



# Half Year Newsletter

AUGUST 2023

# FOREWORD

Dear Members of the Health Policy Commission,

I am delighted to have the honour of writing the foreword for the inaugural edition of the Health Policy Commission Newsletter. This newsletter marks an important milestone in our collective efforts to shape policies and drive meaningful changes in the healthcare sector.

During the first half of the year, the Health Policy Commission actively engaged in a range of activities that aimed to have a positive impact on healthcare. Notably, the Commission played a significant role in the development of a transition pack and policy reform traction. These initiatives were instrumental in identifying key priorities for the new government, setting the stage for meaningful progress in the healthcare sector.

Furthermore, the Health Policy Commission successfully hosted its first General Assembly for 2023 on 31st March 2023. This crucial event provided a platform for engagement, bringing together both existing and new members to exchange ideas and set the agenda for the Policy Commission's activities going forward. The General Assembly served as an invaluable opportunity for health sector experts to come together, discuss critical issues, and collaboratively find solutions to the challenges faced by the Nigerian healthcare system, especially as it relates to health systems strengthening.

Through this maiden newsletter, we aim to provide you with valuable insights into the activities and achievements of the Health Policy Commission during the first half of 2023. Moreover, we intend to prepare you for the upcoming activities and initiatives that lie ahead in the second quarter.

I strongly urge each and every member to actively participate in the Policy Commission's activities. Your involvement is vital as we collectively drive reforms that not only ensure access to healthcare for all but also strive for a healthcare system that is equitable, efficient, and empowers every individual.

In conclusion, I express my deepest appreciation to all members of the Health Policy Commission for your unwavering commitment and dedication to advancing the healthcare sector in Nigeria. Your expertise, passion, and collaborative spirit continue to inspire us all as we work together to ensure a healthier future for our nation. Let us remain actively engaged, driving the necessary reforms and shaping policies that will pave the way for a resilient and inclusive healthcare system.

**Dr Mories Atoki**

Facilitator, Health Policy Commission

# INTRODUCTION

The Health Policy Commission (HPC) is one of the twelve (12) Policy Commissions of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group, with two thematic areas: Public Health and Health as a Business.

The overarching mandate of the HPC is to serve as a platform for public-private dialogue to drive reforms that guarantee not only health for all but health by all in the Nigerian health system. This necessitates that resources for health are evenly distributed and that essential health care is accessible to everyone while acknowledging that attaining a well-developed and better health sector will involve a shared commitment between the government and its national and international partners. This mandate is subsumed under the goal of attaining Universal Health Coverage (UCH), one of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The HPC also adopts the various Nigerian Economic Summit recommendations as it relates to fostering equality in access to health, ensuring quality health services and financial risk protection.



**Cross Section of Participants at the HPC General Assembly held at the Summit House on March 31, 2023**

# ACTIVITIES OF THE HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2023

## Transition Pack

2023 is a defining year for our nation, Nigeria, as we transitioned into a new government. The HPC recognises the transition period as critical and plans to engage the new government with a transition pack highlighting key issues the new administration needs to prioritise. The NESG is eager to play a key role in supporting a high-quality health system, as it is generally known that a well-functioning health system working in harmony is built on having trained and motivated health workers, well-maintained infrastructure, and a reliable supply of medicines and technologies backed by adequate funding, robust health plans and evidence-based policies.

The NESG hosted Policy Commission Leaders at a 3-day retreat in February 2023 to brainstorm the way forward for the nation focusing on sectors covered by the Policy Commissions. At the end of the retreat, a reform traction for the Health Sector and a transition pack to onboard the new government was developed.

## Stakeholder Engagements

### • Call for Proposals

To ensure Nigeria's health system's long-term viability and efficiency, the health system needs to be strengthened. Challenges exist in several areas, including financing, human resources, data management, governance, access to medicines and vaccines, and infrastructure. Given their significant impact

on the population's health, these issues must be addressed in an integrated and thorough manner. To this end, the Policy Commission in Q1 2023 called for proposals on Health Systems Strengthening from Health Sector Experts and received thirty-four (34) proposals. The development Research and Projects Centre (dRPC) supported the selection process with an independent and rigorous review of the submissions.

### • General Assembly

On Friday, 31st March 2023, the HPC hosted its first General Assembly with health sector experts in attendance. The General Assembly provided a platform to discuss Nigeria's critical health sector issues and proffer solutions to the identified problems.

The authors of the top 5 submissions to the HPC's call for proposals on Health Systems Strengthening also presented their proposals at the General Assembly. The recommendations and insights from the General Assembly have been included in the HPC's transition pack and will be used to onboard the new government.

### • Consultations With Other Policy Commissions

On Thursday, 16th March 2023, the HPC engaged the Energy, Manufacturing and Mining, Digital Economy, MSME CoP, Trade, Investment & Competitiveness, Infrastructure, Financial Markets and Financial Inclusion, and

# ACTIVITIES OF THE HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2023

the Governance and Institutions Policy Commission on the White Paper on Enhancing Local Production of Medicines and Vaccines, which was developed in 2022.

The White paper was used to engage several stakeholders, including the Federal Ministry of Health, the Health Sector Reform Committee headed by the former Vice President, Dr Yemi Osinbajo, and the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD) in 2022. However, in a meeting with the Director General of the NIPRD, the need for the White Paper to better reflect the role of Research and Development in the pharmaceutical industry was highlighted. The PC, therefore, engaged the other NESG Policy Commissions to gain further valuable insights from experts across various sectors of the economy.

Also, on the 21st and 23rd of June, 2023, the HPC met with the Manufacturing and Mining Policy Commission and the Trade Thematic Group of the NESG Trade Investment and Competitiveness Policy Commission. The meeting was aimed at brainstorming on specific sector-related issues to help improve Pharma production and trade in Nigeria.

- **Steering Committee Inauguration**

The HPC Steering Committee, the apex leadership structure of the Policy Commission, was inaugurated on Thursday, 23rd March 2023. The Steering Committee comprising public and private sector stakeholders would guide the HPC in the transition plans.

The first Steering Committee meeting after inauguration was held on Tuesday, 27th June 2023, where the Steering Committee members were brought up to date with the activities of the Policy Commission, and an engagement plan to onboard the new government was agreed on.

- **Engagement with UNICEF**

In line with the NESG's collaboration with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to scale a Child-Centred Agenda around Health, Education, Nutrition and Child Protection, the Health Policy Commission is focusing on strengthening the birth registration system in Nigeria.

On 27th April 2023, the HPC hosted a team from UNICEF to align on possible collaborations for UNICEF's agenda on the implementation of UNICEF's key advocacy agenda, which includes Child Health encompassing Food and nutrition, Child Protection which promotes legal identity and universal digital childbirth registration, and Child Education.

At the meeting, the PC and the UNICEF team deliberated on the robustness of priorities to improve and harmonise the legislative environment to administer viable civil registration and identity management systems, outlined the key value proposition to the President, and defined the policy and legislative directives the President needs to issue to give force to this priority area.

# ACTIVITIES OF THE HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2023

## • Other Stakeholder Engagements

On Friday, 24th March 2023, the HPC hosted a Roundtable themed "Healthcare Financing for Universal Health Coverage in Nigeria: Realities, Impediments & Recommendations" as part of its advocacy efforts for improved universal health coverage in Nigeria. The roundtable identified impediments to raising revenue and efficient public financial management within the health sector, mapped out a role for private sector investment, proposed models for public and private partnerships within the health sector, and provided recommendations to remedy the poor funding to healthcare in Nigeria.

The HPC, on Wednesday, 8th March 2023, was represented by Mr Efosa Idemudia, a member of the Health Policy Commission, at the Transition Technical Task Team Meeting, where transition priorities and modalities were discussed alongside other experts.

The HPC, represented by Dr Jesupelumi Adenihun, a member of the Health Policy Commission, attended a focused group discussion on "Advocating for Women's Leadership in the Healthcare Sector: Experiences and Strategies for Growth" on Thursday, 27th April 2023. The current realities of advocacy in women's leadership, women's leadership in the healthcare sector, and actionable strategies that will advance women's leadership in the healthcare sector nationwide were discussed at the event.

## Research Papers

The Health as a Business Thematic Group developed a White Paper on Attracting Funding for the Nigerian Health Sector and how to avoid pitfalls for the health sector players seeking investment. The report covers the opportunity for expansion for the health services sector, including major institutions that use cutting-edge technology and promote medical tourism, medium-sized, low-cost, high-efficiency hospitals that serve a wide range of income groups, and solo medical practitioners.

The Public Health Thematic Group has also begun consultations with other experts in updating the Enhancing Local Production of Medicines and Vaccines.

## Conclusion

The HPC, in the first half, began necessary preparations to engage the new government and would build on it in the next half to ensure that the new government is properly onboarded on priority issues that should be addressed in the short, medium and long term.

# **SNAPSHOT OF ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT IN THE SECOND HALF OF 2023**

- Launch of the White Paper on Attracting Funding for the Nigerian Health Sector and how to avoid pitfalls for the Health sector players seeking investment.
- Engage relevant MDAs with the paper on Attracting Funding for the Nigerian Health Sector and how to avoid pitfalls for the Health sector players seeking investment.
- Update the White Paper on Enhancing Local Production of Medicines and Vaccines
- Develop a Diagnostic Report on Healthcare Financing for Universal Health Coverage
- Engage relevant MDAs with the Diagnostic Report on Healthcare Financing for Universal Health Coverage.
- Undertake a project on health systems strengthening
- Develop a framework to engage the new government
- Engage the Nigerian government with the HPC Transition Pack
- Develop an advocacy paper to the Nigerian government addressing the need for an increase in public health spending in Nigeria should be prepared.
- Webinar and Workshop on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

# THE HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION LEADERSHIP



Dr Mories Atoki  
Facilitator, Health Policy  
Commission



Dr Seyi Vincent  
Anchor, Health Policy  
Commission



Dr Ola Brown, MFR  
Thematic Lead, Health as a  
Business Thematic Group



Dr Mariya Saleh  
Thematic Lead, Public  
Health Thematic Group



# PICTORIAL EXCERPTS FROM THE HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION GENERAL ASSEMBLY

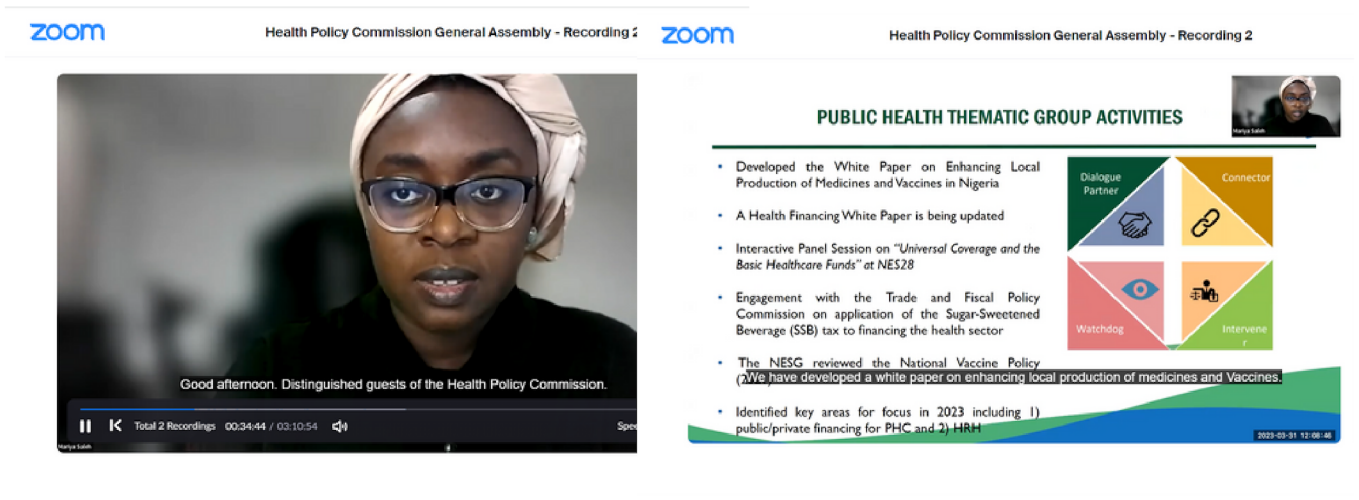


L-R: Mr. Patrick Ajah, Private Sector Co-Chair, HPC Steering Committee, Dr Mories Atoki, Facilitator, HPC and Mr. Siju Olanubi, Acting Head of the NESG Think Tank Operations at the HPC General Assembly



Cross Section of Participants at the General Assembly

# PICTORIAL EXCERPTS FROM THE HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Dr Mariya Saleh, Thematic Lead, Public Health Thematic Group making a presentation on the Group's activities at the HPC General Assembly



Participants presenting their Proposals at the General Assembly

# PICTORIAL EXCERPTS FROM THE POLICY COMMISSION LEADERS RETREAT

