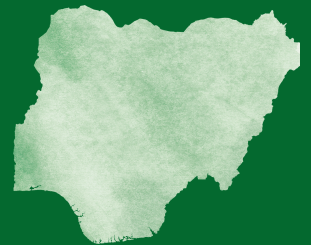




# APLS 13 REPORT



Emerging Global Funding Realities: Impact on  
Population Activities and the Need for Innovative  
Domestic Resource Mobilization



THIRTEENTH ANNUAL  
POPULATION LECTURE  
SERIES (2025)





# **APLS 13 REPORT 2025**

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This document includes an executive summary, policy brief, a summary of recommended key interventions, the main report and the keynote address based on the proceedings of the 13th Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) held on December 10, 2025 at the Nigerian Army Resource Center.

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# CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

It is with a profound sense of responsibility and purpose that I present the report of the 13th Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS 13). Since its inception in 2012, the APLS has served as a premier platform for national dialogue on population and development linked issues, helping to align our demographic realities with Nigeria's development planning. This year's theme, "Emerging Global Funding Realities: Impact on Population Activities and the Need for Innovative Domestic Resource Mobilization," reflects a critical turning point for our nation.

For too long, Nigeria has relied on external donor support for essential population and health interventions. However, as global funding landscapes shift due to economic shocks and changing geopolitical priorities, we are faced with an explosive mix of major interrelated challenges: declining international support alongside rapid population growth that continues to pressure our infrastructure and social services.

As we navigate these challenges, we must be guided by the principle that "the owner of the load must make the first attempt to carry it". Planning and implementation of population activities is not merely a policy goal; it is fundamental to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), social stability, and inclusive growth. This document outlines a roadmap for transitioning toward a sustainable, domestically driven framework anchored in:



- National Ownership: Strengthening our internal capacity and political commitment to fund our population agenda.
- Innovative Financing: Exploring public-private partnerships, diaspora engagement, and health insurance levies to create resilient funding streams.
- Data-Driven Governance: Ensuring that accurate, timely population data informs every level of national planning and service delivery.
- Youth Engagement: Empowering our young people, who are not burdens but the primary economic drivers of our demographic dividend.

I urge all stakeholders, government institutions, the private sector, and civil society, to move beyond dialogue and commit to the concrete actions detailed in this report. Together, we can build a resilient, homegrown system that secures the well-being of all Nigerians and ensures a prosperous future for generations to come.

Dr. Aminu Yusuf  
Taliban Wushishi  
Chairman, National Population Commission

# PREAMBLE

The 13th Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) convened at a critical juncture for Nigeria’s demographic agenda, with the theme “Emerging Global Funding Realities: Impact on Population Activities and the Need for Innovative Domestic Resource Mobilization”. Organized by the National Population Commission (NPC) and its strategic partners, the forum addressed the urgent need for Nigeria to transition from a donor-dependent funding model to a sustainable, domestically driven framework.

Key discussions highlighted that while global donor support is declining due to economic shocks and shifting geopolitical priorities, Nigeria’s rapid population growth continues to

place pressure on infrastructure and social services. The lecture underscored that effective population management is fundamental to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

High-level stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), and various civil society organizations, reached a consensus on prioritizing domestic resource mobilization, youth engagement, and the operationalization of national population policies at the subnational level.



## THE CHALLENGE: A CRITICAL FUNDING SHIFT

The lecture series convened at a time when Nigeria faces a "perfect storm" of demographic and economic challenges:

- **Declining Global Support:** International donor funding is shrinking due to global economic shocks and shifting geopolitical priorities.
- **Demographic Pressure:** Nigeria's rapid population growth continues to place immense pressure on infrastructure and essential social services.
- **Development Risk:** Stakeholders reached a consensus that effective population management is foundational to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); without sustainable funding, these goals are at risk.



## KEY STRATEGIC PILLARS FOR REFORM

The proceedings identified three critical areas requiring immediate policy attention and innovative solutions:

### i. Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM)

- **Private Sector Integration:** This requires moving beyond corporate social responsibility to involve the private sector as a strategic partner in funding population programs.
- **Innovative Financing:** Proposals include exploring population bonds, health insurance levies, and specialized taxes to create a dedicated fund for population activities.
- **Fiscal Efficiency:** Strengthening tax administration and improving expenditure efficiency to maximize existing internal resources.

### ii. Youth Engagement and The Demographic Dividend

- **Human Capital Investment:** Nigeria cannot achieve a "demographic dividend" without sustained investments in health, education, and labor participation for its large youth population.
- **Empowerment:** Recognizing youth and women as vital contributors, shifting from viewing them as burdens to acknowledging their potential as economic drivers if properly supported.

### iii. Resilience and Self-Reliance

- **Ownership of Development:** A central theme of the keynote was that "the owner of the load must make the first attempt to carry it." Nigeria must build internal capacity rather than relying on external support as a foundation.
- **Sectoral Integration:** Integrating formal and informal financial systems to capture a broader base for domestic funding.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY ACTIONS

The forum concluded with renewed call to actions for stakeholders:

- **Institutional Frameworks:** Operationalize the newly revised National Policy on Population for Sustainable Development (NPP).
- **Digital Solutions:** Deploy digital technologies to improve the transparency and delivery of population services, thereby building public trust.
- **Transparency:** Enhance accountability in the management of domestic resources to encourage private investment and public buy-in.
- **Legislative Support:** Advocate for legislative frameworks that mandate specific percentages of national and sub-national budgets for population and reproductive health activities.

## CONCLUSION

The 13th APLS served as a pivotal platform for redefining Nigeria's approach to population management. The shift to innovative domestic resource mobilization is no longer optional but a survival strategy to secure the well-being of the nation's people and build a resilient society.



# STRENGTHENING NATIONAL OWNERSHIP: A ROADMAP FOR SUSTAINABLE POPULATION ACTIVITY FUNDING IN NIGERIA.



## THE CHALLENGE

Nigeria has historically relied on external resources for reproductive health, maternal care, and population data systems. However, planned reductions in international funding—including from the U.S. government starting in 2025—and shifting donor priorities necessitate a reassessment of how population activities are financed.



## KEY POLICY FINDINGS

- **Institutional Frameworks:** The National Population Policy (2021) provides a strong foundation, overseen by the National Population Council, chaired by the President. However, the coordination structures (Technical Working Groups and Advisory Groups) must be fully operationalized across all 36 states by 2026.
- **Demographic Pressures:** While the national fertility rate has declined to 4.8, regional disparities persist due to low female education, early marriage, and limited contraceptive uptake.

**The Gender & Youth Dimension:** Women and girls are disproportionately affected by underfunded population systems. Furthermore, with a large youth population, failure to invest in their development risks losing the demographic dividend.

# STRENGTHENING NATIONAL OWNERSHIP: A ROADMAP FOR SUSTAINABLE POPULATION ACTIVITY FUNDING IN NIGERIA.



## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Budgetary Reforms:** Transition the NPC to "Part C" of the Appropriation Act to ensure budgetary predictability and create dedicated population budget lines at the state level.
- **Innovative Financing:** Leverage public-private partnerships (PPPs), tax reforms, and diaspora remittances to create a "blended financing" model
- **Data-Driven Governance:** Strengthen data systems to ensure that population statistics inform every level of national planning and service delivery.



# GALLERY

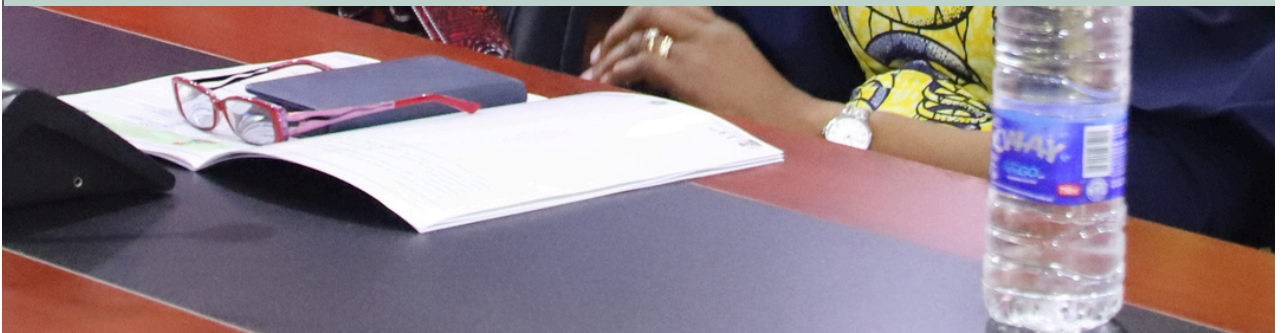


# GALLERY



CATEGORY	ACTION / INTERVENTION POINT	GOVERNANCE LEVEL	MAIN IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES	EXPECTED START DATE
<b>INSTITUTIONAL &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>	Strengthen the functionality of the population management coordination platforms Convening of at least two statutory meetings annually of the National Population Council and establish functional Technical Working Groups in all 36 states, with approved terms of reference, annual work plans, and dedicated budget lines.	National	-Presidency -NPC	Q2, 2026
<b>FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>	Increase health access by implementing IEV Strategy and scale up health insurance coverage Nationwide: Implement the (IEV) Strategy and expand health insurance coverage for reproductive, maternal, and child health services to at least 60% of women of reproductive age, reducing out-of-pocket expenditure by 30%.	National, States, LGAs	-FMHSW -NHIA -States, -LGAs	Q1, 2027
<b>MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH</b>	Expand MAMII to 172 high-burden LGAs reducing maternal mortality significantly: Expand MAMII services to all 172 priority LGAs, with quarterly reporting on maternal mortality and facility deliveries.	National, States and LGAs	-FMoHSW, -NPHCDA -SPHCA	Q4, 2026
<b>YOUTH &amp; SOCIAL INCLUSION</b>	Adopt blended financing for inclusive youth enterprises: Establish and sustain a blended financing facility to support at least 1,000 youth-led social enterprises, with a minimum of 20% of beneficiaries being persons with disabilities.	National, States and LGAs	- Fed. Min. of Youth Development -Bank of Industry	Q3, 2026
<b>POLICY TARGET</b>	Raise contraceptive use above 27%, significantly reduce unmet needs for family planning in Nigeria: Increase modern contraceptive prevalence rate in Nigeria to at least 27% and reduce unmet need for family planning to 5%, by 2030. supported through annual commodity procurement plans and community outreach programs	National	-Federal and State -Ministries of Health -NPHCDA -SPHCDA	Q3,2026
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	Deploy digital financial tools for policy performance tracking Deploy a national digital population financing dashboard covering federal and state expenditures and conduct annual performance reviews of the National Population Policy with published scorecards.	National	-NPC -Federal Ministry of Finance	Q1, 2027
<b>RESOURCE MOBILIZATION</b>	Leverage tax reforms and diaspora engagement for funding Establish at least two domestic financing streams (including earmarked levies or diaspora co-investment platforms) generating a minimum of ₦20 billion annually for population and reproductive health programmes.	National	-FMHSW -Federal Ministry of Finance -NRS	Q1, 2027

LEVEL	PRIMARY	KEY ACTORS
<b>NATIONAL</b>	Policy, financing, coordination	NPC, National Population Council, FMoH, Finance Ministry, NHIA, National Assembly
<b>STATE</b>	Implementation, co-financing	State MoHs, PHCDAs, Planning Commissions, Assemblies
<b>LOCAL</b>	Service delivery	LGAs, Ward Committees, CSOs, PPFN
<b>CROSS-CUTTING</b>	Accountability & financing	Private sector, diaspora, NGOs



# MAIN REPORT

## **EMERGING GLOBAL FUNDING REALITIES: IMPACT ON POPULATION ACTIVITIES AND THE NEED FOR INNOVATIVE DOMESTIC RESOURCE MOBILIZATION.**

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE LECTURE**

The National Population Commission (NPC) and strategic partners convened the 13th Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) as a high-level policy dialogue platform to examine the implications of emerging global funding realities on population activities in Nigeria and to explore sustainable domestic resource mobilization pathways. Since its inception in 2012, the APLS has served as a premier national forum for aligning population dynamics with national development planning. The 2025 edition was particularly timely given declining global donor support and the need for stronger national ownership of financing of its population and development agenda.

### **WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION**

In his welcome address, the Chairman of the National Population Commission (NPC), Dr. Aminu Yusuf, warmly welcomed participants to the 13th Annual Population Lecture Series and expressed appreciation for the presence of policymakers, development partners, traditional institutions, civil society organizations, academics, and other stakeholders.



He noted that the Annual Population Lecture Series has, since its inception in 2012, remained a critical platform for sustained national dialogue on population and development issues.

The Chairman emphasized that population dynamics remain central to Nigeria's development trajectory, noting that rapid population growth continues to exert pressure on economic growth, infrastructure, social services, and the overall quality of life of citizens. He observed that effective population management is fundamental to achieving inclusive growth, social stability, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and must therefore remain a priority within national planning frameworks.

He acknowledged the significant contributions of international development partners in supporting population-related interventions

over the years, particularly in areas such as family planning, electronic civil registration and vital statistics (eCRVS), Demographic and Health Surveys, and other population data systems.

However, he noted that the global development landscape is changing, with shifting donor priorities, economic uncertainties, and competing global crises affecting the availability of external funding. These emerging global funding realities require Nigeria to reassess its approach to financing population activities, ensuring stakeholders remain focused on the urgent need for domestic solutions.

The Chairman explained that the theme of the Lecture, "Emerging Global Funding Realities: Impact on Population Activities and the Need for Innovative Domestic Resource Mobilization," was deliberately chosen to stimulate critical reflection and action. He stressed that Nigeria must increasingly look inward, strengthen domestic financing mechanisms, and adopt innovative approaches to ensure the sustainability of population programmes.

He emphasized that national ownership, political commitment, and coordinated action across sectors are essential for long-term success. He further highlighted the importance of evidence-based policy making, noting that accurate and timely population data is indispensable for effective planning, budgeting, and service delivery at both federal and sub-national levels. He called on stakeholders to support the Commission's efforts to strengthen data systems and ensure that population data continues to inform policy decisions across sectors.

The Chairman also underscored the importance of youth engagement, noting that young people constitute a significant

proportion of Nigeria's population (Over 60% Ref: National Population Commission (2025) and must be actively involved in shaping solutions to population and development challenges. He welcomed the inclusion of a Youth Panel in the programme and expressed optimism that the perspectives shared would contribute meaningfully to the discourse on innovative financing and sustainable development.

In conclusion, the Chairman urged participants to engage in the deliberations actively and to commit to translating the Lecture's outcomes into concrete actions. He called on government institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, and development partners to work collaboratively to build a resilient, homegrown financing framework that will sustain Nigeria's population and development agenda. He expressed confidence that the discussions at the Lecture would generate practical recommendations to support national development efforts.



## OPENING REMARKS

### Dr. Haruna Abubakar Okai (PPFN)

Dr. Haruna Abubakar Okai, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), delivering the opening remarks on behalf of Chief Kwamoti La'ori, President of PPFN, commended the National Population Commission for sustaining a national platform for continuous dialogue on population and development issues.

He emphasized the timeliness of the lecture's theme in light of declining donor funding, geopolitical uncertainties, and rising economic pressures that threaten the sustainability of critical interventions in reproductive health, family planning, and maternal health. According to him, these emerging realities necessitate stronger domestic collaboration and innovative financing approaches.

Dr. Okai reaffirmed PPFN's belief that sustainable development can only be achieved through strengthened partnerships among government agencies, development partners, civil society organizations, and communities. He reiterated PPFN's commitment to supporting policy advocacy, domestic resource mobilization, and initiatives to improve population health outcomes in Nigeria.



## GOODWILL MESSAGES

### Professor Enang Ebingha – President, Population Association of Nigeria (PAN)

Professor Ebingha delivered a goodwill message, describing the lecture as timely and relevant, particularly in light of persistent funding constraints affecting population and health outcomes. He emphasized the importance of evidence-based dialogue and data-driven policy engagement, noting that the unmet need for family planning has remained a critical challenge. He also invited participants to the 2026 International Conference of the Population Association of Nigeria at Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.

**His Royal Highness Alhaji Adamu Baba Yunusa (Onah of Abaji and Chairman FCT Council of Traditional Rulers): Represented by Alhaji Kamal Adamu, Sarkin Gabas of Abaji.**

The goodwill message conveyed high expectations for the leadership of the National Population Commission and called for unity, teamwork, and open communication among Commissioners and stakeholders. He further emphasized that effective population management is fundamental to Nigeria's national progress.

**Princess Edna D. D. Azura – National President, National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) Nigeria.**

Princess Edna D. D. Azura, National President of the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), delivered a goodwill message, emphasizing the critical link between population dynamics, gender equity, and sustainable national development. She noted that population issues are not abstract policy concepts, but realities that directly affect the daily lives of women, families, and communities across Nigeria. She highlighted that reliable population data and adequately funded population programmes are essential for improving maternal health outcomes, advancing girl-child education, addressing gender-based violence, promoting women's economic empowerment, and ensuring inclusive development that leaves no woman or child behind. According to her, weak population systems and underfunded demographic programmes disproportionately affect women and girls, particularly those in underserved and vulnerable communities.



She stressed that these emerging realities require Nigeria to adopt innovative, home-grown solutions that prioritize domestic resource mobilization, strengthen institutional capacity, and deepen community engagement, empowering stakeholders to take ownership of population issues.

She commended the National Population Commission for its leadership and foresight in convening the lecture and for its continued commitment to advancing Nigeria's demographic agenda. She reaffirmed NCWS Nigeria's readiness to collaborate with the Commission, government institutions, civil society organizations, and development partners to advocate for accurate data generation, responsible population management, and gender-responsive policy planning.



Princess Azura concluded by expressing confidence that, through sustained collaboration and innovative financing approaches, Nigeria's population can be transformed into a powerful asset for national development, while ensuring that the needs and rights of women and girls remain central to policy formulation and implementation.

**Professor Olalekan Yinusa,  
Executive Director :Policy  
Strategy and Research at the  
Nigeria's Governors Forum  
(NGF)**

He appreciated the NPC for organizing this annual lecture, which was indeed important and necessary, and commended the Commission for consistently providing exact figures rather than relying on estimates. He added that the governors' forum is committed to ensuring that population-related development issues are given proper attention in policies and programmes.



# TECHNICAL (SUB-THEME) PRESENTATION

## By Dr. Aminu Magashi Garba, Founder and Coordinator, Africa Health Budget Network

Under the sub-theme “Developing a Roadmap for Sustainable Funding of Population Activities in Nigeria,” Dr. Aminu Magashi Garba, Founder and Coordinator of the Africa Health Budget Network, delivered a technical presentation focused on strengthening the institutional and financing foundations of Nigeria’s population agenda. Anchoring his presentation on the National Population Policy, signed in November 2021 and launched in early 2022, he noted that the policy represents one of the few national policies approved at the highest level of government.

He emphasized that the National Population Council, which provides strategic oversight for the policy, is chaired by the President, underscoring the importance of population issues within Nigeria’s national development framework. He explained that the policy mandates that the Chairman of the National Population Commission establish and operationalize key coordination structures, namely the National Population Council, the Population Advisory Group, and the Population Technical Working Group, at both the federal and state levels. According to him, these institutional mechanisms are essential for ensuring policy coherence, sectoral coordination, and the effective implementation of population-related programmes nationwide.

He further noted that full operationalization of these structures at the state level is expected by 2026, in line with policy provisions. In outlining the policy's substantive content, he highlighted that it sets out 21 strategic targets that clearly justify the need for sustainable and predictable financing. These targets include improving immunization coverage, reducing maternal, neonatal, infant, and under-five mortality rates, increasing modern contraceptive prevalence to above 50 percent, and eliminating unmet need for family planning by 2030. Additional targets address zero tolerance for gender-based violence, reduction of rural–urban migration through rural development, compulsory education up to secondary school level, strengthened vocational skills training, and improved birth and death registration systems.

Dr. Garba emphasized that achieving these targets requires moving beyond ad-hoc and donor-dependent financing, toward structured, domestically driven funding mechanisms. He recommended prioritizing the National Population Commission within the national budget architecture by placing it under Part C of the Appropriation Act, thereby ensuring greater budgetary predictability. He also advocated for the creation of dedicated budget lines for population and development

activities at the state level, given the critical role of subnational governments in implementation.

In addition, he underscored the importance of strengthening coordination and accountability through regular performance reviews of the National Population Policy, proposing that such reviews be conducted periodically to assess progress toward agreed targets and to inform policy adjustments. He concluded by charging the Commission to leverage previously underutilized institutional and financial resources, strengthen domestic financing strategies, and provide clear leadership in driving a sustainable funding roadmap for population activities in Nigeria.



# KEYNOTE LECTURE ON EMERGING GLOBAL FUNDING REALITIES

## Delivered on behalf of the Honourable Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare

The keynote address was delivered on behalf of the Honourable Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Professor Muhammad Ali Pate, by the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA). In his introductory remarks, the representative emphasized the strong longstanding partnership between the health sector and the National Population Commission (NPC), noting that health planning, service delivery, and policy decisions are fundamentally anchored in reliable population data and statistics generated by the Commission. The address highlighted that global health and development financing is undergoing significant transformation due to economic shocks, geopolitical tensions, and competing global crises.

As a result, donor support for population and health programmes is declining. Nigeria's historical dependence on external resources for population and health interventions was described as increasingly unsustainable. In this context, the representative noted that the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is prioritizing stronger domestic financing commitments to health and population as part of broader people-centred reforms. On population dynamics, it was noted that

Nigeria's fertility rate has declined from approximately seven children per woman in 1990 to 4.8, according to the 2023-2024 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS). However, persistently high fertility in some regions continues to be driven by factors such as poverty, low female educational attainment, cultural norms, early marriage, low uptake of modern contraceptives, and high under-five mortality.

The keynote further addressed maternal and child health challenges, highlighting the Maternal and Newborn Mortality Reduction Innovation Initiative (MAMII), which targets 172 local government areas with the highest burden of maternal deaths. The initiative focuses on early identification of pregnant women, access to antenatal care, risk profiling, emergency referral and transportation, and free treatment of obstetric complications, including caesarean sections, funded by the Federal Government. Vaccine-preventable diseases were identified as a major contributor to under-five mortality, with routine immunization coverage stagnating at approximately 50 percent. Measures to address this include releasing counterpart funding to the respective concerned organizations, identifying zero-dose locations, and implementing the Identify, Enumerate,

and Vaccinate (IEV) strategy. Other ongoing interventions highlighted included the successful COVID-19 vaccination rollout, which exceeded initial targets; an ongoing nationwide measles–rubella integrated vaccination campaign; and sustained procurement of family planning commodities through government- and partner-supported mechanisms.

The address also highlighted emerging migration challenges, including the emigration of healthcare professionals and internal rural–urban migration, with implications for food security, service delivery, and urban inflation. Sustainable domestic financing was identified as central to addressing remaining gaps in population and health outcomes. The Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative was presented as the overarching framework guiding sector reforms, supported by increased state-level commitments. Anticipated adjustments in external support, including planned reductions in United States government funding for population and health activities from 2025, further underscore the urgency of mobilizing domestic resources at both federal and subnational levels.

Proposed financing strategies included strengthening public–private partnerships, scaling up government and private health insurance schemes to reduce out-of-pocket expenditure, leveraging tax reforms to improve revenue generation and compliance, engaging the Nigerian diaspora through remittances, telemedicine, and co-investment, and improving transparency through digital financial management systems. Emphasis was placed on prioritizing high-impact interventions, strengthening accountability, and building public trust through improved service delivery.

## **KEYNOTE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION**

During the question-and-answer session, participants raised critical issues regarding the

sustainability of population and health financing amid declining donor support. Questions focused on how the government intends to fill funding gaps left by the exit of [1] some non-governmental organizations, how domestic resources can be mobilized without imposing excessive tax burdens on citizens, and the extent to which population and health data inform policy decisions.

In response, the speaker explained that governments typically generate revenue through value creation and production, taxation, and asset management, noting that Nigeria must reduce over-reliance on extractive resources and focus on re-industrialization and economic productivity. While acknowledging that taxation is unavoidable for development, he stressed that transparency, accountability, and visible impact of public spending are essential for building citizen trust.

He further highlighted measures being taken to strengthen accountability, including sector-wide oversight mechanisms, joint performance reviews, partnerships with anti-corruption and security agencies, deployment of financial management officers at the local government level, and the rollout of digital tools to track financial flows. On data-driven policymaking, he reaffirmed the government's commitment to evidence-based decision-making, citing targeted interventions such as the maternal and new-born mortality initiative.

The speaker also noted that when external funding for key Programs was reduced, the government could rapidly assess funding gaps using available data and mobilize domestic resources to sustain services. He emphasized that external support should increasingly play a complementary role, while domestic financing and national ownership remain the foundation for sustainable population and health programmes.

## YOUTH PANEL SESSION

**Ms. Halima Yahaya, Gender and Youth Focal Officer at the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria,**



The Youth Panel Session was held under the theme “Adapting to Change: Youth Perspectives on Innovative Financing for Population and Development.” Panelists included Mr. Ifeanyi Raymond Ofodu, Mrs. Margaret Bolaji Adegbola, Mr. Aminu Ahmed, and Ms. Rebecca Akpabio. Discussions emphasized the need for blended financing models that combine domestic public resources, private sector investment, and strategic donor support to sustain population and development initiatives targeted at young people. The panellists highlighted the importance of inclusive programme design, stressing that young people—particularly girls and persons with disabilities—must be actively involved in shaping interventions rather than being passive beneficiaries.

The session also underscored the role of community-based resource mobilization, including youth-led social enterprises, cooperative financing models, and innovative grassroots funding mechanisms, as practical pathways for strengthening domestic resource mobilization. They emphasized that accountability, transparency, mentorship, and institutional support are critical for enabling youth-led initiatives to attract sustainable financing.

Overall, the panel reaffirmed that sustained investment in young people is essential to harness Nigeria's demographic dividend and drive long-term productivity, innovation, and inclusive national development.

# CONCLUSION

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## KEY OUTCOMES AND WAY FORWARD

Deliberations throughout the Lecture underscored the urgency of strengthening domestic resource mobilization to ensure the sustainability of population and development programmes in the face of declining external support.

Key outcomes from the Lecture included a shared consensus on the centrality of reliable population data for national and subnational planning, the need for stronger institutional coordination across sectors, and the importance of aligning population financing with national reform frameworks. The lecture emphasized the critical role of states in translating population.

policies into action and highlighted the necessity of inclusive approaches that prioritize women, youth, and vulnerable populations. The Lecture further reaffirmed that sustained investment in health, education, and youth development is essential for harnessing Nigeria's demographic dividend. Stakeholders collectively called for deliberate actions to operationalize innovative financing mechanisms, strengthen accountability systems, and translate policy commitments into concrete, measurable outcomes that will advance Nigeria's population and development agenda.

## VOTE OF THANKS

The Vote of Thanks was delivered by Barrister Patricia Kupchi Iyanya, Honourable Federal Commissioner representing Benue State. She expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Population Lecture Series. She described the event as a significant milestone, particularly as it marked one of the first major engagements under the leadership of the newly appointed Chairman of the National Population Commission. She thanked God for the successful hosting of the Lecture and expressed gratitude to the Chairman, Honourable Federal Commissioners, Directors, and staff of the Commission for their collective efforts.

She also acknowledged the Honourable Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare for the keynote address delivered on his behalf, as well as the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), traditional institutions, development partners, and all stakeholders whose support and contributions contributed to the success of the programme. Special commendation was extended to the Director of Population Studies, Dr. Nnamdi Maduekwe, and his team, for their leadership, dedication, and commitment to the successful organization of the Lecture, as well as to all Directors and staff of the National Population Commission for their cooperation and support.

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## **CLOSING REMARKS**

In his closing remarks, the Director-General of the National Population Commission, Dr. Ojogun Tellson Osifo, emphasized the need for Nigeria to reduce its over-reliance on external funding for population activities progressively and to strengthen domestic ownership of population and development programmes. He noted that population issues are not abstract concerns but practical realities that directly affect national planning, service delivery, and sustainable development.

He underscored the importance of strengthening technical advisory structures to support evidence-based decision-making and called for deliberate efforts to design and implement programmes that incorporate active youth participation. The Director-General further observed that ongoing government tax reforms offer opportunities to strengthen domestic financing for population activities and encouraged the Commission to prioritize sustainable financing mechanisms that support the effective implementation of population programmes.

## LIST OF SPEAKERS AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATIONS

The following individuals delivered speeches, goodwill messages, technical presentations, or formal remarks at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) organized by the National Population Commission:

- Dr. Aminu Yusuf - Chairman, National Population Commission (NPC); Welcome Address
- Dr. Haruna Abakar Okai - Executive Director, Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN); Opening Remarks on behalf of Chief Kwamoti La'ori, President, PPFN
- Professor Enang Ebenga - President, Population Association of Nigeria (PAN); Goodwill Message
- His Royal Highness Alhaji Adamu Baba - Traditional Ruler; Goodwill Message delivered by: Alhaji Kamal Adamu, Sarkin Gabas of Abaji
- Princess Edna D. D. Azura - National President, National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), Nigeria; Goodwill Message
- Professor Olalekan Unisa - Representative, Nigerian Governors' Forum (NGF); Goodwill Message
- Professor Muhammad Ali Pate - Honourable Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare; Keynote Address Represented by: Dr. Muyi Aina
- Dr. Muyi Aina - Representative of the Honourable Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; Delivered the Keynote Address
- Dr. Aminu Magashi Garba - Founder and Coordinator, Africa Health Budget Network (AHBN); Technical Presentation: "Developing a Roadmap for Sustainable Funding of Population Activities in Nigeria"
- Ms. Halima Yahaya - Gender and Youth Focal Officer, Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN); Coordinator, Youth Panel Session
- Mr. Ifeanyi Raymond Ofodu - Founder, Raymond Ofodu Foundation; Youth Panellist
- Mrs. Margaret Bolaji Adegbola - Founder and Executive Director, Stand with A Girl Initiative, Youth Partnerships Manager, FP2030 (North West & Central Africa); Youth Panellist
- Mr. Aminu Ahmed - Population Studies Officer, NPC, Advocate for Youth Empowerment, Girls' Capacity Building, and Disability Inclusion; Youth Panellist
- Ms. Rebecca Akpabio - Communications and Marketing Officer, Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), Social Behaviour and Social Norms Expert; Youth Panellist
- Barrister Patricia Kupchi Iyanya - Honourable Federal Commissioner, National Population Commission, Benue State; Vote of Thanks
- Dr. Osifo Telson Ojogun - Director-General, National Population Commission (NPC); Closing Remarks

# FULL TEXT OF KEYNOTE LECTURE

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DR MUYI AINA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
NATIONAL PRIMARY HEALTH CARE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, AT THE  
13TH ANNUAL POPULATION LECTURE SERIES 2025**

**THEME: EMERGING GLOBAL  
FUNDING REALITIES: IMPACT ON  
POPULATION ACTIVITIES AND  
NEED FOR INNOVATIVE DOMESTIC  
RESOURCES MOBILIZATION**

## Protocols

- Chairman National Population Commission (NPC), Dr. Aminu Yusuf
- Chairperson of the 2025 Lecture Series, & Immediate past Chairman, NPC, Dr. Isa Kwarra
- Director General NPC, Dr. Ojogun Tellson Osifo,
- NPC Federal Commissioners
- Dr. Aminu Magashi Garba, Founder and Coordinator, Africa Health Budget Network
- Youth Panelists
- Distinguished Ladies & Gentlemen

It is an honour to address this distinguished gathering at the 13th Annual Population Lecture Series on behalf of the Honourable Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Professor Muhammad Ali Pate, who is unavoidably out of the country on official duty.

I congratulate the new Chairman of the National Population Commission (NPC), Dr. Aminu Yusuf, who assumed office last week, and I look forward to deepening the collaboration between our organizations. I acknowledge and appreciate the immediate

past Chairman, Hon. Isa Kwarra, for the strong partnership. Also, I commend the NPC for sustaining this lecture series for 13 years as part of its efforts to advance public understanding of population and development issues.

This year's theme, 'Emerging Global Funding Realities: Impact on Population Activities and Need for Innovative Domestic Resources Mobilization', is indeed timely. Global health and development financing are undergoing major shifts: donor support is declining, while climate change, youthful population growth, humanitarian crises, geopolitical tensions, and the post-COVID-19 recovery are reshaping priorities. Emerging economies are increasingly expected to self-finance their development agenda. For Nigeria, heavy dependence on external resources for population and health programs is no longer sustainable. We must adapt with urgency and innovation.

Population dynamics - fertility, mortality, and migration- remain at the heart of our national planning as a country:

- **Fertility:** Nigeria's fertility rate fell from around 7 children per woman in 1990 to 5.3 in 2018 and now stands at 4.8 (Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS 2024). Though progress has been recorded, fertility remains high for a pre-dividend country. Drivers include poverty, low female education, cultural norms supporting early marriage, low uptake of modern contraception, and high under-five mortality.

- **Mortality:** Mortality has fallen faster than fertility but remains among the highest globally. Under-five mortality declined from 193 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 110 per 1,000 in 2024. Infant mortality dropped from 87 per 1,000 in 1990 to 63 per 1,000 in 2024. Persisting drivers include suboptimal immunization coverage, neonatal complications, malaria, and respiratory infections, compounded by limited health workers, low-quality care, and funding gaps. Behavioural factors and insecurity influence adult mortality. Life expectancy stands at 56 years, 20 years below the global average.
- **Migration:** Nigeria faces unprecedented migration pressures. The “japa” trend has accelerated the loss of skilled professionals, particularly in the health sector. Internal migration toward urban centres continues to strain infrastructure, services, and security.

Nigeria has made progress in population health, but significant gaps remain. Sustainable financing is central to addressing these challenges - an agenda prioritized in the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII) championed by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and driven by the Honourable Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare.

It is important to note that funding for population activities currently comes from government allocations and external support from donors and development partners. We are now experiencing unprecedented increases in government allocations and other stakeholders’ investment in the health sector since 2023, especially as a result of the Health Sector Compact signed by the President with key stakeholders – States, LGAs, Partners, Private sector, traditional and religious leaders.

External resources have long funded major population and health interventions, including.

- **Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH)** activities, such as family planning, adolescent health, immunization, nutrition, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Tuberculosis (TB), and Malaria programs.
- **Censuses:** The 2006 Census was co-funded by the Government of Nigeria and development partners, notably the European Union, the United Nations Population Fund, the United States Agency for International Development, the United Nations Development Programme, and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.
- **Periodic Surveys and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS):** The 2023/24 NDHS and the 2024 Verbal and Social Autopsy (VASA) Survey cost over 11 million USD and 4 million USD, respectively, and were fully donor-funded.
- **5.14. Health financing:** Overall, donor funding accounts for 11.6% of national health expenditure (National Health Accounts, 2022).

As you may know, in early 2025, the United States Government, one of the largest funders of population and health activities, significantly adjusted its support. This followed earlier reductions from the British Government, which had already weakened family planning programs. The implications have since become a subject of national concern.

For decades, the United States Government supported key programs in HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria, and Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health, as well as national censuses and the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey.

The funding adjustments threaten essential services, widen inequities, and strain access to medicines, supplies, and technical expertise – particularly affecting women, children, orphans, and vulnerable households.

These shifts underscore an urgent need for Nigeria to develop sustainable domestic alternatives and build a more resilient financing system. Domestic resource mobilization must now adopt innovative approaches, including:

- **Public-private partnerships:** Enhancing efficiency, innovations, and investments into public health goals, thereby helping to meet health care needs. For instance, the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) for implementing the NHSRII ensures that all stakeholders are aligned with the government's priorities.
- **Insurance contributions:** This can be through government or privately-owned insurance schemes. It is achieved by pooling financial resources from contributions to pay for healthcare, protecting individuals from catastrophic medical costs. Expanding national and state health insurance schemes to pool risks and reduce out-of-pocket payments remains a major focus of this government because of its importance as a domestic resource. The National Health and State Health Insurance schemes are examples.
- **Taxation:** Strengthening revenue through new tax policies and improved compliance. This is an essential source for financing public services, infrastructure, and social programs. This is why we must all promote the new tax policies and spread hope among the citizenry.
- **Diaspora engagement:** Incentivizing diaspora investment by providing diaspora with opportunities to contribute skills in sectors like health, education, and technology, and creating inclusive governance structures for diaspora representation.

- **Strategic expenditure:** It involves allocating resources in a deliberate, planned manner to achieve the country's long-term development goals.
- **Technology:** Expanding digital tools for revenue collection and service delivery.
- **Local philanthropy and private sector engagement:** Mobilizing domestic actors to complement government efforts.

These approaches face challenges such as weak accountability structures, poor coordination, corruption, competing priorities during emergencies, and inconsistent political will. However, recent shifts toward people-centred governance – demonstrated by current reforms in the health sector – are encouraging.

Overcoming these constraints requires integrating formal and informal financial systems, deploying digital solutions, strengthening tax administration, improving expenditure efficiency, reducing capital flight, promoting private investment, and building public trust through transparency and better service delivery.

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration is pursuing **bold, people-centred reforms** across all sectors. In the health sector, **the NHSRII is the framework to deliver health dividends**. A lot of reforms are ongoing at the same time, and at a rapid pace. While the adjustments may be initially painful, they have halted long-standing economic decline and are positioning the country for growth and self-reliance.

Distinguished guests, I urge us to view this lecture not as a routine event but as a renewed call to action. Nigeria cannot achieve a demographic dividend without sustained investments in health, education, and labour participation.

Reliance on external support alone is neither realistic nor responsible. As the saying goes, "the owner of the load must make the first attempt to carry it." We must take responsibility, build internal capacity, and use external support as complementary - not foundational- if we are to secure the well-being of our people and build a resilient society.

Thank you for your attention.

Dr Muyi Aina  
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