



KOGI NGOs NETWORK

{ K O N G O N E T }

SECRETARIAT ADDRESS:

GP 705 MICHEAL OLOBAYO ESTATE,
BEHIND DIVISION 'C' POLICE STATION,
LOKOJA -KOGI STATE.

EMAIL:

kogingonetwork@gmail.com
idrisrainaina@gmail.com

TEL:

+234 706 3797550,
+234 803 3177 259

1ST QUARTER 2023 PRESS-BRIEFING BY KOGI NGOs NETWORK (KONGONET) ON 3RD APRIL, 2023.

Gentlemen of the Press;

Welcome to our STATE OF KOGI quarterly Press briefing by KONGONET.

Kogi NGOs Network (KONGONET) is the Apex coalition of Civil Society Networks in Kogi State championing the promotion of participatory democracy, good governance/best practices, transparent governance and network coordination through advocacy and policy influencing for the well-being of Kogites.

Highlight of events within the quarter

- The 2023 General election held in a relatively peaceful atmosphere across Kogi State, winners had since been declared, aggrieved party members are currently seeking redress at designated electoral tribunals across the state.
- Kogi State 2023 – 2055 (32) years development plan committee inaugurated September 2022 is currently at a crossroad. The committee activities have taken a long pause, due to funding related challenges.
- After twenty months of comatose state and several appeal to the state government to purchase the required transmitter for the only state-owned radio in Kogi State Capital, the Kogi State radio (FM 94.1) is back on air.
- Amidst calls for reticulation of the Kogi State Greater Lokoja water project to improve in water supply within some part of the state capital, the 2022 flood has put a near permanent seal to water supply in Lokoja the state capital.
- The naira redesign and cashless policy of the federal government that birthed cash crunch effects across the state is gradually easing -off.
- There is still a dearth of periodic interaction between the State Government and citizens on matters of state importance. The State Open Government Partnership (OGP) Steering Committee platform is non- functional as the State Actor (SA) Co-Chair is not active.
- Kogi State house of assembly suspends nine (9) members and five (5) council chairmen.
- A Kogi State Hight Court sitting in Lokoja declared Kogi State Transport Management Authority (KOTRAMA) as illegal and ordered that the law establishing same be set aside.

- The perennial herdsmen/farmers clashes at a community called “Ogane-Enigu” in Dekina LGA of Kogi State has re-surfaced again. It will be recalled that the Kogi State Government promised to set up a judicial panel of inquiry to unravel the immediate and remote causes of the March 14 herdsmen/farmers clash that claimed several lives at Ogane-Enigu in 2018 and put to permanent rest the incessant clashes.
- The Nigeria Country Program Manager of GiveDirectly (GD), Mr. Ndim-Ejor Ndifon, reported the implementation of humanitarian support in four (4) wards of Kogi LGA to tune of over N620,000,000 during the GiveDirectly (GD) program close-out meeting with stakeholders in Kogi State.
- Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases on the rise in Kogi State.

Health Issues:

Civil Society for HIV/AIDS in Nigeria (CiSHAN), reported significant improvement as a result of the restructure Kogi State Agency for the Control of Aids (KOSACA). As required, the substantive board for the agency is positively engaging to create improved access to care for persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in the state. The leadership of Civil Society for HIV/AIDS in Nigeria (CiSHAN) within the reporting quarter call on His Excellency the Executive Governor of the state to release funds for the implementation of KOSACA 2023 budget. CiSHAN reiterated within the reporting quarter that, Network of People Living With HIV/AIDs in Nigeria (NEPWHAN) and Initiative for Health and Social Development (IHSD) still remain the only CSOs presently implementing community level interventions in the State with support from Centre for Integrated Health Program (CIHP), they however, call on implementing partners and the state government to provide support to other CSOs within the state to boost the current community level interventions in the state. The tuberculosis activities of Initiative for Grassroot Advancement in Nigeria (INGRA) across the communities of Kogi state is hereby acknowledged. INGRA within the quarter has been able to trace and screened over 5,000 presumptive cases and placed several on treatment for TB.

Agricultural Intervention Issues:

The Analysis of the 2023 Agriculture Budget draft by the Budget Committee Group (BCG) with support from PIBCID/ActionAid Nigeria shows a decline in the allocated funds to the Agricultural sector. More worrisome is the observed consistent denial of funds to women in Agriculture, even though it is captured in the state budget every year. Small Scale Women Farmer Organization in Nigeria (SWOFON) Kogi State branch and members of the state civil society Budget Committee Group (BCG) held a press –briefing within the quarter to issue a statement over the 2023 Kogi State budget and decried the paltry sum allocated to the agricultural sector. SWOFON Kogi State opined that “In Kogi State year 2023 budget, Agriculture sector yet again got the least allocation compared to other major sectors that drives the social-economic development of the State such as Education and Health; Agriculture received the least at 5.30%.”

Kogi Budget Committee Group (BCG) called on the state Government to review existing policies and framework on Agriculture to facilitate increased funding and prompt release of budgetary allocations to the sector. BCG also commended the state government for the allocation of N600 million to Extension Services and provision for post-harvest losses reduction intervention in the 2023 budget estimate.

SWOFON Kogi State and Budget Committee Group (BCG) concluded that if Agriculture is to serve as a means of diversifying the economy of Kogi State as promised in the new direction blueprint of the Government of the State, then allocations to the sector is grossly inadequate and fund releases to the sector are too poor. Meanwhile, the leadership of Lift Up Care Foundation (LUCAF) has called on Kogites, via a radio program held on Grace Fm 95.5 monitored by KONGONET, that citizens of the state should engage in home garden/back yard farming to boost family nutrition and strengthen household economic status across the state.

KONGONET appreciates GiveDirectly (GD) organization for providing highly impactful humanitarian support reaching over 6, 200 citizens of Kogi State across for wards of Kogi LGA. This intervention by GiveDirectly (GD) is well thought-out bearing mind that same community of intervention were also greatly affected by the 2022 devastating flood in Kogi State.

Education Sector:

Within the reporting period, the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA) congratulated the state government for the successful recruitment and posting of same to secondary schools across the state. The coalition through her state coordinator however called on the state government to pay attention to primary school education system in the state, he said the state had neglected the welfare of primary school teachers as evidenced in the non-payment of full salaries to basic education teachers across local government areas of the state and non-maintenance of basic school infrastructures. The coalition called on the state and local government to immediately resolve the above challenges and save the future of Kogi State children.

Social Welfare Issues:

Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) Kogi State within the reporting quarter made a huge progress in civil resolution of domestic violence, women abuse and child custody cases across the state.

The Association for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Nigeria (AONN) urgently calls on the Hon. Commissioner of Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development to follow through on the alleged case of gender-based violence at Achigili community in Dekina LGA of Kogi State. She outlined list of reported incidences of gender-based violence and child abuse cases within the reporting quarter to include a case of child labour at Okene LGA and another case of sexual molestation. She said while most of cases are receiving attention, some has been resolved through alternative dispute resolution.

Security Issues:

The security atmosphere towards the general election was averagely tensed, however the elections has come and gone with less hitches, we appreciate the state security personnel for the successes. It is noteworthy that despite the averagely peaceful elections, lives were still lost. We call on the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to investigate cases based on their merits and act accordingly. As the apex Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Network in the state, our interest is to ensure that the wellbeing, lives and property of our citizens are protected at all times and we pursue this with vigour.

The Kogi State gubernatorial election will take place in the coming months, activities heralding the event is already on the way. We call on the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to put in place solid strategies to ensure political party(s) primaries are held under strict security watch

and follow through on campaigns to birth peaceful gubernatorial election in Kogi state come November, 2023.

KONGONET appreciate the engagement of stakeholders by Nigeria Police Force (NPF) towards peaceful electioneering process, this strategy should be sustained.

Recommendations:

- We call on the Chief Security Officer of the state, His Excellency Governor Yahaya Bello to urgently intervene through the state security architecture and return normalcy to Ogoni-Enugu community and ensure the perpetrators of the crisis are brought to book.
- The Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Kogi State command as a matter of urgency should put in place strategies to combat possible break down of law and order as we head towards November 2023 gubernatorial election. Political party primaries in Kogi State should be properly secured.
- INEC and NPF should ensure all cases of electoral violence before and during the 2023 general elections in Kogi State are duly prosecuted. We appreciate the action of Miss. Ashlee Momoh for filing for order of mandamus at the high court sitting in Abuja for a case of wilful violation of section 115(1) f, i & j of the Electoral Act, 2022 at Adavi LGA during the just concluded general elections in Kogi State.
- The Kogi State 2023 – 2055 (32) years development plan committee should be urgently revived and appropriately funded to carry out the novel assignment.
- The state government as a matter of urgency through the ministry of water resources should repair and restore the Kogi State Greater Lokoja water project to improve in water supply within the state capital.
- The state government should engage in periodic interaction with the citizens to discuss matters of state importance. The State Open Government Partnership (OGP) Steering Committee platform should be reactivated, committee members should be officially inaugurated and the State Action Plan draft be validated and disseminated.
- The Kogi State House of Assembly Resolution suspending five (5) duly elected council chairmen of the third tiers of government in Kogi State is unlawful, undemocratic and condemnable. This is a clear case of direct party meddling in the activities of the state assembly. The Kogi State House of Assembly is hereby advised to reverse the suspension forthwith.
- The State Government (the Executive arm) should ensure the Kogi State Transport Management Authority (KOTRAMA) comply with court order and vacate the roads pending further legal action on the substantive order of the state high court.
- The Hon. Commissioner of Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development should endeavour to follow through on the alleged case of gender-based violence at Achigili community in Dekina LGA which is currently prosecuted by the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Kogi State command.

In conclusion:

Kogi NGOs Network (KONGONET) will consistently support laudable initiatives of government to ameliorate the suffering of Kogites and ensure the state upholds the tenets of democracy and fair play in her administration of our collective resources. On behalf of Kogi State Civil Society Groups, we appreciate the Kogi state government for reviving the Kogi State Radio Station (FM 94.1).

God Bless Kogi State.

Amb. Idris Ozovehe Muraina

Chairperson, KONGONET

The Executive Director of

Renaissance Care and Empowerment Foundation (RECEF)

Mrs. Ibiteye A. Bola

Asst. Sec., KONGONET

The State Coordinator of

Women Rights Advancement and
Protection Alternative (WRAPA).

For media inquiries please contact:

Amb. Idris Ozovehe Muraina +234 (0) 70 637 97550

Learn more about #KONGONET at www.facebook.com/KONGONETKOGI or on Twitter
@KONGONET and kogingonetwork@gmail.com

Long live the people of Kogi State. God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Thank you.