



Changing the face of health training institution: Making HTIs in Northern Nigeria more female-friendly

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Introduction

- The overarching theory on which the W4H programme rests is that increasing the numbers of **female health workers** in **rural areas** in Northern Nigeria will lead more women and their babies to utilize health services such as immunization, antenatal care and skilled birth attendants (SBAs).

Introduction

Many rural Northern Nigeria women and girls are unable to access HTIs for various reasons:

- Key priority for families to protect the moral integrity of young women
- Poor educational results of the young women mean many are unable to meet the entry requirement to HTIs.

Introduction

- Many who make the entry requirements are unable to compete with their urban counterparts
- Perspective of the potential female students; those who are married are concerned about their absence from the marital home and children
- A range of institutional shortcomings and governance inadequacies meant that the HTIs are unable to offer, high quality, gender-equitable education:

- Admission was in favour of male students
- Except for the SOM all other HTIs had male Principals and just 1 female Vice principal
- Most students who drop out are female students

W4H working principles

- Issues relating to women's roles and relationships can be extremely sensitive, particularly in the complex, religious, political and social structures of northern Nigeria.
- **It cannot be business as usual**
- Effective engagement in this context was not simple and a multi-level, multi-dimensional strategy was required with entry points and strategies sensitively honed to the local situation.

W4H working principles

- Allowing for the time and experience required for attitudinal change and shifts in gender relations.
- Changing social norms around the desirability of local women training as health workers.
- Gender mainstreamed into the work of other advisors at the W4H National level which translated into state level implementation
- Gradually introducing change, ideas, supporting the HTIs to bring about changes for themselves

W4H Interventions

- **Mainstreaming gender related indicators into:**
 - HTI Performance management framework indicators(% of registered tutors that are female)
 - Bi- annual management meeting indicators
- **Targeting female students and tutors with Grants and incentives:**
 - Financial support for indigent student, (Suwaiba's story)
 - FYP students and FYP graduates,
 - Exam fees for final year female students
- **Supporting strategies for improving student outcomes:**
 - Counselling, extra coaching support,
- **Strengthening student voice and accountability mechanisms;**
 - SUG, Platform for discourse between management and SUG
- **Capacity building for HTI managers and student affairs officers**
 - Gender, equity, communication, Voice and accountability

W4H Interventions

- **Construction of female friendly infrastructure:**
creating an enabling physical environment for married student (hostels),
construction of female hostels and common rooms,
improved staff room environment for all staff
- **Monitoring Gender activities**
Gender management plans
Institutional assessment tool
- **Gender facilitators who provide technical support for each health training institution**

Results

- Significant improvement in the gender responsiveness of HTIs: Improved accommodation, improved security
- 49 additional female tutors being sponsored for tutor training
- 40% of the 20 HTIs now have female principals
- One of the five provosts is female

Results

- Females in managerial positions increased from 14% at baseline to 64%
- Schools with nannies increased from 12% to 55%
- 70% of schools now have crèches
- % of schools with higher admission quota for female students increased from 35% to 70%.
- Majority (82%) of the HTI s now have resident matrons in the female hostels.

Final notes

Improving gender sensitivity of HTIs and ensuring that HTIs are female friendly are critical to increasing access of young girls and women to higher education in a religiously sensitive environment.