in its target states; Jigawa, Katsina, Kano, Yobe and Zamfara. The ultimate objective of establishing the FYP in Northern Nigeria is to increase the enrolment of and potential for rural young women to enter and graduate from Health Training Institutions (HTIs). These young women will receive training to help them master the secondary school subjects required for HTI admission, while also acquiring practical learning skills to ensure they have the tools to succeed in health training.

Recommendations

Sustaining the positive outcomes of the Foundation Year Programme will require:

- ✓ Engaging the Ministry of Local Government and State Ministry of Health on bonding the FYP students to health facilities.
- ✓ Continued collaboration, active participation and commitment of all stakeholders at community, local government, state and national level.
- ✓ Counterpart funding from the Government to support W4H efforts.

Foundation Year Programme Target

The FYP targets young women from the targeted northern states; married or single who are graduates of senior secondary schools. They have a deficit of two to three credits needed from either the West African School Certificate Examination (WASC) or the National Examinations Council (NECO) Senior School Certificate Examination for admission to an HTI.

They are indigenous young women from these areas, many of whom are likely to come from resource-poor homes with limited experience of educational success within the family.



W4H support for the FYP includes:

1. Governance and Financial Planning

- Developing costed operational plans for the FYP
- Advocacy for the takeover of funding responsibilities with the states
- Developing bonding policy and procedure for the FYP.

2. Support for HTIs to implement the FYP

- Supporting the establishment of an FYP committee in each HTI
- Designing the FYP curriculum
- Developing training manual for FYP teachers.

3. Support to teachers

- Building the capacity of FYP teachers
- Providing incentives for FYP teachers.

4. Support to students

- Qualified teachers who teach and prepare the students for rewriting WAEC, NECO exams and Entrance exams into the HTIs
- Accommodation for students within the school premises, and free feeding
- Paid nannies to look after the babies of students
- Payment of WAEC and NECO registration and Entrance exam fees for the students
- Payment of a monthly allowance of NGN 5,000 to each student
- Free uniforms and free text books for studies
- Free medical care through the health insurance scheme
- Mentoring and counselling support
- Payment of students' registration fees after gaining admission into the HTI.



Achievements to date

Engaging with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Education, Religious leaders and communities has yielded positive outcomes. The commitment from communities and families of the FYP students is outstanding.

Achievements include:

- Establishment of FYP in all W4H states
- A total of 764 young rural women and girls recruited into the FYP programme
- State specific operational plans for FYP developed, costed and implemented in all W4H states
- Two strands (Bridging and Preparatory) of the FYP operational in five HTIs
- 80 science teachers deployed by state governments to teach at the FYP
- 80 science teachers trained in Learner-centred teaching skills
- 95 communities have made various commitments to sponsor their FYP students throughout the duration of their studies
- FYP students bonded to HTIs in Katsina, Jigawa, Kano, Zamfara and Yobe states
- Successful advocacy and engagement between W4H and states has led to states beginning to take over funding responsibilities.

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