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REPORT OF 2017 NATIONAL MIGRATION DIALOGUE

**THEME: *COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO COMBATING IRREGULAR
MIGRATION: FROM RHETORIC TO ACTION***

SHEHU MUSA YAR'ADUA CENTRE, ABUJA - FCT

18TH – 19TH DECEMBER, 2017

**This Project is funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) within the framework
of the Nigeria-Swiss Partnership on Migration**

1. **BACKGROUND OF THE NATIONAL MIGRATION DIALOGUE (NMD) 2017**

This report with a set of **recommendations** is the outcome of the National Migration Dialogue (NMD) held on 18-19 December, 2017 at Abuja, to mark the 2017 International Migrants' Day.

The 2017 NMD took place at a time when the world, Nigeria in particular sees the largest number of irregular migration flow with all its associated risks, causalities and challenges. The news of the travail of many desperate Nigerians, attempting to enter Europe and other destinations irregularly and those exploited through smuggling, and trafficking is reported regularly on the local and international media. A significant number of Nigerians are held in detention centers of many countries of transit or destination. Others have adopted a clandestine way of life in foreign countries for the fear of immigration and security agencies. In recent times many Nigerians have been deported by different host countries or returned through a current International Organization for Migration (IOM) coordinated return and reintegration program, Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR).

At this time also the global community is engaged in a renewed solidarity and commitment to strengthen global migration governance and strengthen international partnerships in ending all forms of irregular migration through the ongoing process of Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration (GCM). Collaborative initiatives between the Nigerian government, regional and international organizations such as IOM, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), European Union (EU), Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU) and other stakeholders including Civil Society, Diaspora Groups, and the private sector have focused on combating irregular migration as key priority.

Despite all these, many young Nigerians continue to embark on this perilous journey to escape perceived difficult situations at home especially those of economic hardship and lack of opportunity.

Under the overarching title "***Comprehensive Approach to Combating Irregular Migration: From Rhetoric to Action,***" the NMD programme was built to deepen and strengthen Nigeria's response to the challenges of irregular migration, improve collaboration with our respective partners especially in ensuring a comprehensive approach to combating irregular migration, paying particular attention to the root causes. The dialogue asked and responded to pertinent questions: Why do they keep going, in spite of the known dangers and all efforts to discourage them? What are we not doing or not doing well?

Just like the previous NMDs since 2014, the 2017 NMD activities were organized by the Technical Working Group (TWG) on migration management mechanism, under the coordination of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced

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Persons (NCFRMI) with the sponsorship of Switzerland Development Cooperation (SDC) and IOM.

The NMD 2017 gathered more than four hundred (400) participants representing a diversity of leaders of government, local and international organizations and agencies, practitioners and advocates of human rights and development agencies, migrant groups, experts, academia, business and media. These were drawn from the TWG; IOM; EU; Swiss Embassy; UNHCR; ECOWAS; Migrant Groups; Experts; Academia; CSOs; Private Sector, faith-based organizations (FBOs); etc.

3. **EVENTS/ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL MIGRATION DIALOGUE 2017:**

3.1. *DAY ONE: ROAD SHOW* - December 18, 2017

The Road Show was encouragingly attended by over three hundred and fifty (350) members of the Expanded Technical Working Group (TWG) on Migration, at both the Federal and State levels, who were determined to ensuring that the message about the dangers of irregular migration was brought to the attention of the target audience, especially the Nigerian youths. The converging and concluding point was Old Parade Ground at Area 10 and the activity was flagged off and concluded by the Honourable Federal Commissioner (HFC) of NCFRMI, Sadiya Umar Farouq, in the company of the Directors-General of National Agency on Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Barrister Julie Okah-Donli and National Orientation Agency (NOA), Dr. Garba Abari as well as the representatives of some of our International Partners, such as the Swiss Ambassador, the IOM Chief of Mission, ECOWAS and UNHCR.

The road show consisting of road walk/dancing, distribution of flyers and bulletins conveying the message on the dangers of irregular migration went through Area 10 Old Parade Ground to Area 2 junction and back to the Old Parade Ground. The day's event culminated in laying of wreath in solidarity with our citizens that lost their lives en route to their destinations through the irregular means.

The Welcome Address was delivered by the HFC (NCFRMI), followed by Short Remarks by the NIS, NAPTIP, NOA, ECOWAS, IOM and a Poem by Rev. Emeka Xris Obiezu, OSA.

The highpoints of the speeches include:

- The need for all stakeholders to synergize and effectively combat irregular migration, while also protecting migrants rights and set up policies/programmes that would discourage irregular migration;
- The Government at the Federal, State and Local levels were called upon to increase funding of agencies involved in the management of migration in Nigeria;

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- Nigerians were urged to be kind to returnees to enable them reintegrate into the society successfully;
- The International partners pledged to continue to assist Nigeria in the fight against irregular migration

The poem by Rev. Emeka Xris Obiezu, OSA titled, "My Wall of Dream for a World of no Irregular Migration," captured ordeals of the victims and the urgency of tackling the root causes of irregular migration.

3.2. *DAY TWO: THE COLLOQUIUM* - December 19, 2017

3.2.1. ***OPENING SESSION:***

The official opening ceremony of the Colloquium day was performed by various dignitaries from a cross spectrum of government, local and international partners and allies. Following the Welcome Address, by the HFC of the NCFRMI were Goodwill Messages from Swiss Ambassador, EU, IOM, NAPTIP, Special Senior Assistant to the President on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora (SSAPFAD), and the Keynote Address from the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) delivered by the Hon. Minister of Interior. The event was attended by over two hundred (200) persons representing different stakeholders in the Nigerian migration management mechanism and international partners.

a. Honorable Federal Commissioner (HFC) of the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), Sadiya Umar Farouq: In her welcome Address, the HFC of NCFRMI noted that irregular migration is a major challenge to origin, transit and destination countries, as well as the migrants who are exposed to exploitation and abuse. She recalled the increase in the number of migrant's vulnerabilities due to dangerous routes they take to their destinations. She highlighted that 2017 National Migration Dialogue focused on developing and strengthening Nigeria's response to the challenges of irregular migration, improving collaboration with respective partners especially in ensuring a comprehensive approach to combating irregular migration while paying particular attention to the immediate root causes. The goal was to develop Action Plan (rather than focusing on regulations and policy) and to develop strategies to respond to the root causes of why people move irregularly.

b. Embassy of Switzerland: Anne-Beatrice Bullinger, Deputy Head of Mission, who represented the Ambassador of Switzerland to Nigeria, reiterated that the theme chosen for the 2017 National Migration Dialogue is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and current migration trends. She stated that it is commendable that the Governments of Nigeria and Switzerland have a well-functioning partnership to address migration issues in a comprehensive manner and assured that the Swiss government is committed to supporting Government-led policies, initiatives and implementations in

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combating Trafficking in Persons and Return of vulnerable migrants in a dignified and humane manner.

She was optimistic that the Colloquium will further enhance efforts at consolidating the migration architecture through developing a comprehensive approach to curbing irregular migration in Nigeria. She recalled that apart from the partnership with NCFRMI, Swiss had supported the ECOWAS in the area of migration management and development.

c. European Union (EU): His Excellency, Ketil Karlsen, Head of EU Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS noted that migration and mobility are integral parts of human life; “we have the curiosity to explore and desire to seek better life for ourselves and our families.” He identified the fact that Nigerians contribute enormously in the countries where they live and stated that the EU is not concerned about skilled labour, students on scholarship; rather, it is concerned about the increase in the spate of irregular migration, such as stranded migrants and victims of trafficking and smuggling. He enumerated some of EU interventions to tackle irregular migration in Nigeria, which includes the on-going voluntary return of migrants of Nigerian origin, especially from Libya.

The EU welcomes the leadership Nigeria has taken; believes it has a shared burden and responsibility in handling migration issues. He stressed on the need to prevent a situation where the bad (irregular) would drive away the good (regular) aspect of migration. He was optimistic that the National Migration Dialogue would mark the strengthening of subsequent dialogue within Nigeria and between Nigeria and European Union.

d. International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mr. Frantz Celestin, Deputy Chief of Mission: According to the IOM representative, irregular migration across the Mediterranean route is not new, but recently there has been an increase in the number of migrants’ deaths/losses. Whatever is the migration scenario, the first priority should be to save lives. IOM maintains the principle to protect the rights of migrants and to provide them with alternatives such as the Assisted Voluntary Returns and Reintegration (AVRR) programme, meant to facilitate returns and to provide resources for reintegration of returnees. IOM suggested the need to provide Humanitarian and temporary Visas to encourage regular migration; provide skills empowerment facilities for potential migrants targeting endemic areas.

Furthermore, he enumerated some of the support IOM has given to the government of Nigeria, such as capacity building; advocacy programs; vocational skills development in high emigrating states in Nigeria. In conclusion, he hoped that the outcome of the dialogue would be practicable.

e. National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) In a very short remark, Angela Agbayechai, the representative of the Director-General of NAPTIP highlighted

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the despicable dangers of irregular migration. She welcomed all present and thanked them for the obvious interest shown in combating irregular migration.

f. Senior Special Assistant to the President on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora (SSAPFAD), Hon Abike Dabiri-Erewa: In her speech, SSAPFAD emphasized the need to conduct massive awareness at the grassroots on what to expect when one migrates irregularly. Each person should be responsible for tipping and educating the next person about the realities of irregular migration. There should be a reversal of migration where other nationalities come to Nigeria and Africa, not the other way round.

Speaking further, she toed the line of the EU representative, in opining that without care the bad might drag down the good, in other words, it might become difficult for regular migrants to get visas to travel abroad as a consequence of irregular migration. In conclusion, she identified the root causes of migration to include insecurity, corruption and poor economy. These are parts of the President's 3-point Agenda, on-going efforts Nigerians need to support. She further enumerated some government-funded projects and programmes meant for returnees' reintegration, such as Good Entrepreneurship Empowerment Program (GEEP) and the cassava multiplication programme (CMP).

g. Keynote Address by the President and C-In-C of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Represented by the Minister of Interior, RT. Lieutenant General Abdulrahman Bello Dambazau: In his Keynote Address, His Excellency, the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria alluded to the fact that there have been collective efforts on implementing the Nigeria Migration Framework; as well as in embarking on anti-irregular migration awareness campaigns by specific organizations such as the NAPTIP and NIS, while the NCFRMI has a specific mandate to coordinate all issues relating to migration and to manage aspects of irregular migration (refugees, returnees and IDPs).

He advised that migration should be a choice, not a necessity. People do not have to migrate, but when they do so, it should be done in a safe, orderly and regular manner. He further informed the participants that the President has issued a directive mandating all relevant MDAs to assist stranded migrants. The NCFRMI is to coordinate the collaboration of all these relevant partners involved in the process, including the International and donor partners.

3.3. ***PLENARY SESSION:***

The plenary session undertook a comprehensive outlook of the issue—a deepened understanding of the causes, consequences as well as our responses to the hazards of irregular migration. This was framed in pertinent questions that addressed the issues of remote and immediate root causes of irregular migration, our prevalent responses, their effectiveness and lapses as well as the relevant actors in this area. Significant effort was

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made to ensure that the conversation moved from rhetoric to recommending actions for durable solution that would improve our responses to irregular migration dynamics.

A panel of resourceful and experienced persons led the colloquium in this honest search for effective and lasting solution to current issues of irregular migration. They were: the Comptroller-General of Nigerian Immigration Service - Muhammad Babandede, MFR; Angela Agbayekhai, the representative of Director-General of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Barrister Julie Okah-Donli; Abieyuwa Oyemwense representing the Edo State Attorney General/Commissioner for Justice and Chairperson of the Edo State Task Force on Human Trafficking, Professor Oluyinka Osayame Omorogbe, and Dr Ola Brown, a British-Nigerian Medical Doctor and the CEO of Flying Doctors Nigeria.

NIS Chief's presentation revealed that Trafficking in Persons happening within the country exceeds the figures of those happening externally. He advised that while acknowledging the collaborative supports from partners such as EU, its member states or institutions, it is important to ensure that these supports are tailored to suit the needs of Nigeria. Also there is need to strengthen regional approach and cooperation to combating the challenges of irregular migration and to see these initiatives support national efforts. Likewise, collective approach of responding to the cases of returning migrants should not undermine the peculiarity of each individual's issues and needs.

NAPTIP reconfirms that Nigeria is an origin, transit and destination country for Trafficking in Persons. For better efficiency in dealing with trafficking in persons in particular, NAPTIP needs to be visible and available at borders. This will enable the Agency spot potential victims of trafficking and other cases of trafficking in persons. There is also the need for government to muster the political will to review, strengthen and implement existing policies. All stakeholders must be recommitted to achieving the cause.

The presentation of the representative of Edo State Anti-Trafficking Taskforce underscores the effort of the State Government to ensuring the Return, Readmission and Reintegration (RRR) of victims of trafficking and irregular migrants. Such efforts include the provision of reception and profiling centers, long-term psychosocial support system for returnees who have experienced traumatic ordeals. However, the taskforce contends with funding as a huge challenge, and thus solicits for financial support from both Federal Government and Development Partners.

Emphasizing the interconnectedness of migration and development, Dr. Ola Brown, a young entrepreneur, expressed the impact of imbalance news from the media on the state of the country, especially by focusing on the negative, as a driver of irregular migration. Also she maintained that revolutionization of the development paradigm, departing from the quick-fix approach to real and enduring development assistance is urgently needed as a way of tackling the economic-related root causes of irregular migration. That revolutionizing should also endeavor to see that more policies that promote women participation in governance and businesses in Nigeria are put in place.

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3.4. **DISCUSSION SUMMARY**

See Annex for the harmonized responses from the Discussion Questions and Contributions.

3.4.1. **Introduction:** Migration governance is not an attempt to stop migration. Migration, a natural human phenomenon has been significant factor in human development. Movement of people for various reasons especially to better opportunities has driven the development of nations and individuals involved. The scale of this inevitable human activity is always on the increase, reaching a record high in 2016 of 244 million of international migrants with another 760 million moving within countries.

As the number rises, so does its shift in dynamics. Today, while majority of global mobility happens within the regular means, a significant portion takes place outside these regular norms thus referred to as Irregular migration. As migrants continue to be drawn towards opportunity, unfortunately, their conditions of employment as well as the journeys they make are becoming more dangerous, more secretive and more subject to criminalization.

The effects of this abnormality are costly to countries and to individual migrants who are subjected to all manners of inhuman conditions including those of abuses and denial of their basic human rights. The situation has become more troubling in recent times with news of occurrence of various forms of abuses and vulnerabilities as exemplified in the latest atrocities in Libya, deaths at the Mediterranean Sea, and adverse conditions of undocumented migrants in various countries of destination.

3.4.2. **Understanding the concept of irregular migration**

Irregular migration is not just about illegal entering into a country or the dangerous routes associated to such crossing of borders. It includes, leaving, entering and staying in a place outside the regulatory norms. In most cases irregular migrants may have entered their country of destination regularly but will become irregular after crossing the borders. They include: individuals who overstay a visa or residence permit, persons whose employers withdraw an authorization to work that is tied to immigration status, asylum seekers who do not leave after their refugee application is rejected. Another class of irregular migrants represents persons deceived by recruiting agents, smugglers or traffickers into believing that they are entering or working in a regular manner. Persons who entered clandestinely, include those smuggled or trafficked across the border and those who entered illegally or irregularly on their own without the help of an agent. From the perspective of countries of origin, irregular migration involves leaving a country without proper national passport and other traveling documents or authorization.¹

¹ International Council on Human Rights Policy, "Irregular Migration, Migrants Smuggling and Human Rights: Towards Coherence - Policy Brief."

Any policy framework to deal with irregular migration therefore needs to look closely at the causes and contexts in which migration occurs and at the whole migratory journey: before departure, during transit, at the border, within the country of destination, and on return to the country of origin.

3.4.3. **Why do they keep leaving? (Unveiling the root causes)**

The prevailing narrative linking irregular migration of Nigerians with issues of poverty, ignorance or greed is strongly contested by different elements associated with the movement. Some of these are the high financial cost involved, the class of people embarking on the journey which include university graduates and people with supposedly good employment. More than poverty, ignorance or greed, lack of faith in any perspective or future is key factor in making the decision to take this route. Thus, it is important that sufficient attention is given to the feeder of this mindset. Nevertheless, we must present a narrative that underscores the opportunities that are herein (the country) too.

To address the causes of migratory movement in general and irregular migration in particular, a range of strategies will be required (on economic development, poverty alleviation, aid, trade, investment). Getting to the root causes in sincerity as expressed in this event must endeavour to uncover some often politicized issues. These are not election campaign speeches but commitment to action seen in concerted efforts by governments; oppositions; indeed all and sundry to overcoming these issues. A sample of the identifiable immediate causes includes, lack of opportunity for prosperity, social and systemic injustice, bad governance and all its indices; poverty, lack or decline in moral and family values, insufficient or complete lack of information on the dangers of irregular migration, unemployment, insecurity, lack of regular pathways, stringent and expensive visa processes.

3.5. **EVALUATING OUR RESPONSES**

3.5.1. **What we are doing:** One may classify Nigeria's current responses to irregular migration into two major categories namely, security and humanitarian assistance. Security: counter terrorism and external pressure have influenced migration policies and increasingly shifted it from protection towards law enforcement. Globally, states have deployed many new tools to deter entry—and created new institutions and laws to strengthen intergovernmental regulation. As such, much effort in the Nigerian front has been galvanized towards improving border control and mobility management characterized by defensive barriers; militarized border controls; biometric scanning techniques.

The Nigerian Immigration service (NIS) has trained over five thousand (5000) border patrol officers across board, including drivers on map reading and effective patrolling. NIS introduced biometric services to border management processes. There are ten (10) borders

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that now offer biometrics services and NIS plans to cancel the ECOWAS travel certificate because it is not biometric, but would in due course, offer a biometric document which will only check biometrics rather than Passport.

With particular reference to trafficking in persons, NAPTIP's response and approach are geared towards intercepting the various routes of movement/transportation (by sea, land and air), based on the five (5) Strategic Ps - Policy, Prosecution, Protection (rehabilitation), Prevention and Partnership.

Nevertheless, deterrence measures such as stringent mobility policies, militarization of borders block regular pathways for migrants, and have not succeeded in reducing the flow of migrants including those using irregular means. Instead, it has only paved ways for irregular mobility by increasing business for the criminal rings operating in these routes, thus, puts irregular migrants at greater risk and weakens their access to protection. Most important, stringent border does not reduce the pressures and incentives that cause them to travel. Unfortunately we keep doing the same thing expecting a different result – in the last EU-AU summit in Abidjan, our governments committed to more militarization of our borders and said little or nothing to tackling root causes of the movement.

Under humanitarian assistance, Nigerian government through various agencies and commissions such NCFRMI, NAPTIP, NIS, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), in collaboration with international and local organizations such as IOM, UNHCR, SDC, EU and civil society has provided numerous relief and adaptation services to different categories of migrants caught in the web of irregular migration. As exemplified by the activities of the Edo State Taskforce against Trafficking in Persons, some humanitarian approach undertaken towards the rehabilitation of returnees/victims of human trafficking include Reception; Debriefing, Profiling; Counselling & Psychosocial Support. These are laudable as they are, but still palliative, leaving out the question of the core reason why they leave in the first place.

It is of importance to note that the adopted National Migration Policy with the action plan for its implementation provides the mechanism for migration governance covering irregular migration as well.

3.5.2. What needs to be changed: For an effective response, certain things need to change and new measures ought to be explored. The narrative on the media should be holistic representing both positive and negative aspects of migration. The methodology that privileges a top-down approach including the concentration on the metropolis/urban areas ought to be reversed by focusing on the grassroots/hinterland.

There is also the urgent need to move from the prevalent practice of more policies and less action to one that gives more attention to implementing existing laws, policies and regulations on irregular migration. The insufficient or complete lack of budget for migration governance is a major setback in the effort to curbing irregular migration.

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3.5.3. New measures to undertake: To achieve this desired change, some new measures should be encouraged, namely inclusion of migration studies in educational curricula; encouragement of attitudinal change and orientation beginning from the early stages of educational formation; providing for migration financing in national annual budget; implementation of existing laws, policies and regulations on irregular migration; adopting a bottom-top approach in tackling the issue of irregular migration through sensitization and by focusing on the grassroots/hinterland.

The list embraces evidence-based projections on irregular migration informed by improved research, and data collection; updating of border management technology and proactive intervention on the new trends of trafficking in persons such as recruiting individuals for football academy, beauty pageants and false online job advertisements.

Above all, creation of job opportunities, payment of living wages, better working conditions, provision of social amenities and infrastructures remain seminal in this effort. Of importance also is ensuring that bilateral agreements are signed with the interest of Nigerian citizens especially migrants abroad.

Relationships on migration governance that are linked to aids tie our hands—this is why emphasis is always on migration control, deterrence and return. For this reason, Nigeria and other African Countries should insist that cooperation on migration governance must be based on common but differentiated responsibility, aware of and responding to the various interests of the respective partners.

Also development aid system must depart from handout practice and focus on what makes for true development such as wealth and prosperity creation and equal trade opportunity in international trade arrangement. Bold step ought to be taken to uncover the reality of unequal access to opportunity and its relatedness to migration, especially as a driver of irregular migration.

Regarding security issues, no citizen of the country should be made to feel insecure or that their security is not a priority of the government. Incidences that threatens the security of citizens and their property such as the herdsmen instigated crises that have exasperated the kidnapping saga should be given due attention. While respecting international solidarity and agreements, Nigeria must endeavor to develop border and mobility management measures that are people-friendly and human rights compliance, instead of succumbing to external pressures to implement harsh border and stringent migration policies.

Finally, there is need for greater collaboration and strengthening of synergy among relevant agencies and CSOs involved in migration management at the Federal, State and Local Government levels.

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3.5.4. Relevant Actors

The regular actors responding to the issues of irregular migration are primarily the members of the TWG—selected government ministries, departments and agencies, international partners presenting organizations and governments; experts from academia, CSO and private sector. However, the case was made for expansion of the list to accommodate other agents such as parents, communities and their leadership, faith-based organizations, schools, road transport workers, businesses and other employment agencies and outfits.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the discussion, these recommendations were proffered:

1. Migrants should not be criminalized. Therefore policies, interventions, and actions should be targeted at protecting migrants at the origin and destination countries. Nigeria should advocate for the protection of the rights of migrants and creation of regular migration channels (i.e. mobility schemes).
2. Government, through the Technical Working Group (TWG) should review the action plan of the National Migration Policy to ensure it is in line with recent trends and current changes in migration.
3. The media should be encouraged to assess migration rationally and to equally portray both positive and negative narratives of migration.
4. Engage the media, youth organizations on migration discourse (through enlightenment, awareness and sensitization).
5. Develop and use technological and communication tools to support migration discourse (i.e. the use of smart phones for sensitization and communication on migration discourse).
6. Initiate the process of mainstreaming migration studies into the national educational curricula.
7. Apply data protection standards that respect the right of migrants to privacy.
8. The Nigerian government should establish bilateral/multilateral relations with countries to ensure Nigerian citizens are not branded/labelled negatively or denied access due to their nationality.
9. Encourage inter-ministerial coordination for the coordination of migration policies as well as relationships with foreign partners to avoid policy incoherence.
10. The National Consultation Committee (derived from the National Migration Policy) should study and review the various research already conducted on the root causes of migration as well as reports on migration approaches and strategies. These resources should be analyzed and implemented.

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11. The Nigerian government should prioritize migration and development issues, and increase budgetary provision for migration management in Nigeria.
12. The Nigerian government should ensure it implements migration related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) through the allocation of sufficient funding to migration projects.
13. Create job opportunities and enabling environments for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
14. Target the youth population and promote youth employability and skills acquisition and vocational training at home or create opportunities for them abroad (this should be done by country of origin and destination); promote a shift from formal employment to skills acquisition and vocational training (through the implementation of the National Youth Employment Policy).
15. Provide decent public services (especially decent work, health and education facilities) to ensure that migration is by choice rather by necessity.
16. Promote a shift away from the crises and security approach to migration.
17. Encourage and facilitate opportunities for labor migration which includes establishing bilateral migration agreements on the creation of opportunities abroad (i.e. increase negotiations on labour exchange).
18. The government should collaborate with the international community and strengthen local capacity to harness the benefit of migration (i.e. diaspora remittances).
19. Identify the different groups of migrants and their needs (i.e. understand and resolve issues of mixed migration).
20. Strengthen collaboration with CSOs and NGOs on migration and development based projects and activities by providing technical, capacity and financial support to CSOs and NGOs.
21. Promote the ongoing process led by NCFRMI on decentralization of migration discourse at the state and local government level.

5. CONCLUSION

No amount of political rhetoric will stop the movement of people when the forces—push and pull—that cause migrants to travel remain in place. Lack of opportunities and insecurity among others in home country and the persistent need for more and sometimes cheaper labor overseas would continue to draw migrants towards opportunity that no tough regulation or political rhetoric can stop. “Yet, if migration is perceived to be ungovernable, political leaders will continue to come under public pressure to introduce increasingly tough regulations and border controls.”² Thus, it is pertinent that all the suggested recommendations be adequately considered to ensure that at least a Nigerian is saved from taking these routes to death, languishing in detention camps, or giving himself/herself up into slavery.

² Ibid.

ANNEX

The harmonized responses from the Discussion Questions and Contributions

S/N	QUESTIONS	CONTRIBUTIONS/RESPONSES
1.	Identify the remote and main root causes of irregular migration from and into Nigeria (in order of priority)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty; • High rate of unemployment; • Poor governance leading to poor infrastructural development, corruption and bad economy; • Insecurity, due to insurgency and crimes; • Porous unmanned borders; • Social injustice (marginalization, discrimination and nepotism); • Unstable power supply resulting to lack of enabling environment and basic amenities to promote small and medium businesses, leading to undiversified economy; • Loss of family and moral values, including parenting and teachings from schools; • Poor implementation of laws and regulations; • Distortion of information on the reality of life in Europe; • Stringent and expensive Visa application procedures; • The desire for quick wealth, hence, the innate ambition to seek greener pasture abroad; • Focus on formal education with the attendant delay in the educational system, rather than vocational training; • Lack of information on the process and procedures for regular migration.
2.	<p>Assess the various ways Nigerian Government and people have responded to the issues arising from irregular migration from and into Nigeria?</p> <p>a. Outline few of these prevalent responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of relevant MDAs to tackle the issue of irregular migration; • Development of migration policies (National Migration Policy and Labour Migration Policy); • Reception/rescue of victims of trafficking; • Border checks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate funding through budgetary allocation to

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<p>b. How could these be improved?</p>	<p>relevant agencies, such as NCFRMI, NIS, NAPTIP and FMLE;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective grass root sensitization to the dangers of irregular migration, involving community leaders; • Expose and prosecute the culprits (human traffickers), no sacred cows; • Attitudinal change and reorientation of citizens starting from the kindergarten stage; • NOA and NAPTIP should be adequately equipped to adopt effective mechanism to enlighten citizens, especially youths on the challenges associated with irregular migration to avoid being caught in the web; • Create job opportunities and pay living salaries/wages to workers; • Improve the economy by providing infrastructures and social amenities; • Sign bilateral and multilateral Agreements with destination countries adequately protecting the interest of Nigerian citizens abroad; • Strengthen the synergy among relevant agencies and CSOs involved in migration management at the Federal, State and Local Government levels;
<p>c. What needs to change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should not be all bad reports from the press, the good aspects of migration should also be reported (positive reportage); • Access to soft loans with little or no collateral for small and medium scale enterprises. • Inclusion of migration studies in educational curricular; • Implementation of capital budget and procurement principles; • Implementation of existing laws, policies and regulations on irregular migration; • Bottom-top approach in tackling the issue of irregular migration through sensitization, by focusing on the grassroots/hinterland rather than on the metropolis/urban areas.
<p>d. What new dimensions need to be explored?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that annual capital budgets are implemented to at least 80% performance level; • Conduct research, studies and collect data and

		<p>statistics to inform evidence based projections on irregular migration;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More technological responses and innovations should be employed in border control and other cross-cutting areas of migration management; • Be proactive and follow-up on the new trend involving organ harvest/trafficking, recruiting individuals through football competitions, beauty pageants and false online job advertisements.
3.	<p>Who are the relevant actors that need to be involved in these responses and how could their engagement be encouraged and improved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents; • Schools; • Community leaders; • CSOs, FBOs, NGOs; • Private Sector; • Relevant government agencies, such as NCFRMI, NIS, NAPTIP, SMEDAN, MFA, ITF, NOA, FMLE, Ministries of Women Affairs, Justice, Education, Health, Information, Communication, NDE, Agric, etc; • Bank of Industry; • State and Local Governments; • The Media; • Embassies and High Commissions of Transit and destination countries; • Road Transport Workers and Unions; • Foot soldiers, such as Activists, Social workers, Experts and Consultants in the academia, etc; • Nigerians in Diaspora and Diaspora Organizations, etc.