



**The Challenge Initiative  
High Impact Approach Webinar Series:**

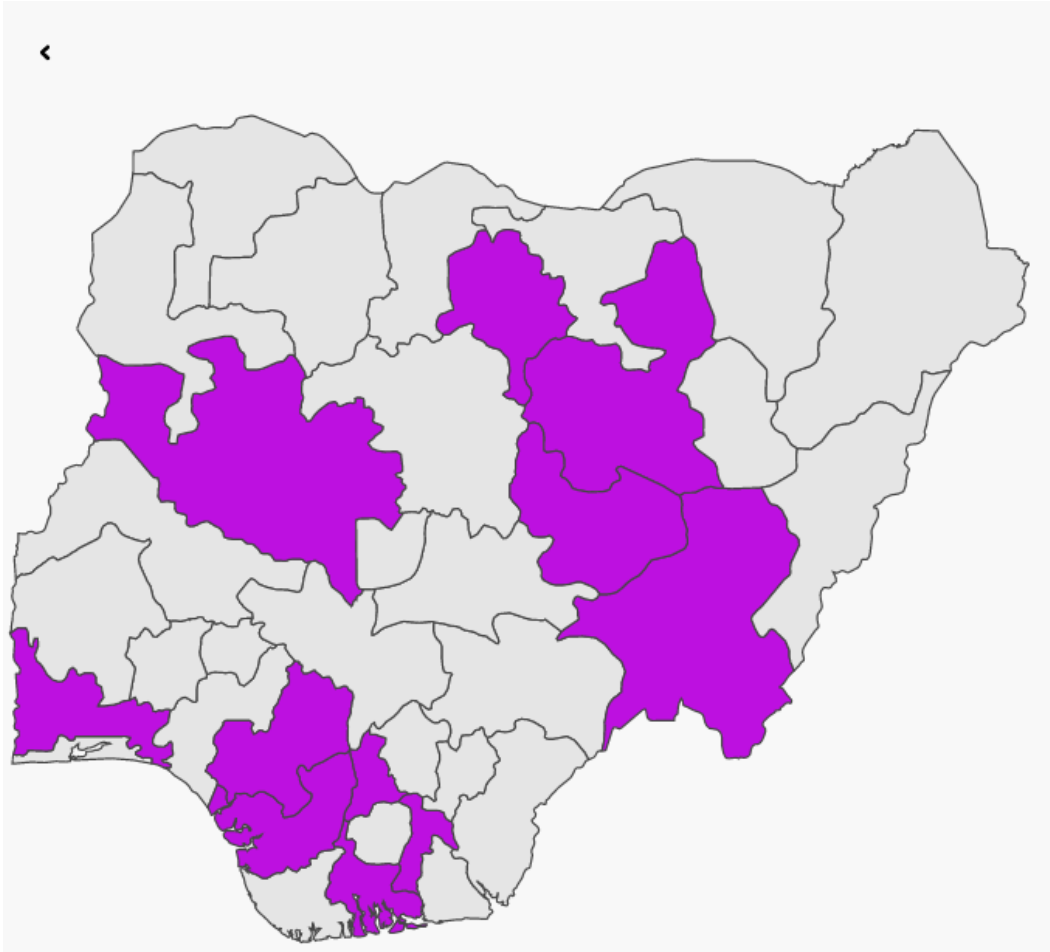
**Engaging with Interfaith Forum for  
Sustainable FP Interventions**

# TCI's Shared Vision

*A “business unusual”  
approach to scaling up  
and sustaining proven  
urban reproductive  
health solutions*



# TCI Nigeria Footprint



## Nigeria Key Approaches

**TCI Package:** Advocacy, Demand Generation, Service Delivery, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation and Adolescent and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health

**10 states - 78 LGAs - and 1 additional AYSRH-only state**

**TCI AYSRH Package:** Integrated in all 10 states (above) with 1 additional AYSRH focused state



# Webinar Objectives



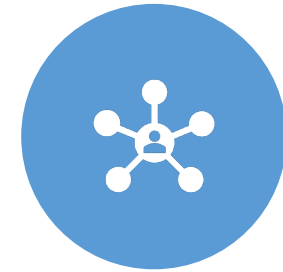
Introduce participants to this proven approach



Share key guidance and tips for how to implement it



Outline key considerations for making it sustainable



Offer an opportunity for Q&A so participants can adapt this approach to their context

# Presenters



Olukunle Omotoso is Researcher and Public Health Specialist in Health Promotion, Population and Reproductive Health with over 10 years of managing evidence-informed and beneficiary led programs in the following core areas: HIV/AIDS, Family Planning, MNCH, Nutrition, Mental Health, Malaria and Gender. He has experience in proposal development, program management and implementation of donor-funded projects. He is currently the Program Manager, Advocacy and Demand Generation, for the TCI project in Nigeria.



Dorcas Akila is the Program Manager, Advocacy and Adolescent and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health of The Challenge Initiative (TCI), Nigeria. She has 11 years' experience in strategic program development, policy and advocacy planning and implementation, health system strengthening, capacity building of government institutions and agencies, civil society organizations and community structures in Nigeria.

# Presenters

Victor Olusegun Obadina is a Pastor at Reigning Christ Chapel, OOUTH, Sagamu, Ogun State. He is a teacher of the Word of God with passion for leadership development, empowerment and growth. He is also passionate about the interphase between the church and societal issues, reproductive health and women empowerment. He is currently the Vice-Chairman of Interfaith Association of Family Planning & Childbirth Spacing, Ogun State Chapter.



Ustas Sulaiman Usman is the Sarkin Malaman Toro (Leader of the Council of Ulama Toro District), an Islamic Preacher and Deputy Imam Unguwan Laka Community Jumma at Mosque, in Toro LGA. He conducts Friday prayer sermons, preaching at Islamic gatherings and during Ramadan fast. He also teaches women and children in some islamiyya schools in Toro LGA. He is an active member of the Bauchi Advocacy for Sustainability Initiative and the Interfaith Forum for Women and Children's Health in Bauchi State.



# Background: Religion & Family Planning

- Religion is an important part of Nigerian culture
- Religious leaders are often looked up to for guidance in various aspect of life including FP/CBS decisions
- Contraceptive knowledge about FP methods in Nigeria is high
- Barriers to FP/CBS exist because of spread of myths and misconceptions among religious leaders
- Unmet needs for FP/CBS has increased from 16% (2013) to 19% (2018 NDHS)
- 66% of women are ready to take up FP/CBS methods if their religious leaders' support it (Adedini et al; 2018)





# The Interfaith Forum

- It is a group of passionate religious leaders
- Members are drawn from different religious bodies (Islam and Christian)
- Focus on raising FP/CBS champions among clerics to support and speak in support of FP
- Support faith-based dialogues
- Create awareness and inform communities on FP/CBS benefits



# Steps for Formation

- Mapping of religious groups/institutions and leaders
- 1-day orientation and formation of interfaith group
- 3-day capacity building exercise for interfaith group using the Islamic and Christian perspectives and sermon notes on FP/CBS and reporting
- Develop a 12-month annual operational plan to guide implementation



The Islamic and Christian perspectives and sermon notes on FP can be found here on TCI-U: <https://tciurbanhealth.org/lessons/interfaith-forum/>



# Implementation



Interfaith forum members hold routine meetings (monthly or quarterly)



Conduct step-down engagements for other clerics



Serve as champions to others influential religious leaders in their domain



Engage followers through their different religious platforms



Track, document and disseminate results



Liaise with other platforms (Advocacy Core Group, Media, etc.) in the state to amplify FP/CBS



# Benefits of the approach



Mitigate family planning barriers



Dispel myths and misconception about religion and FP/CBS



Encourage women of reproductive age to take up FP/CBS methods





## Roles of Interfaith Group in Family Planning Investment and Youth Involvement: Ogun State Experience

### **Pastor Victor Olusegun OBADINA**

- Role of Interfaith Group in Family Planning Investment and Youth Involvement

## Interfaith Group and Male Involvement in Family Planning Intervention: Bauchi State Experience



### Ustaz Suleiman Usman Toro

- Interfaith Group and male involvement for FP
- Socio-cultural and religious barrier to FP and the role of the Interfaith Group

# What Are Some of TCI's Results?

Over 400 religious' leaders are publicly speaking in support of FP/CBS

Hundreds of thousand of followers have been reached with FP/CBS messages using different religious platforms

Steady acceptance, increase visibility and public endorsement of FP/CBS among key religious leaders and bodies

Activities of religious leaders have significantly contributed to FP/CBS uptake across the three initial states – Delta (40%), Bauchi (33%) and Niger (6%)



# Challenges & Key Considerations for Adaptation

- Disagreements over “acceptable” contraceptive methods-Modern and Traditional methods
- Diversification of religious groups with different ideologies on FP/CBS
- Use of appropriate framing to foster buy-in
- Flexibility in membership composition to allow different perspectives to avoid any backlash.
- In-depth analysis of the religious context on FP/CBS is key in implementing this approach

# What Have We Learned?

- Religious leaders are key in facilitating mindset change and driving sustainability: <https://tciurbanhealth.org/driving-sustainability-by-changing-religious-leaders-mindsets-in-bauchi-state-nigeria/>
- Both Islam and Christianity do not forbid family planning
- Speaking publicly in support of FP/CBS by religious leaders is key to improving uptake of FP/CBS services
- Interfaith forum goes beyond addressing myths and misconception to handling issues around policy and funding

# QUESTIONS?



Thanks!