AANI-PAS COLLABORATES WITH LAGOS STATE BMGF CONSULTANT TO HOST A VIRTUAL PARTNERS COORDINATION MEETING
ANI-PAS on the 6th of June 2021 collaborated with the BMGF Lagos state consultant Mr Olukunle Daramola to host a preliminary virtual BMGF partners coordination meeting. The Lagos state Family Planning partners’ forum comprises several BMGF CSOs ensuring improvement of family planning funding and services by providing support to Lagos State Ministry of Health & Lagos State Primary Health Care Board.

The objectives were to improve collaboration amongst partners for efficiency, identify catalytic opportunities and policies that can be leverage on for greater impact, share and harmonize data and proffer recommendations for challenges regarding the implementation status of family planning in Lagos state.

Partner representatives at the meeting included: AANI-PAS, CHAI, TCI, DOSC, ARFH, SFH, ACIOE, A360, PPFP etc. Eighteen (18) partners attended virtually, disaggregated to 10 males and 8 females. Partners were given the opportunity to introduce their project to other partners and amplify areas where collaborative efforts were necessary.

AANI-PAS addressed the partners in a welcome address revealing some of their findings on family planning funding and the Lagos state health budget performance to evaluate advocacy efforts on government's health financing. Findings from their assessment of Lagos state health budget performance in Q1 2021 revealed that only N3.99 billion (12.3%) out of N32.46 billion that was budgeted has been released for health capital budget and only N16.18 billion (22.1%) out of N73.13 billion has been released for the health recurrent budget1. For family planning in 2021 there were two budget lines; counterpart fund-adolescent sexuality reproductive health activities with N6.5 million funding commitment and the counterpart fund-reproductive, maternal, and child health activities with N6.2 million funds. In total, the sum of N12.8 million was allocated to FP. There have been no releases as yet.

Some other challenges identified by partners were inadequate implementation of some family planning policies such as Task Shifting/Task Sharing policy, Public Private Partnership guidelines etc., insufficient allocation and untimely release of family planning funding by state and local government, inadequate human resources for health for family planning service, inter-professional rivalry and reallocation of trained personnel to other services before knowledge transfer to their peers, frequent turn-over of permanent secretaries of LSPHCB and LSMOH resulting in delay in the implementation of agreements, poor synergy between LSPHCB and LSMOH officials, limitation of some policies to capture amplification and recent advances in family planning service delivery, not enough key influencers and important stakeholders serving as FP champions.

OUTCOME
This meeting provided an advocacy framework on challenges partners were facing with regards implementing family planning projects in the state. AANI-PAS is taking up leadership role in the advocacy accountability coordination process.

NEXT STEPS-BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE BMGF LAGOS STATE CONSULTANT
Based on the recommendation of the BMGF Lagos state consultant, the next steps are as follows:

• Creation of 5-member committee who are to meet physically at AANI-PAS Lagos office to develop initial advocacy brief (already created post meeting);
• Family planning partners to share documents and provide suggestions to the aforementioned committee (in-progress); and
• A follow-up physical family planning partners meeting with relevant stakeholders from government (TBD).

The Federal government’s target of reaching 27% mCPR by 2020 has been set, and in order to improve uptake it was noted that there is a need to free FP information, services, and commodities at all public health facilities. Thus, ensuring free access to the FP commodities depends on the government’s ability to make funding available. When the reverse is the case it creates a dangerous gap that may be very difficult to breach, thereby affecting its FP budget commitment.