

REPORT ON SOUTHWEST CCT STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISMS, CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT.

Details of the workshop: Southwest CCT Stakeholder Consultative Meeting on Grievance Redress Mechanisms, Challenges and Recommendations for Improvement at Delight Hotel and Suits, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria, the one day event was held on 17th December, 2019, the program was organized by New Initiative for Social Development (NISD) with support from ANEEJ and UKAids.

Target audience:

42 participants were in attendance. The participants were drawn from Conditional Cash Transfer office of Ekiti, Osun and Oyo State, they are State Cash Transfer Unit Heads, Desk Officers, Monitoring & Evaluation Officers, Cash Transfers Officers, Beneficiaries from each of the state respectively and NISD. In total, 19 Females and 23 males

Objectives of the workshop:

- To identify notable challenges of Grievance Redress Mechanism in the implementation of Conditional Cash Transfer Programme and proffer useful recommendations for improvement
- To ensure that the Cash transfer gets to the direct beneficiaries in Ekiti, Osun and Oyo States
- To improve on existing feedback platform for beneficiaries in the implementation of Conditional Cash Transfer Programme in the three (3) States in the South West
- To create awareness of the Cash Transfer Programme Grievance Redress Mechanism Platform.

Discussion and program activities:

Introduction to MANTRA program by Mr Oyeleye Abiodun



Mr Oyeleye Abiodun giving the overview of the MANTRA project

Mr. AbiodunOyeleye gave brief of MANTRA project in the southwest geopolitical zone and talked about the objectives and activities of Mantra project and the effects of corruption and how it affects the social investment of the country as regards lifting the vulnerable beyond the poverty line.

GRM the Philippines Experience Mr Olamide Martins Ogunlade



Mr Ogunlade Olamide Martins making his presentation

Mr. Olamide gave brief history of Philippines Experience on Grievance Redress Mechanism. He said a department was created, Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in 2007 and the department annual budget allocation as at 2014 is PhP 62 billion (US\$1.4 billion), covering nearly four million households in all 1,627 cities and municipalities in 79 provinces in 17 regions. He said that CCT is successful when the Grievance Redress Mechanism is successful, also poor people which are target beneficiaries should not only be assessed through physical assessment but also through social welfare, education and health and that CCT program

are prone to risk of error, fraud, corruption and leakages due to complexity of the program.

He further talked about **the principles of a standard GRM System** which includes:

Simplicity and Accessibility- GRM procedures for filing grievances and seeking redress are simple and easy to understand; grievances are to be submitted by the beneficiaries, **Transparency-** The system is publicized to a broad audience—beneficiaries and citizens, **Participatory-** Beneficiaries must be encouraged to share feedback and file grievances, **Timeliness-** Guidelines include timelines that ensure grievances are handled in a timely manner, **Right of appeal-** Channels for appeal are available if complainants are not satisfied with the resolution of a problem, **Confidentiality-**The identity of complainants remains confidential unless otherwise requested and **Pro-community-** The GRM aims to involve the community in order to address complaints.

He further talked on **the grievance redress procedure** as modeled by the Philippines which are- **Receipt-** Receipt of grievances through various channels, **Recording-** Entry into the Management Information System MIS; assigning a tracking number, and referring to concerned official, **Fact Finding-** Investigating and verifying facts of the grievance, **Resolutions-** Resolving the grievance based on guidelines, Initial feedbacks: Providing feedback to complainant, **Appeal-** Appeal to higher level if complainant is not satisfied. Decision of the National Grievance Committee is final and executory, **Final Feedbacks-** Providing feedback to complainant

He further talked extensively on **some other components of a standard CCT GRM:**

- Grievance submission methods and means
- Grievance categorization
- Grievance urgency
- Grievance Officers conducts
- Beneficiaries overall view on CCT GRM

Goodwill messages from the State SCTU's

SCTU Osun State: Mrs Iyabo Ayofe appreciated the organisers of the program. Mr Iyabo said that they are doing underground studies from other countries that are successful in CCT and effective GRM, for example Brazil CCT and GRM system. She further said that Nigeria CCT GRM is not doing badly as the GRM Manual is still under review, a document upon completion will allow best practices. She also said that their exist channels to aid the effective management of grievances reported such as the hotlines through which complaints can be filed, tracked and resolved at all levels (local, State and National).

SCTU Oyo State: Mr Ezekiel Oyekola equally applauded the organisers and stressed that the community people should be ready to serve as agent of change in fighting corruption and corrupt practises. He also encouraged participants to step-down the trainings received at their respective states and equally pleaded with the CTF's who are often involved in extortion of beneficiaries to stop the act and do whatever possible within their powers to diligently carry out their assignment with all sense of decency and prudence.

SCTU Ekiti State: Mr Adeokin Tayo equally joined his voice to praise the organisers, he said that all grievances must be sent to Abuja either solved or unsolved as only NTCO has the operational capacity to attend to same. He equally appealed to the State Government to honour the MOU between them and the Federal Government and also allows them engage the media to tell their success stories

Key issues and challenges arising from the discussion at the meeting

- The mode of payment of stipends to beneficiaries is cumbersome resulting in denial of stipends to some beneficiaries;
- Use of ad-hoc local agents without requisite experience for payment affects the effectiveness of the payment system;
- High rate of extortion of beneficiaries by the community leaders;
- Low Capacity of GRM application device
- State Governments in the Southwest provide little or no logistic supports to the programme;
- Non-inclusion of Local Government Grievance Redress Officers (LGGRO) in all trainings
- Community Redress Officers (CRO's) are still in operation even after their removal
- MOU signed by the States and Federal Government on the implementation of Cash Transfer Programme has expired;
- Errors in the payment schedule
- Errors from social Register generated by SOCU;
- Some names of beneficiaries are wrongly typed;
- Low publicity for CCT programme.
- Some poor and vulnerable households were not captured by SOCU

Key recommendations

- Mode of payment should be holistically reviewed;
- Training and re-training of paying agents by the Payment Service Provider (PSP);
- The PSP should mandate the pay agents to always liaise with the Desk Officers as relating to the community of assignment;

- The PSP should ensure availability of sufficient funds to pay agents;
- Review of MOU and strict adherence to the Term of Reference therein;
- The need for synergy between SOCU and SCTU;
- Need to strengthen awareness campaign of the programme;
- All stakeholders of the programme should be sensitized;
- Need for State Governments' effective participation in the programme.

Conclusion

The meeting was a success as it identified the challenges militating against the effective implementation of grievance redress mechanisms in CCT programme in the southwest. The meeting agreed that the stakeholders' session would be sustained and recommendations emanated be channelled to appropriate authorities.



Group Photograph of Participants after the CCT GRM Workshop at Ado Ekiti