Report of NetCaRe campaign launch at Kokona LGA

Submitted to

NetWorks

Written by
Center for communication Programs Nigeria (CCPN)

Location:
Palace of the Royal Father, The Abaga of Toni, Garaku, Kokona LGA

November 2012
Acknowledgments

We appreciate the Special Guest of Honor, the First Lady of Nasarawa State, the wife of the Executive Governor, Hajia Salamatu Tanko Almakura, the wife of the Deputy Governor and her entourage for attending this very important event and for her keen interest and active involvement throughout the entire ceremony.

We appreciate the State Ministry of Health, under the leadership of the Honorable Commissioner of Health, Dr Emmanuel Akabe for their support and guidance.

We indeed appreciate His Royal Father, the Abaga of Toni, Dr Sylvester Ayih for his support from the campaign development stages. His support and commitment has been a source of inspiration and encouragement for the campaign team.

We are pleased that the leadership of Kokona LGA Honorable Joseph Okari, Owa and Honorable Umaru Musa Obakpa rose up to the occasion and were able to demonstrate support for the campaign launch, while they reiterated their support towards the implementation.

A big thank you to the CHVs for accepting to be part of the ‘army of young men and women’ who would interact with the community and improve their knowledge and skills on net care and repair.

We thank the RBM partners who made time to attend the launch.

A big thank you to the design team led by Mr Seyi Akintola worked tirelessly to make sure all campaign materials were ready on time. In the same vein, we also appreciate the Baltimore team who made useful input into the campaign materials.

The project manager, Mr Aboki Nawani and his coordinators, Alfred and Jerry did an excellent job ensuring the success of the launch.
Summary of events during the NetCaRe Campaign launch

The launch of the NetCaRe campaign took place on Wednesday the 30\textsuperscript{th} of October 2012. The program, which started close to midday, attracted top government dignitaries, representatives of the state ministry of health, local government executives, the Royal Father, Abaga of Toni, RBM partners, print and electronic media representatives from 6 outfits and community members. Over 600 guests were in attendance.

The highlight of the launch was the presentation of the media kit to the members of the press and a short interaction, which took place after the dignitaries left.

The launch had \textit{Her Excellency, the First Lady, and Wife of the Executive Governor}, Hajia Salamatu Tanko Almakura as the \textit{Special Guest of Honor}. In her convoy, was the wife of the Deputy Governor, wives of the members of House of Assembly, Female Government executives and her press crew.

The \textit{Honorable Commissioner of Health, Dr Emmanuel Akabe}, the \textit{Chief Host} could not attend but sent his representative in person of Alhaji Haruna Wakili, the Acting Director Pharmaceutical Services of the State Ministry of Health.

His Royal Highness, \textit{Dr Sylvester Ayih} was the \textit{father of the day}\textsuperscript{1}. The spacious ground in his palace was the venue for the event.

Kokona LGA was well represented by the \textit{TMC Chairman; Hon Joseph Okari Owa} (ably represented by his deputy) and \textit{TMC Chairman of Agwada} development area; \textit{Hon. Umaru Musa Obakpa}. They were the \textit{Hosts of the Day}.

\textsuperscript{1} Dr Sylvester gave the leader endorsement for the radio program. This was well received during the pretest.
Schedule of events
The program started after the arrival of the Special Guest of honour and her formidable entourage. The group was welcomed by the Royal Father in his palace before coming to the launch grounds.

*His Royal Highness, Dr Sylvester Ayih, receiving the Wives of the Executive and Deputy Governor in his palace.*

After opening prayers, the representative of the TMC Chairman, Kokona LGA delivered the welcome remarks. He welcomed all guests especially the First Lady and her entourage.

*The Deputy of the TMC Chairman presenting the welcome remarks*

He expressed the commitment of the LG to the success of the campaign as a demonstration of their commitment to the wellbeing of community members. HE expressed optimism that the community members would be proactive and would willingly carry out recommended net care and repair practices. He went on to pledge support with respect to time and resources to support the successful implementation of the campaign.

The Executive Director of CCPN, Babafunke Fagbemi provided some context about the behavior change communication campaign. She mentioned that at the end of the campaign, it is expected that community members would have been empowered with correct facts and equipped with the needed skills to care for and repair their nets to make them last for up to 4 years.
She mentioned that community members would have the opportunity to get these messages from very creative and interesting radio spots, simple, easy to understand print materials (posters and leaflets) and they will be visited by Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) who would be able to provide hands on support and demonstrate how to care for and repair their nets. She thanked the State and Local government for their support and hoped that the results of the campaign would offer RBM partners a model that can be replicated not only to other LGAs in the state but to Nigeria and possibly other African countries.

Presenting the CHVs, the project manager Mr Aboki Nawani said they had been trained and equipped and would serve as the liaison between the community and campaign officials. He said after the formal launch, they would receive their kit that would enable them to go about their duties in the 20 settlements identified.

Soliciting for support, Mr Aboki Nawani said, “we need to support them in the various communities so that they can succeed in Nasarawa state if it must be replicated in Nigeria”.

Just before the Coordinator for NetWorks, Mr Emmanuel Obi addressed the audience, Ms Andrea Brown bringing greetings from the Baltimore team went on to thank all dignitaries and guests for taking time to attend this very important program.
The NetWorks coordinator in Nigeria also thanked the dignitaries for making time and went on to highlight the objectives of the campaign as contributing to improving the quality of life of community members making sure mosquito nets last long to protect from malaria.

Addressing the media, he presented the media kit and expressed the organizers desire that the simplified information about the campaign contained in the press kit be highly publicized. Telling them to do all they can to use the press release and not relent in their efforts, as they are very key to the success of this campaign.

He reiterated, “This press kit is very important. It contains all the information you should use on radio, television, even among your colleagues, community radio and print materials”. He continued, “by doing this you will help us to project this campaign… let your nets last longer, it will save you from mosquito bite, if it saves you from mosquito bite, it will save you from catching malaria, you will not die from malaria.”

Reiterating, Mr Emmanuel said, Kokona LGA in Nasarawa state is the first recipient of this type of campaign not only in the country but in West Africa and also in the Continent.

After his remarks, the gathering was entertained to the traditional dance steps of the Mada cultural troupe.

After the entertainment, the Networks coordinator and Ms Andrea Brown handed out the press kit to gentlemen of the press in attendance².

² See page 12 for list of press in attendance
The press kit contained a letter of introduction, press release, campaign messages, fact sheet for leaders, samples of the campaign materials (a copy each of the posters and leaflet) and a complementary cap.

Giving goodwill messages, the representative of the National Coordinator (picture below), National Malaria Control Program expressed the program’s interest in this campaign being the first of its kind in the country. She rounded up by wishing the team huge success.
The COP IRS Nigeria, another RBM partner described the event as “another important landmark in the fight against malaria in Nasarawa state. The commitment of the government and USAID towards reducing the burden of malaria in Nigeria and Nasarawa state in particular is on display”.

According to him, the NetCaRe campaign could not have come at a better time. Applauding the organizers of the campaign, he went on to solicit for the support and cooperation of the leaders and people of Kokona LGA. He ended his goodwill remarks by saying “the fight against malaria is one we must win in Nasarawa state”.

The Royal Father, Dr Sylvester Ayih, the Chairman Council of Chiefs, was called upon to deliver his goodwill remarks. In his succinct and well-articulated speech, he recognized the organizers of the campaign and offered all a warm welcome to Kokona LGA.

With mixed feelings, he expressed his joy that the wife of the Executive Governor was present but expressed some regret because had he been given ample notice, he would have wanted to invite all his district and village heads
and all the women in the LGA to receive the First lady, whom he referred to as the mother of the ladies in the LGA. "You would have seen the women of Kokona LGA in their thousands and in their colors to welcome you into their midst."

According to him, he would have preferred a more elaborate reception because malaria is a significant health threat to members of his community. He went on to thank the organizers, and Her Excellency for coming to declare the campaign open. He was glad that Kokona was chosen as the first to launch this program. He declared that it is a great honor. He promised to share this message with other leaders that were not in attendance. He went on to say that during the joint traditional council meeting, all rulers, district and village heads would be enjoined to support the campaign and help to carry the program down to the grass root. He wished the program a great success.

After the remarks of His Royal Highness, the Executive Director then shared the radio spot "leaders endorsement" which HRH actually agreed to produce. The audience listened with rapt attention as he provided information about the campaign, encouraged all to cooperate with the campaign team and make sure nets are well cared for and repaired so all members of the LG would benefit from protection from mosquitoes that spread malaria.

The drama team engaged for the campaign entertained the gathering. The drama demonstrated the correct way to wash the net, with the moderator asking questions and the audience responding.
After the drama, the First Lady, Wife of the Executive Governor took the stand and delivered her speech at the end of which she declared the campaign open.

In her words she expressed her delight to attend this launch. The Netcare campaign is a BCC intervention aimed at increasing the care repair and of nets in selected communities and consequently reduce the incidence of malaria infection in Kokona LGA.
Stating that malaria is endemic in the state, and it is one of the most common causes of hospital visits in all age groups. She went on to affirm that it is important to note that everyone is at risk of malaria infection in Nasarawa state including children less than 5 years, pregnant women, visitors from non malaria regions, people living with HIV and sickle cell anaemia. She then flagged off the campaign and then went on to cut the tape unveiling the campaign materials. About 5 CHVs were called upon and the first lady presented them their materials. They received their Tshirt and cap, copies of the posters and leaflet, and CHV handbook.

The campaign launch came to a close around 2.45 pm and the dignitaries departed. The remaining CHVs received their materials and the campaign team, the Executive Director of CCPN, the NMCP representative and Ms Andrea Brown and the Networks coordinator, Emmanuel Obi, addressed them.
Media Coverage
The event received attention from the print and electronic media.

The evening news on the local radio station ran an excerpt of close to three minutes covering the highlights of the launch. (File to be shared by drop box).

One of the local newspapers, Eggonnews also had about half page coverage on the event. Though correctly titled "Nasarawa First Lady Launches NetCare Project", the initial information however mentioned that the campaign was to give out mosquito nets, it went on to comprehensively cover the highlights of the net care and repair campaign. Included in the write up was a picture of the first lady handing out campaign materials (NOT nets) to the representatives of the CHVs.

Names of Press in attendance
1. The Guardian – Garuba Ahmed
2. Precious FM - Yakubu Ibrahim Danjuma
3. Eggon News – Alogakho Michael Koju
4. Blue print – Tukur Ahmed
5. Daily Trust – Joseph Hio
6. Nasarawa Broadcasting Services (NBS) – Grace Amivikpa
7. Office of the First Lady of the state - Press officer