

ELDERLY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE GROWTH CLINIC

14-15 June 2023



*Grand Pela Hotel and Suites,
Abuja Federal Capital Territory*



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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

S/N	ACRONYM	MEANING
1	ACHA	African Caribbean Heritage Africa
2	ADF	Alzheimer's Disease Foundation
3	CACH	Confidence Aged Care Home
4	CADROP	Centre for Ageing Development and Rights of Older Persons
5	CAPIO	Carmelite Prisoner's Interest Organization
6	CARE	
7	CAWDI	Care for Adolescent and Women Development Initiative
8	CoP	Community of Practice
9	COSROPIN	Coalition of Societies for the Rights of Older Persons in Nigeria
10	CSO	Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team
11	DDF	Dew Drop Foundation
12	DOF	Dunsin Ogunmoyela Foundation
13	FBO	Faith-based Organization
14	FEC	Federal Executive Council
15	FGN	Federal Government of Nigeria
16	GRAF	Gracefully Aging Fellowship
17	HMO	Healthcare Maintenance Organization
18	IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
19	K&TRC	Kids and Teens Resource Centre
20	LEADIN Africa	Leadership Empowerment and Development Innovation Initiative Africa

S/N	ACRONYM	MEANING
21	MAMA	Mothers and Marginalized Advocacy
22	MDI	Motherhen Development Initiative
23	NAN	News Agency of Nigeria
24	NAYA	Novel Association for Youth Advocacy
25	NAN	News Agency of Nigeria
26	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
27	NINE	Network of Incubators and Innovators in Nigeria
28	PCMP	Pietan Caring Mission for the Poor
29	SAFEI	
30	NINE	Network of Incubators and Innovators in Nigeria
31	WEAAD	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
32	YSAD	Youth and Students Advocates for Development Initiative

WITH SUPPORT FROM



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP) CHAIR



COP MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS



Carmelite Prisoners' Interest Organization (CAPIO)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Two-Day Voice^[1] Elderly Community of Practice Growth Clinic Workshop held in Abuja, Nigeria, and brought together Elderly CoP Voice grantees and NGOs working with the Elderly population across Nigeria – an often-neglected minority group. Coinciding with World Elderly Abuse Awareness Day, the workshop aimed to enhance knowledge, raise awareness, and drive positive change in elderly care policies and programs. The workshop focused on identifying elderly needs, improving care, and healthcare accessibility. Leveraging research findings earlier conducted by the CoP in 2021, the Growth Clinic addressed implementation challenges and knowledge gaps through basic care-giving training. By fostering collaboration and building capacities, the workshop aimed to improve elderly care, raise awareness, and drive positive change in Nigeria's policy advocacy and programs.

Conversations on the challenges faced by older persons in diverse settings provided valuable insights into the pressing issues and potential solutions. The discussions highlighted the plight of older persons in Nigerian prisons, IDP camps, rural communities, urban cities, and those dealing with cognitive loss and disabilities. Key themes that emerged included the need for tailored policies, collaboration, resource mobilization, and awareness campaigns. Proposed solutions included advocacy, partnerships, comprehensive support, capacity-building, alternative approaches, effective policy implementation, social safety nets, improved transportation options, caregiver training, and addressing stigma. The discussions underscored the urgency of inclusive approaches and comprehensive policies to improve the well-being of older persons across diverse contexts. Similarly, a Growth Clinic was conducted for CoP members to reflect on their individual and collective capacities and what is needed to push the needle of progress further. The World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) 2023 theme of "Seniors Deserve Our Respect and Our Attention" was highlighted, emphasizing the various forms of abuse and strategies to mitigate them.

Recommendations aimed to address the needs and challenges faced by older persons in various contexts. Policy and advocacy efforts should focus on developing inclusive policies and guidelines for older persons in incarceration and internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, ensuring their participation in policy discussions and the implementation of supportive legislation. Mobilizing resources for comprehensive healthcare services, strengthening social safety nets, and providing professional assistance for cognitive decline are vital. Addressing stigma, raising awareness of elder abuse and mental health, and providing training programs for caregivers are crucial. Promoting social connections, conducting educational initiatives, and organizing community events are essential to combat social isolation. Furthermore, comprehensive assessments, person-centred care planning, documentation, and technology utilization should be prioritized in caregiving and long-term care. The recommendations encompass policy and advocacy, healthcare and support services, elder abuse prevention and response, social connection and community engagement, and caregiving and long-term care.

[1] Voice Nigeria is an innovative grant funded by the Netherland Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by Oxfam Nigeria, which aims to increase participation, access and justice for marginalized groups. The Elderly Community of Practice is supported via the linking and learning stream of the Voice grant facilitated in Nigeria by Cognito & NINE

BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

The 2-day Voice-supported Elderly Community of Practice Growth Clinic Workshop took place from 14-15 June, 2023 at the Grand Pela Hotel and Suites in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The event served as a learning activity for Elderly Community in Nigeria and it coincided with the World Elderly Abuse Awareness Day Abuse (WEAAD) which is celebrated on 15th June annually. The Community of Practice (CoP) for the Elderly, initiated in 2020, is a coalition comprising Voice grantee partners and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) focused on promoting a favourable policy environment and improving care for older people in Nigeria. The overarching goal of the CoP is to identify the level of awareness, needs and challenges of the elderly population, how to care for the elderly, determine the availability and accessibility of health and social care facilities for the aged people across the nation while advocating for a favourable policy environment that supports health ageing.

The learning activities of the Elderly CoP aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences and insights gained from various eldercare interventions across different regions of the country. By collaborating and advocating for the welfare and social protection of the elderly population, the objective is to enhance the knowledge base of organizations working on eldercare in Nigeria and raise awareness of the needs and challenges faced by seniors and other issues to drive positive change through policies and programs. The efforts include administering proper care, creating awareness about age-related ailments, promoting healthy lifestyles, assessing the availability and accessibility of healthcare and social facilities for the elderly, and influencing policy-making in favour of the elderly. Leveraging a vast network that extends beyond Voice grantees, the CoP has captured valuable insights on Elder-care in Nigeria. In the last quarter of 2021 for instance, the CoP conducted comprehensive research on Elder-care across six geographic zones in Nigeria. The findings from this research served as a foundation for evidence-based advocacy.



An outcome from this research is the 2-Day Elderly CoP Growth Clinic facilitated by the Cognito - linking and learning partners for the Voice in Nigeria as well as a practical How-to guide on caregiving for the elderly. The Growth Clinic is a learning activity to identify specific gaps in the capacities of member organizations, particularly in addressing implementation challenges, sharing knowledge, ideas, and innovative measures. The Clinic aims to strengthen organizational capacities by providing basic care-giving training, which member organizations will then pass on through step-down training for caregivers in their respective localities - a collective effort that is geared toward ensuring the well-being and thriving of older adults in diverse geographic areas.

DAY ONE

WELCOME ADDRESS

Agatha Nnaji, Executive Director, Dew Drop Foundation, formally welcomed participants on behalf of the VOICE Elderly Community of Practice to the two-day Growth Clinic Workshop sharing that the workshop is designed as a platform for sharing of knowledge and experiences, identifying and strengthening the capacities of member organizations working for the elderly population in Nigeria. Mrs. Nnaji emphasized that this unique learning forum would tap into the strengths and resources of Community of Practice (CoP) members to enrich their collective knowledge. Participants were encouraged to introspect, identify strengths and weaknesses, and learn from the shared information and strengths of others while also leveraging the CoP platform to mobilize positive action for older persons. Additionally, participants were urged to work on a sustainability plan for the CoP, including collaboration with other organizations and stakeholders who impact elderly policies and welfare.



Empowering organizations with knowledge, skills, and passion to provide improved services for the elderly and influence policies addressing critical issues in Nigeria is the aim of the workshop, while the desired outcome of the meeting is co-creating a learning document that practically guides the CoP members and other stakeholders on best practices in contemporary eldercare management. She concluded by urging participants to utilize their networks and platforms to inform and educate colleagues and the public about the workshop's outcomes.

OPENING REMARKS

Cedric Owuru, the Linking and Learning Amplifier for Voice Nigeria, a program implemented by Oxfam, gave the opening remarks stating that the Voice program in Nigeria focuses on enhancing the capacity of grantees and rightsholders, particularly marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities, the elderly, young persons, women and indigenous minorities, operating as part of a larger program spanning 10 countries across Africa and South-east Asia. The goal is to amplify the voices of marginalized individuals in society for an equitable, just and fair society. The importance of eldercare was emphasized, highlighting that ageing is an inevitable part of life and should be viewed as a blessing rather than a curse. He stressed that the community of practice is aimed at facilitating learning and knowledge sharing through research, workshops, active participation and other activities. Participants were encouraged to bring out their inner curiosity and ask questions, to foster an engaging and participatory workshop with the ultimate objective to support development and implement effective policies for the elderly, in order to achieve the desired outcome of improved welfare and support for the ageing population in Nigeria.



OVERVIEW OF VOICE ELDERLY COP - DEW DROP FOUNDATION (DDF)



Vivian Ugwu gave an overview of the Community of Practice (CoP) for the elderly as a component of the Voice program in Nigeria. The aim of the CoP is to enhance the capacity of organizations and improve the welfare of older persons. The CoP consists of a coalition of NGOs, CSOs, and other non-profit organizations that have received funding from OXFAM through the VOICE program and other interested NGOs working in the elder-care space of development. Its objectives include promoting knowledge sharing, implementing collaborative projects, raising awareness about eldercare issues, and attracting funding from local and international donors for the betterment of the ageing population. The CoP conducts research, produces reports, and organizes workshops to disseminate findings and foster learning. Its membership extends beyond Voice grantees to include other stakeholders interested in eldercare. The CoP also emphasizes networking, partnership building, and leveraging the strengths and resources of its members to address key issues related to eldercare. The CoP aims to leverage the internal capacity of its members to carry out activities collectively and plans to source funding as a network to engage in elder-care interventions and continuously share knowledge and experiences to improve services provided for the elderly. The Elderly CoP, along with other Voice-supported CoPs, is coordinated by Cognito a strategic communication, knowledge management and learning organization who act as the linking and learning facilitator for the Voice Program in Nigeria.

The Speaker, in giving an overview of the CoP's journey so far, articulated that the CoP has always been interested in the plight of the elderly in terms of challenges they face as well as the quality of care they receive and the eldercare awareness of the people responsible for delivering that care. To this end, the CoP conducted a research across the 6 geopolitical zones of the country in the last quarter of 2021 which was documented and published in 2022. Additionally, the CoP has delivered a 10-minute documentary on issues of Elder Abuse in selected locations in Nigeria and, a communiqué highlighting action points for the public and private sectors on eldercare management in Nigeria in the same 2022. She stressed how the CoP was adding value because they document and share their learnings at the grass-roots which serves to provide compelling evidence for program development, formulation of policies and bills at the upper levels



PRESENTATION 1:**ISSUES OF AGEING IN NIGERIA**

Olayinka Ajomale led the conversation on the issues of ageing in Nigeria and how ageing is somewhat comparable to other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa due to specific peculiarities concerning elderly care but differs from countries like the US, UK, Canada, and Australia. He described ageing as a process of gradual decline in various aspects of life and how ageing was both a positive stage of life on one hand, where senior citizens could contribute wisdom and values to the new generation, and a negative stage on the other, marked by general degeneration in physical and/or mental functionality. Nigeria as a country is experiencing a rapid increase in its ageing population, which calls for special attention and resources. His discussion highlighted the challenges and complexities of ageing describing it as an inevitable process accompanied by various physical and mental health issues. The challenges of ageing mentioned include declining health, visual impairment, incontinence, chronic diseases, lower income, social isolation, loneliness, elder abuse, neglect, abandonment, cultural changes, collapse of the extended family system, economic pressures, rural-urban migration, and the impact of globalization.



The aforementioned challenges hold significant implications for the quality of life of older individuals and require adequate support and planning. Mr Ajomale highlighted that the demographic transition occurring in many parts of the world is such that populations are gradually ageing, resulting in a decrease in the number of youth and an increase in the number of older persons. This shift posed a challenge were there would be fewer working-age individuals to support and sustain services, pensions, and care for the elderly in the near future. Advancements in healthcare and increased awareness about health however have contributed to longer life expectancies and improved quality of life for older people all of which are not the reality of ageing in Nigeria. He also touched on different aspects of ageing, educating participants on how they are indicative of the different capacities and competencies that caregivers for the elderly should have and these include:

- Biological ageing, which involves the decline in physical functionalities and vital organ systems
- Psychological ageing, encompassing memory functioning, learning, intelligence, self-identity, and self-actualization; and,
- Social ageing, which refers to the changing roles and responsibilities expected from individuals as they age, within families, religious groups, and society at large.

The Presenter concluded by emphasizing that ageing is a universal process that varies for individuals and ageing gracefully was more important than longevity in ill-health. He therefore urged individuals to not only pray for long life but also take proactive steps to secure a fulfilling and secure future as they age.



PANEL DISCUSSIONS:

EXAMINING ELDER-CARE REALITIES IN VARIOUS SETTINGS

Moderator: Cedric Owuru – Linking and Learning Amplifier for VOICE programs in Nigeria. Cedric introduced the panellists and defined the approach to the panel discussions, stating that the common element the panellist shared was their work with the elderly. He proceeded to guide each panellist through sharing their unique experiences, the realities and, challenges of older persons in the specific areas where they worked.



REALITIES OF OLDER PERSONS IN INCARCERATION

Chuks Nwagwu from Carmelites Prisoners Interest Organization (CAPIO) spoke about the realities of the elderly in the Nigerian Custodial Centres (prisons). He expressed concern about the challenges they faced as there seemed to be no legal provision for that particular category of population within the prison system: they faced the same difficulties other inmates faced but with a heavier impact because of their age. One of the major challenges he cited is cell congestion with particular reference to provisional capacity of 600 but real situation of 3000 and above inmates in a particular custodial centre in Nigeria. Other difficulties he cited include social exclusion within and outside, lack of acceptance, and limited access to necessary services. He was disheartened to learn that older individuals in these settings are often disregarded and faced stigma from both fellow inmates and society at large. As a result, they experienced difficulties in building relationships and accessing support networks once outside the system.

Policy-wise, there were no specific guidelines or frameworks in place to address the unique needs of older persons in incarceration. The Nigeria Correctional Service Act, passed in 2019, categorized older persons as adults without accounting for their distinct requirements. This gap highlights the urgent need for advocacy and the development of tailored policies that consider the vulnerabilities and well-being of older individuals in such settings. He further explained that in terms of international standards, the UN had ratified the standard minimum rules for the treatment of inmates or prisoners, emphasizing the importance of dignified treatment. However, the implementation of these rules in Nigerian facilities remained limited. It is crucial to push for reforms that align with international standards and to develop comprehensive guidelines specific to the care of older persons in incarceration.

Recommendations:

- Advocate for the development of policies and guidelines that consider the unique needs and vulnerabilities of older persons in incarceration and correctional facilities.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, to ensure the inclusion of older persons in policy discussions and decision-making processes.
- Push for the signing and implementation of a bill that provides comprehensive support and services for incarcerated older individuals.
- Develop capacity-building programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of personnel working with older persons in correctional facilities.
- Raise awareness and combat stigma surrounding older persons in incarceration and who have been released through community engagement and education campaigns.



REALITIES OF OLDER PERSONS LIVING IN INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS) CAMPS

In the discussion regarding the challenges faced by older persons in IDP camps, it was apparent that the living conditions in these camps could be likened to a form of imprisonment for the inhabitants. Jummai Ogboge from Dew Drop Foundation (DDF) spoke about the IDP camps in Nigeria and described them as pathetic, with inhabitants enduring numerous challenges. The major issues identified include declining health conditions, environmental factors, poor housing conditions, separation from loved ones, loss of income and property, and the overall disconnection from their communities of origin. Many individuals in these camps, she explained, had experienced trauma and hardship due to conflicts, such as the Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east and clashes with herders and bandits in the Middle Belt and other parts of the country. Consequently, they are amenable to trauma and health related issues. With no infrastructure in place to cater to their basic and health needs, in some cases, the poor living situation in the camps, particularly with the elderly, is compounded.



She explained that there were currently no comprehensive policies in place to address the unique challenges faced by older persons in IDP camps. Their well-being largely relied on the support provided by NGOs, which offered limited resources, including food, medication, and encouragement. The absence of a structured support system exacerbates their vulnerability and diminishes their prospects for a better future.

Recommendations:

- Develop and implement specific policies that address the unique needs of older persons in IDP camps, including healthcare, social support, and psychosocial services.
- Mobilize resources and engage relevant stakeholders to provide comprehensive healthcare services, including regular check-ups and access to necessary medications.
- Strengthen advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the challenges faced by older persons in IDP camps and promote the allocation of resources for their well-being.
- CSOs could explore the possibility of partnering with Healthcare Maintenance Organizations (HMO) to provide healthcare coverage and services to older persons in IDP camps.
- Consider alternative approaches, such as privatization of the camps, to improve the living conditions and overall well-being of older persons in IDP camps.

REALITIES OF OLDER PERSONS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Dr Erisa Danladi spoke about the work of her organization, Motherhen Development Foundation (MDF) as being primarily in the North-Eastern parts of Nigeria while extending to the whole of Northern Nigeria. MDF focuses on eldercare as one of their thematic areas and some of the realities of living in the Rural areas that they have observed was not peculiar to older persons but affected them direly. She spoke about the challenges of feeding from hand-to-mouth, poverty, the preponderance of the Almajiri system, the effects of insecurity perpetuated by Boko Haram terrorists which pushed them further into poverty, lack of sustainable employment in the midst of an agrarian society where there were inadequate farming tools. The communities in these Rural settings were often seen as retirement spaces - a space that older persons would return to after spending years in the urban areas. Therefore, the reality of older persons in these communities revolved around the difficulty of surviving without caregivers in the midst of poverty, ill-health, declining strength and loss in the face of life's many misfortunes. Being resident in rural communities means that older people are dependent on support for mobility and to carry out farming activities which makes ageing a burden and a difficult reality to face.



MDF adopted the approach of identifying and mapping the vulnerable groups in these communities to ascertain what could be done for them to ameliorate their situation. Being subsistence farmers, they would engage the older persons in farming practices that would keep them occupied. The goal was to create and operate in farm spaces that was very close to their places of residence. This would in turn create access to food and consistent source of nutrition. This way they had food available to them which they would collectively harvest and share amongst themselves and by engaging in the activity of farming they would also enjoy the therapeutic benefits to their minds and bodies, sustaining them in good health for longer. The MDF approach also involved gathering the care givers and training them on how to render care to the elderly under their care and to let the communities see the elderly as special people who should be taken care of. The goal was to make these communities a place where older persons would be happy to return to, farm and stay healthy sustainably.

Recommendations:

- **Promote sustenance farming practices:** Engage older persons in sustainable farming practices to provide them with occupation, access to food, and a consistent source of nutrition. This approach can enhance their well-being and contribute to their overall health.
- **Train caregivers on eldercare:** Provide training programs for caregivers in the community to ensure that older persons receive proper care and support. Educating the community about the importance of caring for the elderly can help create a culture of respect and support for older persons.

REALITIES OF OLDER PERSONS LIVING IN URBAN CITIES - MISS MARGARET CHICHI NKIRE (LEADIN AFRICA)

Urban cities are characterized by larger population sizes and offering better socio-economic benefits compared to the rural communities. In urban ageing, age-friendly cities are expected to offer a supportive environment for the older population to be able to age actively within their families as well as within their neighbourhood, community and society at large. In her discussion, Margaret Nkire from LEADIN Africa, an organization based in Nigeria's commercial city of Lagos, shed light on the challenges faced by this demographic and proposed recommendations to address these issues. The discussion primarily focused on the impact of poverty on older persons' health and the importance of a multi-sectoral approach involving government, civil society organizations, private sector, multinational organizations, and international donors.



Miss Nkire emphasized the significant relationship between poverty and health challenges faced by older persons. She highlighted that with age, individuals naturally become more susceptible to various illnesses. In the context of limited financial resources, health issues could be aggravated, leading to malnutrition and inadequate healthcare. Access to quality healthcare would also be a challenge for older persons, as they often lacked the means to afford necessary medical services. Another crucial challenge faced by older persons in urban cities is mobility and transportation. Despite having caregivers or family members responsible for their well-being, individuals would still need to go out for medical appointments or hospital visits. Unfortunately, not all families can afford transportation costs, such as taxi fares. Therefore, ensuring adequate mobility and transportation options is essential to facilitate older persons' access to healthcare services.

Recommendations

- **Holistic Approach through Collaboration:** Government could adopt a holistic approach in addressing the issues faced by older persons. A multi-sectoral effort involving collaboration among government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector entities, multinational organizations, and international donors. This would enable comprehensive policy development and implementation.
- **Effective Implementation of National Policy on Ageing:** Proper implementation and monitoring of the national policy on ageing approved on February 10, 2021 at the FEC meeting presided over by Ex-President Muhammadu Buhari. Merely enacting laws is insufficient; continuous evaluation and progress tracking are vital. Involving civil society organizations in the monitoring process can provide insights into the effectiveness of the policies and ensure that older persons are the primary beneficiaries.
- **Strengthening Social Safety Nets:** The significance of social safety nets, particularly in the form of financial support for older persons cannot be overemphasized. She praised the efforts of Lagos State in implementing such measures but stressed the need for improvement across other regions. Access to a reliable safety net would enable older persons to meet their daily needs independently, reducing dependence on families for financial support and impact positively on their dignity.



REALITIES OF OLDER PERSONS LIVING WITH COGNITIVE LOSS



Osanyem Anenih from the Alzheimer's Disease foundation (ADF) during her discussion focused on the realities of older persons living with cognitive loss, particularly Alzheimer's disease and dementia. She provided insights into the nature of dementia, specifically Alzheimer's, and shared personal experience accentuating the importance of effective communication and offered recommendations on managing individuals with cognitive loss. She described dementia as an umbrella term used to describe memory loss and the decline of cognitive abilities in individuals. She described it as encompassing various forms, including Lewy Body, Parkinson's dementia, and Alzheimer's disease being the most prevalent form of dementia. She described it as characterized by a progressive decline of brain cells. Although the exact cause is unknown and there is no definitive test, individuals typically experience the loss of short-term memory over time. She stressed that managing people living with the condition was as simple as tender-loving-care.

Recommendations

- **Seek Professional Assistance:** Recognizing the early signs of cognitive decline is crucial as well as seeking professional help. Timely intervention and diagnosis can help individuals and their families navigate the challenges associated with cognitive loss more effectively.
- **Addressing Stigma:** The stigma surrounding dementia often prevents individuals and families from seeking help. In some communities, people may face discrimination or social isolation due to misconceptions about mental health. She encouraged open discussions to raise awareness and challenge stereotypes surrounding cognitive loss.

REALITIES OF OLDER PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS)



The Chair of the PWDS Community of Practice, Favour Adjara, highlighted the effects of disabilities on elderly individuals, the need to improve support in society, and the existing policies in Nigeria to safeguard elderly persons with disabilities. She emphasized the importance of consulting with elderly persons with disabilities and implementing comprehensive policies to address their specific needs. She acknowledged that disability in Nigeria is often met with high levels of discrimination and various barriers, even from their families, resulting in feelings of isolation and neglect. This could easily translate into experiencing financial difficulties as they struggle to meet their daily living needs. Social networking, she said, could also be a significant barrier, as societal prejudices and misconceptions about disability could lead the persons with disability to withdraw from potential networks leading to isolation and limited social interactions.

Recommendation

- **Shifting from "Help" to "Assist":** Favour encouraged the use of the term "assist" instead of "help" when providing support to elderly persons with disabilities. By promoting a sense of empowerment and dignity, individuals and families can actively contribute to improving the lives of older persons with disabilities.
- **Government Engagement:** There is the need for the government to dialogue with elderly persons with disabilities to better understand their specific needs and concerns. Collaboration with disability organizations representing elderly persons would help shape policies and initiatives that address their unique challenges.
- **Comprehensive Policies:** While Nigeria has the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, implementation remains limited. It is necessary to developing policies that encompass all aspects of ageing with disabilities while considering the different factors that impact older persons with proper implementation and monitoring.

- **Consultation and Implementation:** Government should consult with elderly persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to gather insights on their needs and preferences. This inclusive approach would ensure that policies are comprehensive and that they effectively address the challenges faced by older persons with disabilities.
- **Adequate Facilities and Support:** Dedicated facilities that cater to the needs of older persons with disabilities should be established for their specialized care. These facilities would serve as accessible and reliable resources for the elderly, offering assistance and support when required.

GROWTH CLINIC

The purpose of the Growth Clinic session was to emphasize the importance of growth at the individual, organizational, and community levels within each community of practice. The journey towards growth and improvement begins with self-reflection and introspection at the organizational level. The unique competencies and strengths of each individual and organization were recognized as valuable assets that contribute to the community's overall progress. By identifying these qualities, participants were encouraged that it would lay a solid foundation for future development. The objective was to collectively aspire towards specific goals and achievements that would contribute to overall collective development.

The COGNITO NINE facilitator outlined the key aspirations that the growth clinic aimed to achieve. Firstly, to focus on identifying the core competencies of member organizations, recognizing the unique strengths and capabilities that define each organization. This understanding would serve as a foundation for future growth and collaboration. Secondly, to explore opportunities for personal development and organizational growth. The significance of continuous learning and improvement was highlighted, emphasizing its role in driving progress. Thirdly, they would be strategizing a growth pattern that aligned with the community's values and objectives. To achieve this, adaptation and evolution were essential to meeting the challenges and opportunities that would arise and by staying attuned to emerging themes, they could be leveraged for the benefit of the community and facilitate collective advancement. The commitment to identifying and addressing gaps in policy, advocacy, and practice, particularly in the context of elder-care, was also emphasized.



The Growth Clinic comprised two segments. The first segment involved participants engaging in self-reflection and identifying their organization's focus, strengths, proudest moments, interests, values, competencies, and developmental needs. The second segment introduced the SOAR (Self, Opportunities, Aspiration, Results) methodology to guide participants in exploring organizational strengths and opportunities. The SOAR methodology was described as a powerful tool to bring stakeholders together to reflect on and recognize the potential of their organizations and create a shared vision of the future.

During the activity, participants were instructed to take out a sheet of paper and respond to a series of questions. These questions included writing their organization's name and focus, describing their proudest moment as a member of the organization, and assigning one word to represent their organization's personality. Following this reflection, the facilitator introduced the key components of the SOAR methodology: participants were guided to reflect on the concept of self, opportunities, aspirations, and results.

To facilitate the activity, the use of post-it notes and flip-charts were employed. Participants were provided with post-it notes and instructed to write down their major interests related to their work with the elderly and elder care. Each interest was to be written on a separate post-it note, and participants were encouraged to write as many as they desired. The post-it notes were then placed on the wall under the corresponding area of interest.

Participants were then prompted to identify the values they wished to prioritize when working and advocating for older persons. Similar to the previous step, each value was written on separate post-it notes and placed on the designated chart on the wall.



The facilitator further instructed participants to recognize their competencies and strengths. They were encouraged to circle the competencies listed on the chart that resonated with them. If their competencies were not listed, participants were asked to write them on a post-it note and affix it to the chart.

Continuing with the activity, participants wrote down the specific elderly issues that appealed to them on post-it notes. They were also instructed to identify the preferred context in which they wanted to work with elder care, as well as any developmental needs they believed would enhance their performance. Additionally, participants were asked to identify opportunities that could be leveraged by the community to advance their work with the elderly in Nigeria. Each response was written on separate post-it note and placed on the corresponding chart.

Finally, participants reviewed all the post-it notes on the charts and circled three items on each chart that resonated with them personally.

The SOAR Methodology activity provided participants with an opportunity for introspection, sharing perspectives, and identifying organizational strengths and opportunities. The use of post-it notes and the wall facilitated a visual representation of the collective insights and aspirations of the community. These activities laid the groundwork for meaningful discussions and collaborations throughout the Growth Clinic, fostering a sense of collective growth and advancement.



DAY TWO

The second day of the Growth Clinic commenced with a prayer and a recap of the preceding day's engagements. Subsequently, an educational skit was presented, emphasizing one of the distressing ways elderly abuse can manifest.



PRESENTATION 2: WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY (WEAAD)

Theme: Seniors deserve our respect and our attention



Agatha Nnaji - Dew Drop Foundation

The theme of the 2023 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), marked annually on June 15, 2023 was highlighted as "Seniors Deserve Our Respect and Our Attention." The concept of elder abuse was introduced as encompassing any act of commission or omission that causes harm or distress to individuals aged 60 and above. It was underscored that elder abuse can occur in various settings, including homes, nursing homes, hospitals, and public places. It was important to show care and concern while communicating with the elderly while paying attention and patiently attending to them.

Different forms of elder abuse were discussed, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, abandonment, sexual abuse, and financial exploitation with strategies for mitigating against these particularly hinging the importance of education and awareness, training and support for caregivers, promoting autonomy and independence of older adults, strengthening and enforcing laws, establishing safe reporting mechanisms, fostering social connections, and supporting multidisciplinary response teams. Mrs Nnaji shared that Dewdrop Foundation's interventions aimed at curtailing elder abuse. These interventions included the establishment of Seenagers' (Senior citizens) Associations as social support networks, public awareness campaigns, individual eldercare interventions, urban gardening projects, advocacy programs, food pantry initiatives, training and education, helpline and support services, collaboration with community partners, and policy advocacy.

Collaboration between members of the Community of Practice (CoP) to raise awareness of elder abuse was stressed as very important as this would enhance the individual strengths of the organizations and boost their impact on their respective communities. These options include partnering with non-profit organizations, government agencies, healthcare providers, legal professionals, educational institutions, faith-based organizations (FBOs), community centres, senior organizations, media and communication channels, financial institutions, and community law enforcement.

Recommendations:

- **Strengthen public awareness:** Develop targeted awareness campaigns to educate the general public about the signs of elder abuse and the importance of reporting incidents.
- **Training and support for caregivers:** Organize training programs for caregivers to enhance their skills in providing care to older adults and equip them with knowledge on identifying and addressing elder abuse.



- **Foster collaboration:** Establish partnerships with relevant stakeholders such as nonprofit organizations, government agencies, security outfits and healthcare providers to create a coordinated response to elder abuse cases.
- **Establish reporting mechanisms:** Advocate for the establishment of safe and accessible reporting mechanisms, ensuring that older adults feel comfortable and supported when reporting instances of abuse.
- **Policy advocacy:** Work towards the implementation and enforcement of legislation that safeguards the rights and well-being of older adults, including stronger penalties for elder abuse perpetrators.
- **Social connection initiatives:** Promote social connections among older adults by organizing community events, support groups, and activities that encourage interaction and combat social isolation.
- **Continuous education:** Conduct ongoing educational initiatives to raise awareness among older adults about their rights, the resources available to them, and ways to protect themselves from abuse.



NWANNEKA OKOLO - LIFT SAXUM ON WEAAD 2023

The presentation focused on the role Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) play in raising awareness about the realities of the elderly and the issues around eldercare in Nigeria. The aim is to ensure that the scope of awareness is broadened describing this as a strategy employed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP[MOU1]) to promote the objectives of the COP 24 on Climate Change. where they used FBOs to promote the objectives of the programme. She stated that 84% of the people of the world belonged to one faith or the other and adherence to the tenets of their faith was of importance to them and the UNEP discovered that about 50% of schools worldwide were under ownership of FBOs. Similarly, 65% of schools in Sub-Saharan Africa were owned by FBOs.[4] FBOs then, she believed, could serve as an effective vehicle for raising awareness regarding elder-care issues in Nigeria. FBO-owned schools across the federation could enrich their curricula with relevant education on elder-care and the related issues. This would help push the awareness campaign further and wider. She gave an overview of two fundamental issues affecting the elderly in Nigeria: poor lifecycle planning and poor lifestyle choices.

She quoted the Best Start Resource Centre's 7 Stages of life[5] which include: The good life (birth to 7Years), the Fast life (15-21 yrs.), the Wandering and Wondering life (15-21yrs), the Stages of Truth (21-28yrs), Planting and Planning (28-35yrs), Doing (35-42), and, the Elder – Giving back life (49 and above). She stressed that the most important part ages were the birth to 7 years and the 49 and above because these represented the start and finish of the cycle. Considering this, she called on participants to go back to the basics and plan life early with the generation coming up.



Recommendations:

- She encouraged parents to make home training their first line of intervention against elderly abuse. In the context of the African-Nigeria society, this means to begin with proper training on culture and imbining respect for the elderly early on in life.
- It is imperative to start making lifestyle choices earlier in life so as to reduce old-age related challenges, including: proper financial planning (saving and functional spending), regular exercise, water intake for proper hydration, restful sleep and to generally put their health first.

[4] UNEP (2023). Faith action on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. United Nations Environment Programme. : <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/faith-action-un-sustainable-development-goal>

[5] Best Start Resource Centre (2010). A Child Becomes Strong: Journeying Through Each Stage of the Life Cycle. Toronto, Ontario, Canada

PRACTICAL TRAINING SESSIONS

BASIC CARE-GIVING SKILLS FOR PROPER CARE OF THE ELDERLY

Introduction to Caregiving and Personal Care Services

Olayinka Ajomale, the Executive Director of the Centre on Ageing, Development & Rights of Older Persons (CADROP), trained participants on the basics of caregiving. He began with an overview of caregiving, defining it as the provision of care for individuals who are unable to care for themselves and examined the two types of caregiving: formal caregiving, which involves paid care by trained professionals, and informal caregiving, which is unpaid and often provided by family members, friends, and volunteers.

Different types of care settings were explored, including residential facilities such as old people's homes, nursing homes, daycare centres, retirement villages, and home care. He also highlighted the importance of activities of daily living (ADL) and the role of caregivers in assisting with the associated tasks such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation, and social activities. A significant portion of his presentation focused on the duties of caregivers, including checking vital signs, conducting personal hygiene tasks, assisting with mobility, managing incontinence, and maintaining a clean-living environment. The importance of caregiver skills was emphasized, including empathy, communication, observation, time management, interpersonal skills, organization, cleanliness, patience, flexibility, initiative, physical strength, and stamina.

He emphasized that confidentiality, dignity and respect, privacy, safety, individuality, record keeping, choice and preference, and equality and inclusion were the principles of care and therefore served as guiding principles for caregivers in providing high-quality care and maintaining the well-being and autonomy of care receivers. In conclusion, the presenter highlighted the purpose of caregiving as providing a quality life, free from stress and discomfort, to individuals who are unable to care for themselves and it was important to fill this gap with diligence and passion recognizing that the essential role of caregivers lies in enhancing the lives of care receivers.



Recommendations:

- Advocate for the adoption of existing legal and regulatory frameworks that would be deterrents and address issues of elder abuse. Particularly frameworks like the Elder Rights Bill which aims to establish special privileges for senior citizens in Nigeria, along with penalties for breaching the provisions outlined in the bill. Also, the National Ageing Policy on ageing too addresses certain areas around ageing should be effectively implemented
- Promote the use of hot-lines like Dew Drop's 070-DEWCARE hotline to report incidences of abuse across the nation. The hot-lines provide a means for engaging the relevant security agencies and CSOs to action in the community where the abuse is being perpetrated.
- Conduct comprehensive assessments to accurately determine the specific type of care needed for individuals, considering their unique circumstances and preferences.
- Place greater emphasis on home and community care, promoting the concept of "natural habitation" to provide care in familiar and comfortable environments.
- Develop individualized care plans that integrate both medical and social aspects to address the holistic needs of care receivers.
- Adopt a person-centred approach, ensuring that care is tailored to the individual's preferences, choices, and values.
- Involve family members in the care planning process, fostering collaboration and support to create a supportive care environment.
- Establish mechanisms for periodic evaluation of service provision, monitoring the quality of care and ensuring compliance with regulations and standards.
- Maintain accurate and comprehensive documentation of service users and activities within caregiving facilities, enabling effective communication and continuity of care.
- Utilize modern technology to enhance monitoring systems, enabling the detection and prevention of abuse, neglect, and mistreatment.
- Prioritize the recruitment and training of well-qualified personnel, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver optimal care.



HEALTHY LIFE STYLE MANAGEMENT FOR THE ELDERLY: NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

Christiana Asala, the Executive Director of COGNITO and a development nutrition specialist, shed light on key aspects of nutrition and dietetics that significantly impact our overall well-being. Emphasizing the significance of unprocessed foods over processed alternatives, she underscored the crucial role of proper nutrition in shaping our bodies' responses. Building on the notion that ageing begins in infancy, it became evident that establishing a strong foundation is vital.



Key highlights:

The Interconnected Systems of the Body:

Our bodies consist of various systems that work together harmoniously. A noteworthy interaction occurs between the brain and the gut. The brain-gut connection refers to the bidirectional communication between the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord) and the enteric nervous system (a complex network of nerves embedded in the walls of the gastrointestinal tract). This intricate connection allows for constant communication and coordination between the brain and the gut. Research has demonstrated that optimal functioning of both these systems is essential for our overall well-being. When the brain and gut are in sync, they promote improved health and vitality.

The Gut Microbiome and its Impact:

The human gut is home to a delicate balance of microorganisms that play a crucial role in our health. Unfortunately, our lifestyle and dietary choices can disrupt this balance, leading to adverse effects on other body systems. Christiana Asala highlighted the potential consequences of high-sugar diets, which can overwhelm the gut microorganisms, triggering a condition known as leaky gut syndrome. Over time, this can result in chronic inflammation, negatively impacting overall health.

To promote a healthy lifestyle and well-being during the ageing process, specific recommendations were put forth during the discussion:

- **Balanced Diet with a Focus on Fiber:** A balanced diet is of utmost importance, incorporating all essential food groups. For the elderly, it is crucial to prioritize nutrient-rich foods. The inclusion of fibre-rich foods, which have healing properties for the gut, was emphasized. These can include whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, and nuts. Adequate fibre intake supports digestive health and overall well-being.
- **Quality Sleep:** Sufficient and restful sleep has been shown to enhance overall bodily functioning, including the optimal performance of the gut. It is important to prioritize good sleep hygiene to ensure adequate rest. Quality sleep also plays a role in reducing anxiety, which has a direct relationship with gut health. Creating a peaceful sleep environment and establishing regular sleep patterns are beneficial practices for the elderly.
- **Mental Health Promotion:** Taking care of mental health is vital for overall well-being. It was highlighted that diet, rest, and exercise are interconnected with mental health. By nourishing the body with a balanced diet, providing adequate rest, and engaging in regular physical activity, individuals can support their mental well-being. Remembering the brain-gut connection, it is evident that nurturing the gut through proper nutrition positively impacts mental health.
- **Stress Management:** Chronic stress can have detrimental effects on the body, including the gut. It is important for the elderly to adopt stress management techniques to mitigate its negative impact. Engaging in activities such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, pursuing hobbies, and seeking social support can help manage stress levels effectively.
- **Regular Exercise:** Physical activity is a key component of healthy aging. Regular exercise improves cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles and bones, and promotes mental well-being. The elderly should engage in activities that suit their abilities and preferences, such as walking, swimming or yoga. Consultation with healthcare professionals or physical therapists can help determine suitable exercise routines.



CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INTERGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The session on "Cultural Diversity and Intergenerational Knowledge Sharing in Caregiving ", facilitated by Uzoamaka Okoroafor, Dew Drop Foundation, focused on the significance of these concepts in enhancing the quality of caregiving and provided practical strategies to implement them. The workshop covered two main sub-topics: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Caregiving and Promoting Intergenerational Knowledge Sharing.

Regarding cultural diversity, the workshop emphasized the importance of recognizing and celebrating different cultures, traditions, beliefs, and values among individuals receiving care. Person-centred care for the elderly involves respecting individual preferences, effective communication, avoiding stereotypes and biases, promoting inclusion and equity, and maintaining the overall quality of care. Practical strategies for understanding diverse cultural backgrounds included building trust and rapport, engaging in active listening, observing non-verbal cues, conducting research, seeking guidance, and attending cultural events.



In terms of intergenerational knowledge sharing, the workshop highlighted the value of exchanging knowledge, experiences, and skills between different generations. Older individuals possess wisdom, life experience, historical perspectives, and cultural insights that benefit younger caregivers. Intergenerational knowledge sharing promotes learning, personal growth, emotional support, bridging technological gaps, and strengthening family bonds.

The session concluded by emphasizing the importance of cultural diversity and intergenerational knowledge sharing in caregiving. It encouraged attendees to incorporate these concepts into their caregiving practices to create an inclusive and person-centred environment that enhances the well-being and happiness of the elderly population.

CARE FOR PERSONS LIVING WITH ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA

The session, delivered by Miss Osanyem Claire Anenih representing Alzheimer's Disease Foundation (ADF), assisted caregivers with methods of coping with the challenges of caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, offering support, and helping them find fulfillment in their caregiving journey.



The session highlighted several key points:

- **The Alzheimer's and dementia care journey:** Caring for someone with Alzheimer's or dementia can be a long and emotionally challenging journey. Millions of caregivers worldwide are involved in providing essential support to individuals living with this disease and the importance of their caregiving efforts cannot be over-emphasized.
- **Challenges and rewards of Alzheimer's care:** Caregiving can be rewarding despite the difficulties and grief experiences that caregivers may face as they witness their loved ones' memories fade and skills deteriorate. Rewards such as deepened connections, changed perspectives on life, and a sense of purpose and accomplishment are worth noting.
- **Caregiving in different stages:** Caregiving can happen at different stages of the disease and the session provided guidance for caregivers in the early and middle stages of Alzheimer's or dementia. She stressed the need for acceptance, dealing with conflicting emotions, utilizing available resources, and preparing for future challenges.
- **Preserving independence:** Tips were given for slowing down the progression of symptoms, helping with short-term memory loss, and promoting healthy lifestyle changes for both the caregiver and the person living with dementia.
- **Sources of caregiver support:** Caregivers were encouraged to seek help from various sources, including in-home assistance, adult day care programs, respite care, and support groups. Specific organizations like the Alzheimer's Disease Foundation and Gabi Williams Alzheimer's Foundation were mentioned as valuable resources.
- **Making time for reflection:** Caregivers were encouraged to keep a daily journal, practice gratitude, value their loved one's remaining abilities, and develop emotional awareness to better cope with the challenges of caregiving.

- **Maintaining structure and familiarity in daily activities**, involving the person with dementia to the best of their abilities, and engaging in sensory and outdoor activities
- **Coping with changes in communication:** Strategies for communicating effectively with individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia were provided, including being patient, using appropriate body language, and speaking slowly and clearly.

RECORDS / INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN CAREGIVING

The session on "Records/Information Management in Caregiving" was delivered by Margaret Chichi Nkire, LEADIN Africa and, Wetleng Jennifer Geoffrey, Confidence Aged Care Home (CACH). The presentation emphasized the importance of records management in caregiving and its role in enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and transparency. Key topics covered during the presentation included client record management information, characteristics of good record keeping/management, processes of casework records keeping and management, records life cycle, reasons for keeping records, principles of records keeping/management, recommendations, and conclusion.



Highlights of the Presentation:

- Record/information management in caregiving of the elderly is inevitable, as casework processes cannot be conducted without proper record keeping: records management contributes to organizational efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, and transparency.
- Client record management information needs to be comprehensive and integrated data that would assist in social diagnosis, treatment, and improved services and practices and the characteristics of good record keeping/management are to be followed including reliability, integrity, compliance, comprehensiveness, and systematic management of records.
- The reasons for keeping records include guarding against medical triad, ensuring continuity of care, preventing medication mishaps, and decreasing caregiver stress while adhering to the principles of records keeping/management which include knowing the tools of record-keeping, maintaining confidentiality and integrity, using clear and concise language, avoiding overwriting, recording only relevant information, and maintaining neutrality.

Recommendations:

- Caregivers should receive training on the characteristics, principles, and uses of record keeping in caregiving to the elderly.
- Caregiver organizations should make it compulsory for their caregivers to keep records of each step taken during the caregiving process.



CLOSING REMARKS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Kaseina Dashe brought the Elderly CoP Growth Clinic to a close. She thanked participants on behalf of VOICE Nigeria, COGNITO and NINE and encouraged organizations in attendance that had not joined the learning focused community of practice to get on board with the Elderly CoP to ensure a wider reach across their communities.



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The summary of recommendations suggested throughout the 2-Day Growth Clinic include:

Policy and Advocacy

- Advocate for the development of policies and guidelines for older persons in incarceration and IDP camps.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to ensure inclusion of older persons in policy discussions.
- Push for the signing and implementation of bills providing support for incarcerated older individuals.
- Strengthen advocacy efforts and raise awareness of challenges faced by older persons.
- Effective implementation of the National Policy on Ageing.
- Develop comprehensive policies that consider the needs of older persons with disabilities.
- Government engagement and consultation with older persons with disabilities.

Healthcare and Support Services

- Mobilize resources for comprehensive healthcare services for older persons.
- Strengthen social safety nets and financial support for older persons.
- Seek professional assistance and timely intervention for cognitive decline.
- Address stigma and raise awareness of dementia and mental health.
- Provide training programs for caregivers and enhance their skills in elder care.
- Develop accessible facilities and support services for older persons with disabilities.



Elder Abuse Prevention and Response

- Strengthen public awareness of elder abuse and reporting mechanisms.
- Provide training and support for caregivers in identifying and addressing elder abuse.
- Foster collaboration among stakeholders for a coordinated response to elder abuse.
- Advocate for the implementation and enforcement of legislation against elder abuse.

Social Connection and Community Engagement

- Promote social connections among older adults and combat social isolation.
- Conduct ongoing educational initiatives for older adults about their rights and resources.
- Organize community events, support groups, and activities for older adults.

Caregiving and Long-term Care

- Conduct comprehensive assessments and develop individualized care plans.
- Adopt a person-centred approach and involve family members in care planning.
- Establish mechanisms for evaluation and documentation of care services.
- Utilize technology for monitoring and prevention of abuse.
- Recruit and train well-qualified personnel in caregiving.



ANNEXES- AGENDA

**Voice Elderly Community of Practice
Welcomes you to her 2-day Learning Activities**

Theme: “Growth Clinic Workshop”

Date: 14th -15th June, 2023

Venue: Plot 649, Cadastral Zone B02, Near American Int’l School, Durumi Area I Garki, 731 Sentinel Crescent, 900104, Abuja

Agenda - DAY 1

S/N	Activity	Time	Responsibility
1	Arrival and Registration of participants	08:30am – 09:00am	PCMP/DDF
2	Opening Prayer/National Anthem	09:00am – 09:05am	PCMP
3	Formal Introduction of participants	09:05 -09:30am	DOF
4	Welcome Address	09:30am – 09:45am	DDF
5	Opening Remark	09:45am – 10:00am	Voice
6	Overview of Voice Elderly CoP.	10:00am – 10:30am	DDF
7	Tea Break/Group Photograph	10:30am – 11:00am	All participants
8	Presentation: Issues of older persons	11:00am – 12:00am	CADROP
9	Panel Discussion – Eldercare Realities in various settings	12:00am -01:00pm	CAPIO, DDF, CARE, ADF, MHDF, LEADIN AFRICA
10	Growth Clinic	01:00pm – 02:00pm	Cognito-NINE
11	Lunch Break	02:00pm -02:30pm	All participants
12	Let’s share our take home Lessons	02:30pm – 02:45pm	CAPIO
13	Vote of Thanks & Closing	02:45pm – 03:00pm	LEADIN AFRICA

PARTICIPANT LIST

S/N	NAME	ORGANIZATION	SEX
1	Ugbor Anne Anulika	Dew Drop Foundation	F
2	Egbuna Uchenna	YSAD	M
3	Okoye Samuel O	Dew Drop Foundation	M
4	Confidence Ezeala	Gender Mobile Initiative	F
5	Jang Charles .A.	COGNITO	M
6	Olamosu Grace	Dew Drop Foundation	F
7	Richard Nwaya	NCCE ABUJA	M
8	Anthony Chukwudi Edeh	Dew Drop Foundation	M
9	Uzoamaka Okoroafor	Dew Drop Foundation	F
10	Nsofor Chisom	SAFEI	F
11	Patience Godwin		F
12	Abiola Ayodele		F
13	Obinna Nwagbara	YSAD	M
14	Akala Temitope	K&TRC	F
15	Henry Mbene	COSROPIN	M
16	Samuel Walter	AFRICAN CARIBBEAN HERITAGE ALLIANCE	M
17	Dajai Emmanuel	COGNITO	M
18	Jummai Oboge	Dew Drop Foundation	F
19	Aderogba George	NAN (REPORTER)	M

PARTICIPANT LIST

S/N	NAME	ORGANIZATION	SEX
20	Ndidichukwu Odoh	NAN (REPORTER)	F
21	Ogidi Njideka Susan	DEW DROP FOUNDATION	F
22	Ajuma Edwina Ogiri	PERSECOND NEWS ONLINE	F
23	Nwangwu Chukwunuike	CAPIO	M
24	Nwodo Uchechukwu	PCMP	F
25	Imonikiro Gift Ewomazino	GRAF	F
26	Nwanneka Okolo	LIFT SAZUM	F
27	Nsofor Chisom	SAFEHOST	F
28	Adjara Favour .A.	CARE/PWD	F
28	Caroline Iyiola	COGNITO	F
30	Sis Mary Rosanna Emenusiobi	CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT OF NIGERIA	F
31	Cedric Owuru	VOICE/OXFAM	M
32	Ekujereoye Beck Obinna	DISABILITY ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE	M
33	Cynthia Azinwa	COSROPIN	F
34	Senator Eze Ajoku	COSROPIN	M
35	Vivian Ugwu	DEW DROP FOUNDATION	F
36	Dr Danladi Erisa	MOTHERHEN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE	F
37	Binta Suleiman Jalo	KIDS AND TEENS RESCUE CENTRE	F
38	Joshua Ibrahim	COGNITO-NINE	M
39	Kaseina Dashe	COGNITO	F

PARTICIPANT LIST

S/N	NAME	ORGANIZATION	SEX
40	Margaret Chichi Nkire	LEADIN AFRICA	F
41	Agatha Nnaji	DEW DROP FOUNDATION	F
42	Christiana Asala	COGNITO	F
43	Etoro Inyong	CAPIO	F
44	Amb Uzoezi Imonikiro	COSROPIN	F
45	Osanyem Claire Anenih	ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE FOUNDATION (ADF)	F
46	Ogunmoyela Elizabeth	DUNSIN OGUNMOYELA FOUNDATION	F
47	Pillah T. Benedicta	THE ALBINO FOUNDATION	F
48	Obinna Okenna C.	INTERNATIONAL PREVENTION OF ELDER ABUSE	M
49	Ogunbameru Christine Osen	DEW DROP FOUNDATION	F
50	Eunice Enoch	COGNITO	F
51	Wetleng Jennifer Geoffrey	Confidence Aged Care Home (CACH)	F
52	Ajiga Fidelis Adikpe	Confidence Aged Care Home (CACH)	M
53	Patience Ike	DEW DROP INSTITUTE	F
54	Afi Ikori John	ACHA	M
55	Abdulrahman Alkal	SOCEITY FOR ACTION ON AGEING IN AFRICA	M
56	Kim Dashong	COGNITO	M
57	Olayinka Ajomale	CARDROP	M
58	Andrew Ochu-Baiye	OMUHA INITIATIVE -RAPPORTEUR	M

PARTICIPANT LIST

S/N	NAME	ORGANIZATION	SEX
59	Timothy Avidime	COGNITO	M
60	Nkemka Nwobu	DEW DROP FOUNDATION	F
61	Chioma Jane Samuel	DEW DROP FOUNDATION	F
62	Bridget M. Udoaka	BRIMAX CARE FOR THE AGED FOUNDATION	F
63	Glory Dauda	FAUTSUAM FOUNDATION	F
64	Emmanuel Useh	BIG MEDIA HOUSE	M

COMPREHENSIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Advocate for the development of policies and guidelines that consider the unique needs and vulnerabilities of older persons in incarceration and correctional facilities.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, to ensure the inclusion of older persons in policy discussions and decision-making processes.
- Push for the signing and implementation of a bill that provides comprehensive support and services for incarcerated older individuals.
- Develop capacity-building programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of personnel working with older persons in correctional facilities.
- Raise awareness and combat stigma surrounding older persons in incarceration and who have been released through community engagement and education campaigns.
- Develop and implement specific policies that address the unique needs of older persons in IDP camps, including healthcare, social support, and psychosocial services.
- Mobilize resources and engage relevant stakeholders to provide comprehensive healthcare services, including regular check-ups and access to necessary medications.
- Strengthen advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the challenges faced by older persons in IDP camps and promote the allocation of resources for their well-being.
- CSOs could explore the possibility of partnering with Healthcare Maintenance Organizations (HMO) to provide healthcare coverage and services to older persons in IDP camps.
- Consider alternative approaches, such as privatization of the camps, to improve the living conditions and overall well-being of older persons in IDP camps.
- Promote sustenance farming practices: Engage older persons in sustainable farming practices to provide them with occupation, access to food, and a consistent source of nutrition. This approach can enhance their well-being and contribute to their overall health.
- Train caregivers in Elder-care: Provide training programs for caregivers in the community to ensure that older persons receive proper care and support. Educating the community about the importance of caring for the elderly can help create a culture of respect and support for older persons.
- Holistic Approach through Collaboration: the government could adopt a holistic approach in addressing the issues faced by older persons. A multi-sectoral effort involving collaboration among government agencies, civil society organizations, private sector entities, multinational organizations, and international donors. This would enable comprehensive policy development and implementation.
- Effective Implementation of National Policy on Ageing: Proper implementation and monitoring of the national policy on ageing approved on February 10, 2021 at the FEC meeting presided over by Ex-President Muhammadu Buhari. Merely enacting laws is insufficient; continuous evaluation and progress tracking are vital. Involving civil society organizations in the monitoring process can provide insights into the effectiveness of the policies and ensure that older persons are the primary beneficiaries.

COMPREHENSIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Strengthening Social Safety Nets:** Miss Nkire emphasized the significance of social safety nets, particularly in the form of financial support for older persons. She praised the efforts of Lagos State in implementing such measures but stressed the need for improvement across other regions. Access to a reliable safety net would enable older persons to meet their daily needs independently, reducing dependence on families for financial support.
- **Seek Professional Assistance:** Recognizing the early signs of cognitive decline, Miss Anenih emphasized the importance of seeking professional help. Timely intervention and diagnosis can help individuals and their families navigate the challenges associated with cognitive loss more effectively.
- **Addressing Stigma:** Miss Anenih acknowledged that stigma surrounding dementia often prevents individuals and families from seeking help. In some communities, people may face discrimination or social isolation due to misconceptions about mental health. She encouraged open discussions to raise awareness and challenge stereotypes surrounding cognitive loss.
- **Shifting from "Help" to "Assist":** Miss Favour encouraged the use of the term "assist" instead of "help" when providing support to elderly persons with disabilities. By promoting a sense of empowerment and dignity, individuals and families can actively contribute to improving the lives of older persons with disabilities.
- **Government Engagement:** the need for the government to engage in dialogue with elderly persons with disabilities to better understand their specific needs and concerns. Collaboration with disability organizations representing elderly persons would help shape policies and initiatives that address their unique challenges.
- **Comprehensive Policies:** While Nigeria has the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, implementation remains limited. Miss Favour highlighted the necessity of developing policies that encompass all aspects of ageing with disabilities, considering the different factors that impact older persons with proper implementation and monitoring.
- **Consultation and Implementation:** government should consult with elderly persons with disabilities and their representative organizations to gather insights on their needs and preferences. This inclusive approach would ensure that policies are comprehensive and that they effectively address the challenges faced by older persons with disabilities.
- **Adequate Facilities and Support:** Miss Favour recommended establishing dedicated facilities that cater to the needs of older persons with disabilities. These facilities would serve as accessible and reliable resources for the elderly, offering assistance and support when required.
- **Strengthen public awareness:** Develop targeted awareness campaigns to educate the general public about the signs of elder abuse and the importance of reporting incidents.

COMPREHENSIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Training and support for caregivers:** Organize training programs for caregivers to enhance their skills in providing care to older adults and equip them with knowledge on identifying and addressing elder abuse.
- **Foster collaboration:** Establish partnerships with relevant stakeholders such as nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and healthcare providers to create a coordinated response to elder abuse cases.
- **Establish reporting mechanisms:** Advocate for the establishment of safe and accessible reporting mechanisms, ensuring that older adults feel comfortable and supported when reporting instances of abuse.
- **Policy advocacy:** Work towards the implementation and enforcement of legislation that safeguards the rights and well-being of older adults, including stronger penalties for elder abuse perpetrators.
- **Social connection initiatives:** Promote social connections among older adults by organizing community events, support groups, and activities that encourage interaction and combat social isolation.
- **Continuous education:** Conduct ongoing educational initiatives to raise awareness among older adults about their rights, resources available to them, and ways to protect themselves from abuse.
- She encouraged parents to focus on training at the beginning. Relating this to elder-care abuse in the context of the African-Nigeria society this means to also begin with culture
- She encouraged participants to start early in making lifestyle choices to reduce old-age related challenges, including: proper financial planning (saving and functional spending), regular exercise, water intake for proper hydration, restful sleep and to generally put their health first.
- Advocate for the adoption of existing legal and regulatory frameworks that would be deterrents and address issues of elder abuse. Particularly frameworks like the Elder Rights Bill which aims to establish special privileges for senior citizens in Nigeria, along with penalties for breaching the provisions outlined in the bill. Also, the National Ageing Policy on ageing too addresses certain areas around ageing
- Promote the use of hot-lines like Dew Drop's 070-DEWCARE Hotline to report incidences of abuse across the nation. The hot-lines provide a means for engaging the relevant security agencies and CSOs to action in the community where the abuse is being perpetrated.
- Conduct comprehensive assessments to accurately determine the specific type of care needed for individuals, considering their unique circumstances and preferences.

COMPREHENSIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Place greater emphasis on home and community care, promoting the concept of "natural habitation" to provide care in familiar and comfortable environments.
- Develop individualized care plans that integrate both medical and social aspects to address the holistic needs of care receivers.
- Adopt a person-centred approach, ensuring that care is tailored to the individual's preferences, choices, and values.
- Involve family members in the care planning process, fostering collaboration and support to create a supportive care environment.
- Establish mechanisms for periodic evaluation of service provision, monitoring the quality of care and ensuring compliance with regulations and standards.
- Maintain accurate and comprehensive documentation of service users and activities within caregiving facilities, enabling effective communication and continuity of care.
- Utilize modern technology to enhance monitoring systems, enabling the detection and prevention of abuse, neglect, and mistreatment.
- Prioritize the recruitment and training of well-qualified personnel, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver optimal care.
- **Balanced Diet with a Focus on Fiber:** A balanced diet is of utmost importance, incorporating all essential food groups. For the elderly, it is crucial to prioritize nutrient-rich foods. Christiana emphasized the inclusion of fibre-rich foods, which have healing properties for the gut. These can include whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, and nuts. Adequate fibre intake supports digestive health and overall well-being.
- **Quality Sleep:** Sufficient and restful sleep has been shown to enhance overall bodily functioning, including the optimal performance of the gut. It is important to prioritize good sleep hygiene to ensure adequate rest. Quality sleep also plays a role in reducing anxiety, which has a direct relationship with gut health. Creating a peaceful sleep environment and establishing regular sleep patterns are beneficial practices for the elderly.
- **Mental Health Promotion:** Taking care of mental health is vital for overall well-being. It was highlighted that diet, rest, and exercise are interconnected with mental health. By nourishing the body with a balanced diet, providing adequate rest, and engaging in regular physical activity, individuals can support their mental well-being. Remembering the brain-gut connection, it is evident that nurturing the gut through proper nutrition positively impacts mental health.

COMPREHENSIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Stress Management:** Chronic stress can have detrimental effects on the body, including the gut. It is important for the elderly to adopt stress management techniques to mitigate its negative impact. Engaging in activities such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, pursuing hobbies, and seeking social support can help manage stress levels effectively.
- **Regular Exercise:** Physical activity is a key component of healthy aging. Regular exercise improves cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles and bones, and promotes mental well-being. The elderly should engage in activities that suit their abilities and preferences, such as walking, swimming or yoga. Consultation with healthcare professionals or physical therapists can help determine suitable exercise routines.
- **Caregivers** should receive training on the characteristics, principles, and uses of record keeping in caregiving to the elderly.
- **Caregiver organizations** should make it compulsory for their caregivers to keep records of each step taken during the caregiving process.

