SOCIAL PROTECTION, SOCIAL SECURITY INCLUDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS

Recently Nigeria has just been declared as the world headquarters of poverty the older people are the most affected by the inadequacy of social protection for her old people.

Access to healthcare, housing and employments in old age is one of the biggest challenges for social protection in Nigeria.

Older people can not enjoy good healthcare due to financial problem. They now look at alternative to healthcare by patronizing quacks or engage in self medication to maintain their health, these have led to more complication and untimely deaths in older age .

The constitution of federal Republic of Nigeria made adequate provision for the rights of all citizens to social security and social protection. Older Nigeria are recognized under this right . Social security is the protection that the government of the day provide for individual and households that will guarantee assess to healthcare, income ,quality life when one is getting older. It is a policy measure that is aimed at protecting a citizen in life situationor condition in which his means of livelihood may be at risk especially in old age.

• We campaign in ensuring that Older people in Nigeria have the right to social protection, social security including protection floor. They are entitled to contributory and non-contributory pension but unfortunately the contributory pension is does not come on time and lower than their expectation. While the non -contributory is not available

• We campaign in ensuring that government at all level come up with policy that will guarantee provision of Universal Pension for all older people in Nigeria. Only few local government councils give stipends to older people. There should be an instrument that will guarantee that all older people in Nigeria have access to non- contributory pension.

• We campaign in ensuring that govern of the day at Federal and State level fulfil their obligation by ensuring that all gratuities being owed are paid to the pensioners who hav been denied their right to receving their gratuities

• We campaign in ensuring that government provide more Primary healthcare that will be accessible to the older people. They are faced most time with chronic diseases like hypertension and kidney problem. Most time they do not have enough money to provide care for personal treatment there is need for government to come to their aid

We are in the election year. The foundation have been engaging government officialsfor the purpose of getting strong commitment from them to provide age friendly primary secondary and tertiary health centers for older people.

The present Federal Government has a policy on social protection which include older people. We are engaging them importation. Through a designated agency cash transfer scheme has been put in place for vulnerable family which include the older people. Unfortunately the good scheme is shrouded in secrecy and not much information is available for onward dissemination to the older people in the rural area that need it most. We are even on a long search for a beneficiary of this social protection cash transfer scheme by the Federal Government.

Since we are dealing with government that do not have specific programme for older people, we have increased our engagement with government officials, politicians and policy makers. We are also encouraging Civil Society organisations to teem up with us in encouraging the government to show more plight to the social security and social protection floor of older people who are presently being discriminated against. For instance , the Federal Government launched Market Money (market moni )which is a special intervention fund to encourage vulnerable small business holders with a sum that is less that $25.However we have not seen similar gesture extended to older people that really need this social fund. We keep on telling the government to support the older people with a national security and social protection safety net scheme that will guarantee their freedom without discrimination.

Through the support of our partner Helpage International, we keep on engaging and doing follow up and review bse on their commitments and promises on the programmes they may have for older people on monthly basis. Less than 1 % of all Local government councils in Nigeria has programmes for older people and this is the high level of neglect of older people in Nigeria.

There is no provision for complaint the foundation is looking at the legal aspect of enforcing the government to engage the older people and come up with programmes for them.