

# Strengthening State Capacities and Women's Participation

in COVID-19 Response and Broader  
Peacebuilding Initiatives In  
Kaduna State



## Acronyms

CODE	Connected Development
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
FTM	Follow The Money
LGA	Local Government Agencies
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
PLWD	People Living with Disabilities
RUWASSA	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency

## About

# Connected Development

Within the past 8 years, Connected Development [CODE] through its Follow The Money (FTM) Initiative has tracked and monitored public spending in rural communities across Nigeria, reaching an estimate of 4 million community members covering 373 communities, across 33 Nigerian states.

As such, CODE has collaborated with tens of community governance structures to monitor the implementation of USD 13.5 million worth of socio-economic projects in their communities. By following the money, CODE has promoted and ensured open government, improved service delivery in the execution of community projects by the government, exposed and mitigated corruption, as well as fought extreme poverty in rural communities. Follow The Money's works have been recognized both nationally and globally as Africa's leading anti-corruption and social accountability movement.

In May 2019, the initiative won the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Mobilizer Award. In November 2019, Follow The Money emerged the 2019 winner of the Council of Europe's Democracy Innovation Award - amongst other awards and recognitions. Starting in Nigeria, the FTM Initiative has spread to several countries including Liberia, Kenya, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Malawi, The Gambia, Uganda with interest in Pakistan and Haiti etc., and has a national spread across Nigeria.



# Project Summary

Nigeria recorded its first case of COVID-19 on February 27, 2020, and the number of confirmed cases reached 52,000 as of August 25, 2020. The pandemic has had several effects on all aspects of human life, severely disrupting normal functioning of the world population. Healthcare systems have been overwhelmed, socio-economic divides widened and there has been an increase in political and social insecurity. Women and girls have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. To amplify women's leadership and ensure their active participation in the decision-making response, there is a need to build cohesion and create visibility around women-led efforts.

The **'Strengthening State Capacities and Women's Participation in Covid19 Response and Broader Peacebuilding Initiatives'** a campaign funded by UN Women in collaboration with the British High Commission, had the goal of enhancing Women's leadership and participation in decision making in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project sought to advance women's meaningful participation in the COVID-19 response and beyond in Kaduna state.

Through implementing coherent, comprehensible and multi-dimensional civic engagement, Connected Development [CODE] leveraged on its citizen mobilization and multidimensional engagement expertise, resources and strategies; presence and network in Kaduna states to broaden collaborations between relevant government agencies, enhance the capacities of 45 women, girls and men in the development of a checklist and tracker that served as a tool for monitoring and tracking government's response and recovery decisions from a gender perspective. 18 out of these groups we trained using the checklist and monitored the Kaduna State Government's COVID-19 response, actions and policies, across 5 local government areas in Kaduna state.

A desk research to analyze COVID-19 actions, policies, plans and budget including government strategic plan for economic recovery and future health resilience in Kaduna State, was conducted. Interestingly, 5 Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) made available COVID-19 economic and non-economic intervention response data for Kaduna State and so the data received were analyzed and effectively utilized in the research. Data from the Ministry of planning and budget commission, RUWASSA, Kaduna State Pension and Bureau, Local Government Affairs, Ministry of Education were instrumental to the research. Additionally, data gathered from the field were analyzed to reflect government interventions in these LGAs as it affects women and girls.

CODE visited policy makers in 11 MDAs in Kaduna who signed the pledge card committing to advancing the cause of women - which brings us closer to achieving women empowerment in governance. Our team met with the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Governor and a series of Commissioners and Heads of Agencies. Also, to amplify women's leadership and ensure their active participation in the decision-making response, we built cohesion and created visibility around women-led efforts through documenting the voices of women in political leadership positions via a documentary we produced. Members of the coalition discuss gender-responsiveness in COVID-19 Intervention and the effectiveness of the Emergency Operations Committee in addressing gender-responsiveness on Follow the Money radio on Invicta FM 98.9 Kaduna State. This was largely due to a series of radio programmes held twice a week.

Through our campaign hashtag: #GenderResponsiveness, our online advocacy had over 75 mentions, 1,400 interactions, 371,200 reach, 1,000 shares and 424 likes. Generally, our findings in Kaduna State, showed a high political will and commitment to open up more spaces for women in creating and accessing opportunities for leadership, economic liberation, empowerment, wellbeing and improved livelihood.



Hamzat Lawal  
Chief Executive, CODE

## Stories from the field



"I sell pap and bean cake inside my house. I also give my children items to hawk in the morning before they go to school. Since the pandemic, the cost of cowpeas (Millets) has increased to 300 Naira and even 400 Naira, so I had to stop the business because I do not gain from it. I didn't receive any palliative from the government. They only brought a register for us to fill, after which we did not receive anything from the government. Whenever they bring the register we fill it and never receive any palliative from the government. We only hear other people from other communities talking about what they have received. We call on the government to come to our aid. they should prioritize the poor in the local communities because we need help."

- **Amina Abubakar** (Community member)



'Dedicated women, hard-working women excel anywhere, anytime and under any circumstances. A lot of women are in responsible positions. There are 6 Commissioners that are women and women in leadership here in Kaduna State.'

- **Dr Shehu Muhammed** (Commissioner of Education)



'There is a lot that we will bring to the table. You might be let down but keep the course by being intentional and deliberate'

- **Saude Amina Atoyebi** (Deputy Chief of Staff (Admin) Kaduna State Government House)

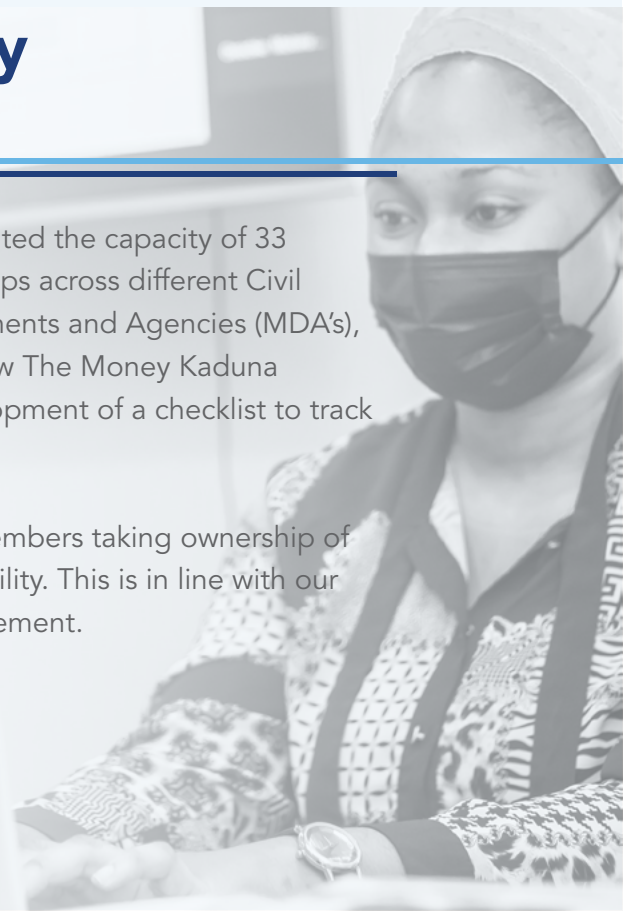
# Outcomes

- Improved Knowledge of the project by team members with clear understanding of roles, strategy, work plan and stakeholders engagement approach.
- Collated research findings used for effective project engagement and cross promoted on diverse platforms for public utilization and learnings. All details are found in the appropriate section below.
- Checklist developed for effective monitoring of government response, actions and policies in Kaduna State.
- Gathered evidence-based data to engage with stakeholders on ensuring women participation in COVID-19 response in the State. Details are in the appropriate section below.
- Established and strengthened partnership with key government stakeholders and documented commitments to support Women Participation at all levels in Kaduna State.
- Increased awareness on the roles/ impacts of women in political leadership positions especially in tracking COVID-19 plans, actions, policies and budget as well as responses from supposed community beneficiaries of the actions.
- Improved awareness on COVID-19 responses. olicies and actions State budget allocations and gender responsive public service delivery and the critical role women played in COVID-19 response in Kaduna state.

## Strengthening The Capacity of Community Champions

We expanded our social mobilization enterprise and consolidated the capacity of 33 women and girls and 12 men including Women Coalition groups across different Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Government Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDA's), Women office holders in the Kaduna State Government, Follow The Money Kaduna Champions and People With Disabilities (PLWD) on the development of a checklist to track women participation in COVID-19 response in Kaduna state.

In Connected Development, we take delight in community members taking ownership of campaigns because we believe that trust reinforces accountability. This is in line with our vision of ensuring sustainability of the Follow The Money movement.





# Amplifying Women's Participation in COVID-19 Response through video documentary

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Women's political participation has become an issue of concern due to current records that indicate low participation and under-representation in both elective and appointive roles in Nigeria. The Kaduna State Executive Council (Cabinet of Kaduna State) is the highest formal governmental body that plays important roles in the Government of Kaduna State. It consists of the Deputy Governor and Commissioners who preside over ministerial departments. It is significant to note that Kaduna State is the only state in northern Nigeria with a female as the deputy governor.

The Deputy Governor, Dr Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe (who doubles as the Chairman of Kaduna State COVID-19 Task Force) and the Commissioner of Health, Dr Amina Baloni, are females and public health experts. These two women possess enviable records and experience in controlling infectious diseases following their work against Ebola and Lassa Fever. With their antecedents, public records, it is plausible that women are fully represented (44%) beyond the affirmative action propositions (30%) often demanded by women rights groups and crusaders.

At Connected Development, we apprehend that interviews are a main staple in most documentary films. It is a powerful alternative to a more impersonal narration and we often utilize them to communicate vital information about a story. To this end, we interviewed Jummai Monday Bako (Director Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Planning and Budget Commission, Dr. Amina Mohammed Baloni (Commissioner Ministry of Health), Fausat Adebola Ibikunle (Commissioner Ministry of Housing and Urban Development), Dr. Shehu Usman Muhammad (Commissioner Ministry of Education), DSP Maryam Zakari (Head of Gender Unit Kaduna State Police Command), Saude Amina Atoyebi Deputy Chief of Staff (Admin) Kaduna State Government House, Hajiya Halima Idris (Special Adviser to the Governor of Kaduna on Creative Arts and Development), Hauwa Shehu (E-learning English Teacher), Prof. Salamatu Isah (Executive Secretary Kaduna State Pension Bureau), Halima Lawal (Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry) to tell stories of their involvement in the decision-making process of the state.

UN Women Documentary on Women Participation during COVID Pandemic; click [here](#)

# Public Officials pledge commitments by signing the Women Empowerment Pledge Card

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For whatever reason, gaining the support of stakeholders is challenging enough. There are many tactics that can be and are used to encourage stakeholders to buy-in on project goals. For us at Connected Development, one method that has proven results is using pledge cards.

During our engagements across Kaduna State, we had all the state actors we met sign our pledge cards – committing to Strengthening the capacity of women, girls and existing women led advocacy organizations to participate in the development and monitoring of COVID-19 actions, policies, plans and budget including government strategic plan for economic recovery and future health resilience. They also committed to advocate and amplify women’s leadership and active participation in the decision-making response through effective coalition building and collaboration between women organizations and women in political leadership positions. They also committed to examine, monitor, amplify and advocate for the role of women in the decision making processes and structures in Kaduna State and also, to determine the equitability and inclusivity of the COVID-19 response in Kaduna State on women and girls including persons living with disabilities (PLWD).

Summarily, a total of 10 State actors signed pledge cards and publicly declared to prioritize women’s participation in decision making.

- Jummai Monday Bako: Director Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Planning and Budget Commission
- Fausat Adebola Ibikunle.: Commissioner Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
- Dr. Amina Mohammed Baloni: Commissioner Ministry of Health
- Dr. Shehu Usman Muhammad: Commissioner Ministry of Education
- DSP Maryam Zakari: Head of Gender Unit Kaduna State Police Command
  
- Saude Amina Atoyebi: Deputy Chief of Staff (Admin) Kaduna State Government House
- Hajija Halima Idris: Special Adviser to the Governor of Kaduna on Creative Arts and Development
- Hauwa Shehu: E-learning English Teacher
- Prof. Salamatu Isah: Executive Secretary Kaduna State Pension Bureau
- Halima Lawal: Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry

# ✓iPledge

## STRENGTHENING STATE CAPACITIES AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN COVID-19 RESPONSE AND BROADER PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVES

*Strengthening women's capacity and equip them with the necessary tools, skills and expertise to directly participate in COVID19 Response and Broader Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kaduna State.*

I pledge to support the 'Strengthening of State Capacities and Women's Participation in COVID-19 Response and broader Peacebuilding Initiatives in Kaduna State'.

I, the signatory,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness(es) \_\_\_\_\_

Recognise that;

Typically, women in Nigeria are grossly underrepresented in decision-making structures, with 4% representation in national parliament, 4.43% in state legislatures and 16.2% of ministerial appointments. Women's unequal representation puts their specific needs at risk of being overlooked in the development and monitoring of COVID-19 actions, policies, plans and budgets, including for economic recovery and future health resilience. Women's leadership and participation in decision making in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic is crucial because the impact affects them disproportionately. To amplify women's leadership and ensure their active participation, there is a need to build cohesion and create visibility around women-led efforts.

**For this reason, I pledge to:**

- Strengthen the capacity of women, girls and existing women led advocacy organizations to participate in the development and monitoring of COVID-19 actions, policies, plans and budget including government strategic plan for economic recovery and future health resilience.
- To advocate and amplify women's leadership and active participation in the decision-making response through effective coalition building and collaboration between women organizations and women in political leadership positions.
- Examine, monitor, amplify and advocate for the role of women in the decision-making processes and structures in Kaduna state
- Determine the equitability and inclusivity of the COVID-19 response in Kaduna state on women and girls, including persons living with disabilities (PLWD).



# Research Methodology

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In a research to study and examine COVID-19 curtailment plans, responses and policies for economic recovery and resilience-building, we delved into the decision-making structures among formal and informal actors on COVID-19 in Kaduna State. We also explored transparency in the utilisation of COVID-19 funds; dynamics of gender-based violence in Kaduna State and gender-responsiveness to public policy in the state as governments and citizens battle to contain the spread of the virus.

The desk research covered the social and economic policies implemented by the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development (FMHDSD), CBN, Like Food Assistance, cash transfers, Stimulus Package and Pharmaceutical Fund to Support Healthcare Sector, Power relations in response to COVID-19 in Kaduna State, Public Health Policy Measures (Contact tracing, travel Bans and Lockdown Orders Public awareness campaign and Mandatory Use of Face Masks and Social Distancing), Dynamics of Gender-Based Violence during COVID-19 in Kaduna State and Gender Responsive budgeting: Making the Difference through State Budgets in Kaduna.

We received arrays of data specifically from the Ministry of planning and budget commission which provided us with COVID-19 budget performance from September 2020 - January 2021, RUWASSA provided data on the installation of wash hand basins in secondary schools in Kaduna State and also, distribution of soaps in all the 23 LGA, with the total number of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender, Kaduna State Pension and Bureau provided us with a desegregated number of females and males that benefited from pension payment during the lockdown.

The report received from the pension bureau, shows that a total of 1250 beneficiaries were scheduled for payment of retirement gratuity and death benefits and out of which 257 (20.56%) are women. The net payable for the women stood at N678,302,623.76 (22.60%) (excluding unearned salary, rent, and load deductions). In general, this collation showed 20.56% of the scheduled beneficiaries are women and they got 22.60% of the total allocation.

Local Government Affairs provided data on soap palliative distribution in all the LGA disaggregated by gender, The Ministry of Education data revealed that 12 teachers (8 males and 4 females) and 87 school leaders were trained in using distance learning methods and were provided materials to support distance learning, disaggregated data shows 36 female teachers and 51 male teachers benefitted from this initiative. Additionally, a total of 506 primary schools and 485 Secondary schools are implementing safe school protocols (COVID-19 prevention and control).

# Providing oversight to government projects and spending in lieu of the COVID-19 pandemic using a Checklist

Connected Development (CODE), during and after its capacity-building for women, girls and existing women, led advocacy organisations, developed a checklist to ascertain inclusivity gaps, monitor, effectively advocate for the increase and amplification of the level of women participation in the decision-making process(es), structures and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose was to ensure an equitable and sustainable response to the pandemic, in addition to promoting the inclusion of the vulnerable population most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Kaduna state, Nigeria.

The scope of these structures, processes and response permeate all governance structures and societal strata to include women in political leadership, women in the COVID-19 Emergency Operations Committee (EOC) which developed the Incident Action Plan (IAP), women involved in the planning, coordination and distribution of COVID-19 supplies and equipment, women in COVID-19 case management, women in infection prevention and control, women in research, risk communication and laboratory services, and women as beneficiaries of the state's COVID-19 response. The checklist also serves as a guide to demonstrate, albeit propositional, the role of women, girls and women-led organisations in providing oversight to government projects and spending in lieu of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using this tracker, we empowered 18 women and girls to monitor the Kaduna State Government's COVID-19 response, actions and policies, across 5 local government areas in Kaduna state.

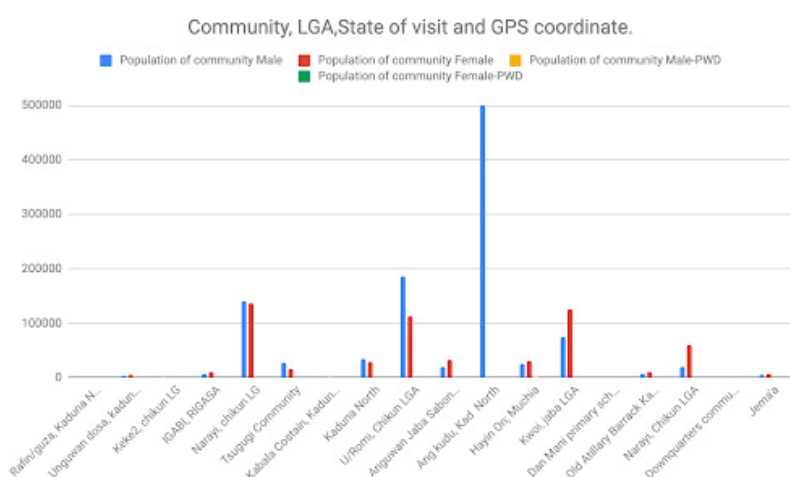


Figure 1.0 shows the highest numbers of community, LGA visited. It shows that Anguwan Kudu Kaduna North has the highest number of males

Analysis of Male, Female, Male-PWD, Female-PWD in Schools Visited

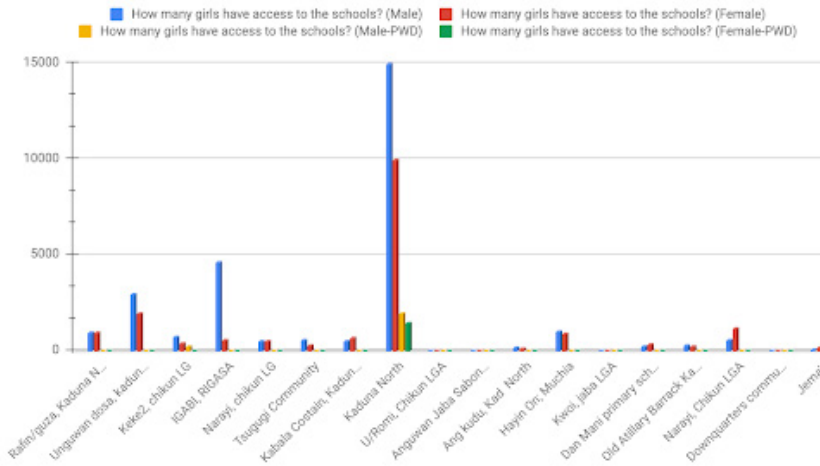


Figure 2.0 shows an analysis of male, female, male- PWD, female- PWD in schools visited. From our findings, it can be seen that in Kaduna North, males have more access to schools

Currently, what is the ratio of female to male teachers in the school

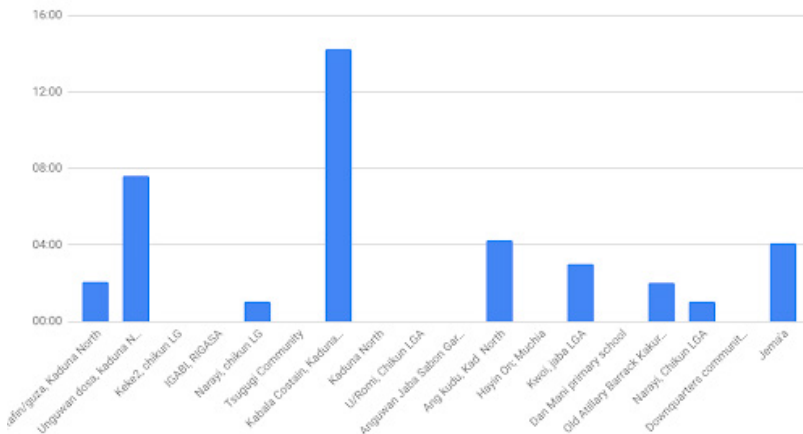


Figure 3.0 shows the ratio of female to male teachers in school

Number of women that the PHC attended to since the outbreak of COVID 19

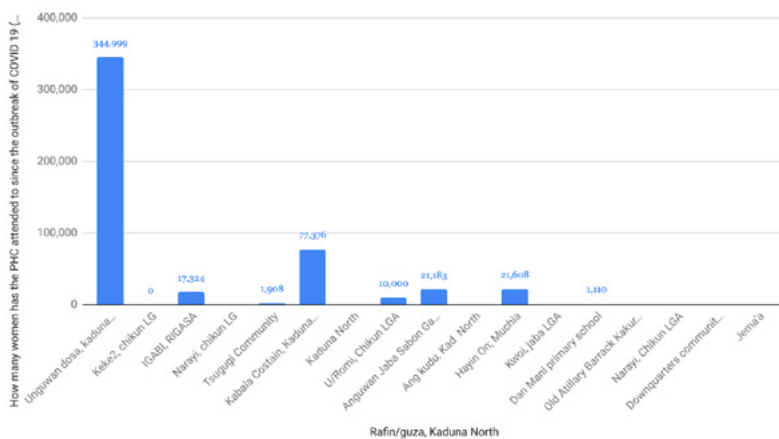


Figure 4.0 shows the number of women that the primary health care attended to since the outbreak of COVID-19



# Engaging in Strategic Digital/ Social Media Advocacy Using the Hashtag #GenderResponsiveness



We understand that incorporating trending and relevant hashtags in our social media posts helps to expand reach, increase post engagement, and enhance our campaign. As such, we leveraged our hashtag on all our social media platforms. On Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook in the month of February, March and April 2021. Our analytics comprise 75 mentions, which got 1,400 interactions, 371,200 reach, 1,000 shares, and 424 likes.

# Traditional Reach



UK Government

CODE  
connectdevelopment.org

UN WOMEN

**Strengthening State Capacities  
and Women's Participation in  
COVID 19 Response**  
#GenderResponsiveness #COVID19

**Invicta** 98.9 FM  
Radio  **98.9FM | 5:30PM - 6:30PM**  
**Mondays & Fridays**

The traditional media has always played a massive role in transmitting our activities and our work especially in hard-to-reach rural communities, creating awareness about funds going into communities, calling on citizens to be active, and providing public oversight while publicising how citizens are holding the government to account.

Follow The Money Radio has been a frontrunner programme that enhances citizen participation in governance spending.

We leveraged existing relationships with media houses to ultimately discuss gender responsiveness in COVID-19 Intervention and the effectiveness of the Emergency Operations Committee in addressing gender-responsiveness. With six (6) episodes, our Kaduna Follow The Money Radio on Invicta FM 98.9 reached over 500,000 people.

# Lessons Learnt from Project implementation

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## **Having already organized community indigenes or residents in our team improved the effectiveness of our work.**

In the course of our activities, we have been able to rejig and readjust our work processes according to prevailing local peculiarities. For instance, more than ever, we appreciate the need for indigenes or residents of host communities in our team. This helps us in managing social (group) dynamics without meddling with local political structures. The essence of this is to avoid political colouration or interpretation to our activities especially from political oppositions. Again, having community members (community reporters) in our team helped us manage the security and safety of our team during reconnaissance visits. We had such volunteers in Kaduna State who were instrumental to the project implementation. Ensuring the security and safety of our team is critical to our success even as Nigeria is contending with rural banditry and kidnapping. The increasing growth of kidnapping in Nigeria has become a strong threat to National peace and security.

## **Strengthening partnership with Government Stakeholders through advocacy visits.**

We understand that advocacy visits are essential in building relationships with individuals. As part of the deliverable on this project, we embarked on courtesy calls to key MDAs in Kaduna State. One of the first stakeholders we met with was the Deputy Chief of Staff to the Kaduna state Governor Mrs Saude Atoyebi and a host of other stakeholders for information sharing and buy-ins.

During which we were provided with access and contacts to other stakeholders. This of course facilitated entrance to other MDAs like Commissioner Ministry of Health, Director of Public health, Commissioner Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Special Adviser to the Governor of Kaduna on Creative Arts and Development etc.

These MDAs have continued providing us with several project implementation data in the state. In furtherance, the courtesy call on the Deputy Commissioner of Police resulted into the provision of security personnel during our other engagements within the State.

## **Through this project, we were able to strengthen our innovation in project delivery strategy.**

Progress is never easy or assured. Sometimes, there are unforeseen setbacks. Sometimes, we need to change our priorities to match an evolving situation on the ground. But the forward direction for the positive impact is never in doubt. As part of our delivery on this project, we initially planned to analyse Kaduna State COVID-19 framework. However, we were unable to lay our hands on the document as it was not made available to the public. Hence, the need for us to re-strategize and come up with innovative ways to deliver on this task. We then focused on sectoral responses from various MDA's which broadened our research and we broke down into economic and non-economic actions taken by the Kaduna state government.



We had representatives from the Ministry of Budget and planning talk about the Social Protection Policy, Kaduna state plans to provide support to 50,000 Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the State by December 2023, looking at how many females will benefit from this programme, How do programmes like Kaduna State Emergency Nutrition Action Plan (KADENAP) and Kaduna State Women & Empowerment Fund (KADSWEF) represent women's interests especially those in the rural area and how effective were the tax breaks on the socio-economic status of women in the state post COVID-19 lockdown. The radio programs were specifically spearheaded by the women champions.

# Recommendations

CODE proposes that the timeline of the project be extended to a minimum period of 9 months. This will provide more time for the coalition to conduct field tracking, needs assessment and research in order to provide more concrete data and situational analysis across all the Local Government Areas in Kaduna State.

CODE is also proposing that more funds be assigned for building a digital tracking system on Kaduna State COVID-19 responses. CODE is also proposing that this project be scaled across other states for more informed and evidence-based analysis on women's participation in Nigeria. These learnings can be documented and cross-promoted on different platforms.



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