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COMMUNITY PEACE INITIATIVES NETWORK

ZOOM MEETING REPORT

Topic: Inclusive Leadership, Bridging the Gap.

Date: 21st March, 2024.

Venue: Zoom

Duration of Meeting: 1hour, 20mins

Meeting Moderator: Mr. Olanrewaju O. Adeyanju

Total Number of Meeting Participants: 17 Participants.

Executive Summary:

Background:

International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated annually on March 8th and serves as a global observance of the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. It is also a day to raise awareness about gender equality and advocate for women's rights and empowerment worldwide. The theme for the International Women's Day 2024, "**Inclusivity**," highlights the importance of creating a more inclusive world where all women and girls have equal opportunities, rights, and representation. Inclusivity encompasses a broad range of issues, including eliminating discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and other factors. It is in line with this year's theme, that the AOCPIN organized a discussion titled "**Inclusive Leadership: Bridging the Gap**" This session marked the fourth installment of the AOCPIN's THE PANEL (**Peace Advocacies Network for Education and Leadership**) series which brought together a varied group of participants and panellists to deliberate and suggest solutions to the Non-inclusion of Women in Leadership."

Objective:

Discuss and identify existing barriers to inclusive leadership within our organization/community, including challenges related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Panelists: The panellists were critically selected to reflect a balanced view of the inclusion of women in leadership roles, which includes “**Miss Olatoyin Falade** the Key Speaker, who is one of the leading voices in mediation, early warning and specifically Women, Peace and Security. She has led and participated in advocacies on policy reforms related to gender and social inclusion in Nigeria and Africa. **Ms Lebabatu Mohammed**, a dedicated volunteer at women’s initiative for sustainable community development, a trained mediator and a member of the women peace and security(WPS) Initiative. And our moderator **Mr. Olanrewaju Adeyanju**, a seasoned Business Analyst, Development Consultant, and Podcaster, with over 5 years of experience in navigating the intersection of development initiatives, multimedia storytelling and moderating meaningful dialogue.

Analysis by the speakers as to why women are not Included in leadership roles: The Speakers stated that gender stereotypes and biases contribute to the perception that men possess traits such as assertiveness, decisiveness, and competence, which are often associated with effective leadership. Conversely, women may face stereotypes that portray them as nurturing, emotional, or less capable in leadership roles. They also stated that Cultural and Religious beliefs may also influence attitudes towards women's participation in leadership roles. Societies that adhere to conservative interpretations of religious texts or cultural traditions may reinforce gender-based divisions of labour and limit women's agency in decision-making processes. Also, unequal access to education and resources, as well as discriminatory practices within organizations, can impede women's advancement into leadership roles. These barriers perpetuate gender inequality and limit opportunities for women to ascend to positions of power.

Recommendations:

A substantial portion of the conversation centered around identifying policy shortcomings and formulating actionable recommendations. These focal points emphasized the pressing call for action regarding the inclusion of women in leadership positions.

- Implementing policies that favour women in governance: By establishing quotas or targets for the representation of women in political and governmental bodies, such as legislatures, cabinets, and executive positions, will enhance the participation of women in leadership roles. .
- Empower women in Education: The speakers believe that by providing training and capacity-building initiatives e.g giving scholarships to women, workshops on political campaigning and advocacy, and also provide networking opportunities for women leaders, will enhance women's leadership skills, political participation, and representation in governance.
- **#35 affirmative action** should be adopted, where women should at least be give 35% of seat in the senate house.
- Women should Increase support for each other, and not try to block themselves.
- Religious leaders can lead by example by ensuring that women are included in the decision making process within religious institutions. Oftentimes, religious leaders have significant influence over cultural norms and practices; they can challenge harmful traditional Practices that hinder women participation in leadership roles.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, The speakers and Participants explored the multifaceted nature of inclusive leadership, recognizing that it goes beyond simply acknowledging diversity but actively fostering an environment where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and talents. We have highlighted the significance of embracing diversity in all its forms, including gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, and background, as a source of strength and innovation.