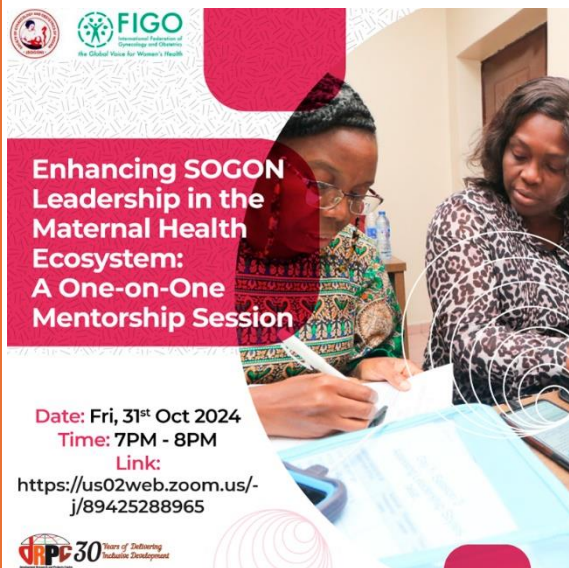


## Report of the Executive Reflection and Mentorship Session for SOGON EXCOs – 31st October 2024



**Session Title:** Enhancing SOGON Leadership in the Maternal Health Ecosystem: A One-on-One Mentorship Session

**Organizers:** development Research and Projects Centre (dRPC) for the SOGON-FIGO LDI project

**In Partnership With:** Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON)

**Background:** The development Research and Projects Centre (dRPC) is a prominent Indigenous non-profit established in 1993, focusing on advancing health outcomes in Nigeria, especially in maternal and newborn health. Since 2023, dRPC has supported the Society of Gynaecology and Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON) in implementing the FIGO

Leadership Development Initiative Project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The initiative aims to enhance maternal and newborn health outcomes by advocating for improved care and supporting national Obstetrics and Gynaecology Societies in six countries, including Nigeria, to become the primary advocates for women's health in their respective countries.

The core of this project lies in enhancing maternal and newborn health outcomes through leadership development, advocacy, and evidence-based guidelines. The dRPC's strategic role is to bolster the leadership skills of SOGON to advocate for changes in clinical practice, align with best practices, utilize the latest evidence relevant to Nigeria, and effectively communicate the needs to targeted audiences. The initiative aims to cultivate strong leadership among health professionals to drive improvements in health services, ultimately leading to enhanced maternal and newborn health outcomes.

Over the past few years, five sessions have been conducted with the SOGON EXCOs to enhance their leadership capacity and ability to be more gender—and media-responsive while remaining relevant as key stakeholders contributing to policy processes. As the leadership component concludes for the year, a final one-on-one session is being organized, fostering collaboration by pairing the EXCOs with seasoned professionals for a virtual mentorship session.

### Objectives:

1. To provide one-on-one mentorship sessions with leading maternal health professionals for the SOGON Executive Committee (EXCO) members.
2. To equip EXCO members with practical leadership skills and strategies to address health challenges.
3. To foster relationships between emerging leaders in Nigeria and experienced professionals in obstetrics and gynecology.
4. To facilitate the exchange of innovative ideas and best practices in maternal and newborn health.

**Format:** virtual participatory session

**Facilitator:** Mallam Umar Kawu

**Structure:**

- Opening Remarks by dRPC and SOGON leadership (5mins) – 7:00 – 7:05 pm
- Keynote Presentation by a leading expert (5mins) – 7:05 – 7:10 pm
- Breakout Session for one-on-one mentorship (45 mins) – 7:10 – 7:55 pm
- Closing Remarks and Reflections (5mins) – 7:55 – 8:00 pm

**Mentorship Sessions:**

EXCO members will be matched with a mentor in breakout rooms.

| Mentor  | EXCOs  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Prof Friday Okonofua</b></p> <p>Friday Okonofua is a professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics. He is the pioneer Vice Chancellor of Ondo State University of Medical Sciences and founder of Women Health and Action Research Centre, a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Benin City, that focuses on promoting female reproductive research. He was the Program Officer of Ford Foundation's West Africa office. Professor Okonofua's research interests are public health, sexual and female reproductive health, and andrology.</p>   | <p>Prof. Okechukwu Ikpeze<br/>Prof. Chris Aimakhu<br/>Prof. Peter Aboyeji</p>      |
| <p><b>Dr Mohammed Lecky</b></p> <p>Dr. Muhammed Mustafa Lecky is a health demographer and a highly motivated health systems specialist with many years of experience across several sectors and organizations within and outside Nigeria. Dr. Lecky played roles in the Nigeria health sector through the passage of the National Health Bill into law; the guided development of Nigeria's 1st National Health Plan, the National Strategic Health Development Plan 2010 -2015; successfully managed a large scale health interventions project, the World Bank Funded Health Systems Fund Project that was implemented across all the states in Nigeria; served as Executive Secretary of a national civil society organization, the Health Reform Foundation of Nigeria; and he commenced the formal take-off of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS, now NHIA) in June 2005. He is an immediate past National Commissioner at the Independent National Electoral Commission, INEC; and he was the Executive Secretary/CEO of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and he was a Director of Health Policy, Planning, Research, Statistics and Monitoring and Evaluation at the Federal Ministry of Health; and was the National Consultant for the Development of the NHMIS – the National Health Management Information System. He is currently a member of the Federal Ministry of Health Ministerial Expert Advisory Committee on Covid19 Health Sector Response.</p> | <p>Prof. Onyebuchi Azubuike<br/>Dr. Fatima Zara Mairami<br/>Prof. Patrick Daru</p> |
| <p><b>Prof Sani Garko</b></p> <p>Prof Garko is a seasoned expert, a professor of Internal medicine, and the Provost of the College of Medical Science at the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria; He is a seasoned development expert with the development Research and Project Center as a board member. He also supports the Cardiology Association of Nigeria.</p>   | <p>Dr Rahila Garba<br/>Dr. Eziamaka Ezenkwele<br/>Dr. Fausta Chioma Emegoakor</p>  |
| <p><b>Dr Adamu Igoche</b></p> <p>Dr. Igoche is the immediate past Deputy Director of the Peace and Democratic Governance Office at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). He has over two decades of experience working in the development space and is now an independent consultant in Maryland, USA.</p>  | <p>Dr. Sagir Muhammad<br/>Dr. Sule Gaya<br/>Prof. Yusuf Oshodi</p>                 |
| <p><b>Dr Muhammad Saddiq</b></p> <p>Dr Saddiq is a Course Director MSc International Health Management and Leadership and a Senior University Teacher in Health Systems and Management, University of Sheffield UK. He is a member of the Presidential Health Sector Reform Committee in Nigeria and has supported many health systems strengthening efforts in Nigeria. As a development expert, he has implemented three THET/Health Partnership Scheme project in Nigeria.</p>   | <p>Prof. Abidoye Gbadegesin<br/>Dr. Simeon Bazuaye</p>                             |
| <p><b>Dr Ejike Oji</b></p> <p>Dr Oji is President /CEO Dr Ejike Oji Community Development Foundation, Chairman Association for the Advancement of Family Planning (AAFP), Chairman, of Coalition for Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Accountability Mechanism (C4MAN), Chairman Board of the Network of Reproductive Health Journalists, CSO Focal Point FP 2020 (Civil Society focal person representing all civil societies in Nigeria on the Global Initiative to get Family Planning services to additional 120 million women and girls by the year 2020) Chairman Medical Sub Committee, FCT Ministerial Expert Advisory Committee on COVID 19.</p>  | <p>Dr. Segun Spaine<br/>Dr. Abubakar Umar<br/>Dr. Laima H. Christopher</p>         |

These Mentors provided guidance on the following themes:

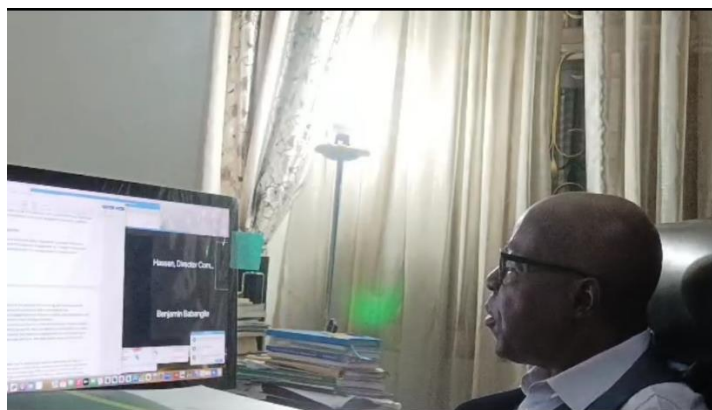
- Effective leadership
- Strategic planning and implementation
- Advocacy for maternal health issues
- Navigating challenges in health policy and practice
- Staying relevant in the ecosystem

Their roles as mentors involved providing guidance to SOGON as an organization about opportunities and strategies to align with the government's new policy directions to improve healthcare delivery through the primary health system with referral links to the secondary system. For too long, SOGON's expertise and place in the Nigerian health care delivery systems has largely been associated with the Tertiary Health Care System. This engagement with SOGON focused on issues of effective leadership as a Health Professional Association and their role as maternal health advocates within the government's new focus on Primary Health Care. Their voice in this mentorship session significantly contributed to the professional growth and development of SOGON as a Health Professional Association, ultimately improving health outcomes in Nigeria.

The virtual mentorship program had 25 participants in attendance.



**Dr. Saddiq (L), Prof Garko (R), and Dr. Lecky (B) during their breakout session at the one-on-one virtual mentorship session with their cohort of SOGON EXCOs.**



#### **Outcomes:**

1. Enhanced leadership capacities among SOGON EXCO members.
2. Strengthened collaboration and networking within the health sector.
3. Increased ability to develop actionable strategies to improve maternal health.

4. Increased awareness of current trends and challenges.

**Conclusion:**

This virtual mentorship session represented a unique opportunity to empower the SOGON leadership and improve health outcomes in Nigeria. By harnessing the expertise of established professionals, we created a supportive environment conducive to professional growth and collaborative innovation.