

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 58TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY OF GYNAECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS OF NIGERIA (SOGON) HELD IN UYO FROM THE 26TH TO 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

Preamble

The 58th Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference of the Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON) was convened in Uyo, Nigeria, from the 26th to the 30th of November 2024. Under the overarching theme "**Sustaining Quality Maternal & Child Health in a Challenging Economy**" the conference discussed Nigeria's worsening economic conditions and how to improve her equally abysmal maternal and child health indices by providing and sustaining quality healthcare. The sub-themes were carefully selected to address critical facets of women's health and well-being in Nigeria. They are as follows:

- I. Strategies for Prevention of Gynaecological Cancers
- II. Mitigating Gender-based violence in Nigeria
- III. Improving uptake of family planning services in Nigeria

Day One: Preconference-1 and Advocacy Visit

The conference began with a preconference workshop on **Advanced Comprehensive Obstetrics, Surgical Skills Workshop** which was organised by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) in conjunction with SOGON at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital GOPD Seminar room. The traditional SOGON council meeting was held on the same day followed later by a courtesy visit to the Paramount ruler of Uyo, HRM Edidem Sylvanus Okon in his palace, where the SOGN council members were introduced by the LOC Chairman, Prof Emem Bassey. The significance of this year's theme was introduced by the SOGON President, Prof Okechukwu Ikpeze. The Paramount ruler was apprised of the theme and sub-themes of the conference and the rationale for the choice and formally invited to the opening ceremony which he accepted and later presented a souvenir to the SOGON president. The day ended with a dinner organised for the SOGON council members by the LOC at the poolside of Watbridge Hotel and Suites.

Day Two: Preconference workshop-2: Parallel pre-conference workshops, Advocacy for SOGON projects and Annual General Meeting

The Preconference workshops drew in more than 200 participants, offering hands-on training in three domains of obstetrics and Gynaecology:

- I. Colposcopy in Gynaecological Cancer Prevention
- II. The National Labour Care Guide and Intrapartum Care Guide: A hands-on Training.
- III. Early detection and treatment of PPH using the WHO EMOTIVE bundle: Competency-based training
- IV. Statistics in Gynaecological practice(Stata software Training)

The workshops allowed participants to engage actively in practical sessions focusing on these critical areas, while the SOGON Advocacy Workshop on Accelerating Measurable Progress and Leveraging Investments for Postpartum Haemorrhage Impact (AMPLI-PPHI) raised awareness of members on SOGON ongoing projects and partnerships. The advocacy workshop was chaired and Co-chaired by SOGON president, Prof Ikpeze and VP-2, Prof Aimakhu respectively.

The annual general meeting, led by President, Okechukwu Ikpeze began with an opening speech highlighting the remarkable achievements made during his first year in office. This was followed by the presentation of the secretariat's report and a detailed audited financial report for the year.

Day Three: Opening Ceremony and Scientific Conference

This marked the official opening ceremony, with over 350 participants, including dignitaries, members, and the media. His Excellency the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Eno was ably represented by the Deputy Governor, Her Excellency, Senator Akon Eyakenyi. In his opening remarks, Prof Emem Bassey, the LOC Chairman, welcomed everyone and underscored the essence of the conference—fostering knowledge exchange, research collaboration and skill acquisition aimed at elevating patient services.

Prof Okechukwu Ikpeze, as the President of SOGON, reiterated the profound significance of the conference's theme and subthemes.

The highlight of the opening ceremony was the keynote lecture delivered by Prof Innocent O. A. Ujah, mni, a renowned Gynaecologist, teacher and global health expert. Prof Ujah's presentation, titled "Sustaining Quality Maternal & Child Health in a Challenging Economy" underscored the alarming indices of maternal and child health in low- and middle-income countries especially in Nigeria with an economy currently at its lowest level. He outlined essential strategies to reverse this trend, shedding light on important measures crucial for achieving and sustaining maternal and Child health and improving the indices despite Nigeria's current economic difficulties.

The major highlight of the conference was the induction ceremony welcoming 120 new members into the society.

Day Four: Plenaries and Scientific sessions

The day started with the Prof O. K. Ogan Memorial Lecture presented by Professor Cyril Chukwudi Dim. Titled, ``**Advancing the African Regional Framework for Cervical Cancer Elimination in Nigeria: Enhancing Routine HPV Immunization and Defining the Next Steps**`, the lectures highlighted the burden disease course of Cervical Cancer, the World Health Organization Cervical Cancer Global Elimination Strategy, African Region Framework for Implementing the 90-70-90 Strategy, the Initiation of Routine HPV Immunization in Nigeria and the need for developing Routine Cervical cancer Screening and pre-cancer and Cancer treatment.

Observations

The conference discussions centred on the following:

- Maternal Health and Child health indices are still not satisfactory in comparison to SDG goals 2030.
- The Nigerian Economy is on the downtrend and Challenging for health care.
- Gender-based violence is still persistent and high despite efforts at enlightenment and efforts at reducing the scourge in Nigeria.
- Gynaecological cancers especially cervical cancer remain the second most common cancer among Nigerian women and it is entirely preventable.

- Family planning uptake is suboptimal in Nigeria.

Recommendations

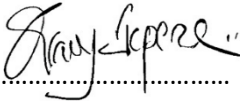
Based on these observations, the following recommendations were proposed:

- There is a need for increased health financing in our budget and judicious use of resources. Efforts should be intensified to increase insurance coverage of her citizens in order to out-of-pocket expenditure which is unnecessarily high for our depressing economy.
- Augmented access to healthcare through enhanced planning, equitable service delivery, and improved accountability and partnerships.
- Mass HPV vaccination campaigns should be sustained and advocacy to our religious and traditional leaders, to foster acceptance among adolescent girls.
- Encouraging community access to family planning commodities, dispelling myths, and ensuring obstetric care accessibility.
- SOGON aligns with the sector-wide approach of the Federal Ministry of Health in order to achieve its new health-sector blueprint.

Appreciations

1. The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR
2. The Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Eno
3. The Honourable Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Hon Muhammad Ali Pate
4. The Honourable Commissioner of Health Akwa Ibom State, Prof Augustine Umoh
5. Chief Medical Director Holifield Specialist Hospital, Uyo
6. Chief Medical Director, Goodhealth Specialist Clinic, Uyo
7. Chief Medical Director University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo
8. The SSA/PPG, Akwa Ibom State
9. The Paramount ruler of Uyo, HRM Edidem Sylvanus Okon
10. International Donor agencies, other sponsors and exhibitors.
11. Keynote Speaker, Prof Ujah I.A.O., mni

12. Prof Ogan Memorial Lecturer, Prof Cyril Dim
13. All SOGON members
14. All other invited guests
15. Member of the Press



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Prof Okechukwu Ikpeze
President, SOGON



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Prof. Azubuike Onyebuchi
Secretary General, SOGON