**STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA -PAPER PRESENTED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FEDERAL MINSTRY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ON 3 AUGUST 2021 AT THE 20TH EDITION OF THE JOINT PLANNING BOARD/NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENT PLANNING...**

**PROTOCOLS**

**APOLOGIES HM WHO IS IN KEBBI STATE ON ANOTHER NATIONAL ASSIGNMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. A humanitarian crisis occurs when a single or series of disasters, either natural or manmade, overwhelms the ability of the most vulnerable in society to cope. It therefore results in a loss of life and/or the inability of a critical mass of citizens to secure access to one or more of the basic requirements of life with dignity; namely security, water, food, shelter , healthcare and livelihood. There is no gainsaying that the protracted conflict in NE , the several inter-communal, and banditry/mass kidnapping related conflicts in other parts of the country, as well as several natural disasters such as flood, drought, food insecurity, and climate change have created patterns of humanitarian assistance marked by a confusing interplay of national and international actors. Given the trends in recent years, FMHADMSD as the national humanitarian coordinator, as well other FGN MDAs with mandates relevant to humanitarian response, states and LG authorities as well local/international NGOs , bilateral/ multilateral donors/partners and CSOs will be expected to respond timeously, effectively and efficiently to more frequent, severe and complex emergencies in future. If the goal to ensure ‘Lives are saved, suffering reduced and human dignity maintained and protected in humanitarian crises resulting from natural disasters and conflict situations is to be achieved, then certainly **STRATEGIC APPROACHES AND FRAMEWORKS TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA** are necessary and must be formulated . Humanitarian response being an inter-agency, inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder undertaking requiring whole of government and whole of community approach, the FMHADMSD as the ministry responsible for coordination humanitarian affairs, disaster management and social development , in close collaboration with all the afore-mentioned stakeholders, is fully immersed in developing STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA .

**WHY STRATEGIC APPROACHES AND FRAMEWORKS TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA**

2. strategic approaches and frameworks to addressing humanitarian challenges in Nigeria are needed , in part in response to pressure from citizens, beneficiaries, vulnerable people and donors, who believed that there was a lack of coordination and coherent planning in humanitarian and disaster management response in Nigeria. With Nigeria being a federal entity with 3-tiers of government, there is also the need to have a well-coordinated whole of government , whole of community approach that eliminates or reduces fragmentation , overlap and duplication as well as bottlenecks in addressing humanitarian challenges in Nigeria which lead to wastage of funds, tardiness in response and /poorly targeted response. There is also the need for strategies that not only prioritize response but seek to tie together the 3 strands of humanitarian assistance , peace and development through a ‘humanitarian-development-peace nexus’ approach. The Strategic Framework is predicated on the assumption that all the actors should speak with one voice, and adopt a coherent approach in which peace and assistance strategies are linked.

**OBJECTIVES OF STRATEGIC APPROACHES AND FRAMEWORKS TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA**

3. A Strategic Framework, according to the UN, is an umbrella under which a strategy incorporating political, humanitarian aid and human-rights dimensions can be developed. A Strategic Framework should be predicated on the assumption that all the actors should speak with one voice, and adopt a coherent approach in which peace and assistance strategies are linked.

**WHAT NATIONAL STRATEGIC APPROACHES AND FRAMEWORKS TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA SHOULD LOOK LIKE**

In collaboration with all stakeholders (at the federal, states and LG levels, national and international NGOs, Private sector, CSOs, research institutions, development partners) FMHADMSD is working towards developing STRATEGIC APPROACHES AND FRAMEWORKS TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA that have the following elements:

1. **Co-ordination across whole of government** . Response to humanitarian challenges is often criticized for having fragmented humanitarian management structures, but this is not in itself a barrier to coherent humanitarian programming across government. There are currently 4 donor humanitarian aid management models each of which has merits and disadvantages, and all these business models can deliver useful results if there is an effective cross-government co-ordination mechanism in place.1. **Ring fencing**: One entity (agency or ministry) makes all policy and funding decisions Ring-fencing has the advantage of facilitating coherent humanitarian policy and funding decisions, but it can also create the risk of humanitarian programming becoming isolated from inter ministerial mechanisms and diplomatic channels. 2. **Split responsibility**: A Ministry of Foreign Affairs sets policy and sometimes provides core funding to multilaterals, with a separate agency for earmarked funding and partnerships with NGOs.Split responsibility ensures that diplomatic channels can be used for humanitarian advocacy, and that humanitarian concerns retain a strong voice in government. Strong co-ordination mechanisms are needed to ensure that funding decisions are coherent, and that results from cross-government humanitarian funding can be measured. 3. **Split objectives**: Two ministries or agencies with mandates for different areas of humanitarian response set policy and provide funding individually. Split objectives allows donors to exploit the comparative advantages of various ministries, but may also lead to inconsistencies between responses to different types of crises, a lack of clarity in the division of labour, and the failure to exploit programmatic links – for example, links with development programming.4. **Multiple actors:** Delivery through multiple branches of government, and often also through sub-national structures Multiple actors exploits the comparative advantages of many different arms of government, but also exposes external stakeholders to the risk of inconsistent decision-making, a lack of clarity regarding the division of labour, excessive earmarking and difficulties in measuring overall humanitarian impact. These risks need to be carefully managed.

All business models need an effective cross-government co-ordination system. The FGN in august 2019 established the FMHADMSD to provide clear strategic vision), and a mechanism to ensure coherence between humanitarian policies and other related policy areas, e.g. climate change and migration, provide a useful framework for this work. Other important elements are a transparent division of labour between the humanitarian instruments, establishing a clear lead agency, and extending participation in co-ordination structures to other national response actors, including NGOs and donors. A strong cross-government co-ordination mechanisms have the greatest potential to deliver coherent, consistent and holistic humanitarian programming. Effective co-ordination will also support better impact measurement and provide the platform for demonstrating value for money. Notwithstanding the coordination role of the FMHADMSD , the full participation from key partners and other interested stakeholders in the policy development process is an important determinant of success. Consultation across all concerned ministries at federal and state level is especially critical to ensure that the policy framework has full buy-in from all areas of government. Donor development staff should also actively participate to promote cross-programme linkages and understanding. FLOOD POLICY

WHY: Without a cross-government framework, stakeholders risk political pressure to stretch their humanitarian budgets beyond the traditional humanitarian imperative of saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity. Opportunities to promote collaboration across institutional boundaries and between humanitarian and broader development objectives will be missed. A policy vacuum could also allow other ministries to propose clashing policies which may be inconsistent with overarching humanitarian objectives.

WHAT: A cross-government policy and/or strategy for humanitarian assistance is a critical first step towards ensuring consistent humanitarian responses that respect the GHD principles. This must however be anchored in relevant legislation and accompanied by a realistic implementation plan.

**LOCALIZATION** . There is no single definition of “localization”. In the Grand Bargain,1 (a 2016 agreement between some of the largest humanitarian donors and agencies,) signatories committed, under the heading of **“more support and finding tools to local and national responders,”** to **“making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary”** while continuing to recognize the vital role of international actors, in particular in situations of armed conflict. ‘Localisation’ of humanitarian aid emerged as a theme from consultations leading up to the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. In particular, evidence that less than 0.2 per cent of reported humanitarian funding is being channelled directly to national and local NGOs highlights the need for a more locally rooted humanitarian response that leverages the responsibilities and capacities of states, civil society and affected communities.

Local humanitarian action already has an enormous life-saving impact around the world. It could do even more – in particular, it could be the key to bridging the growing gap (currently over $15 billion) between humanitarian needs and available funds -- if the international community began to really invest in it. At FMHADMSD we shall focus our collective efforts on ensuring strong, sustainable, relevant, effective local organizations so as to achieve better durable solution, preparedness, response and recovery in humanitarian settings and improving outcomes for affected populations. The overall objective of localization is improved humanitarian response, ensuring access for all in need to fast, quality, impactful and sustainable humanitarian assistance that is efficient, effective and fit for purpose. Local organisations are the first responders in an emergency and are uniquely positioned to strengthen local communities’ capacity in the face of future crisis. Local organisations are best placed to identify communities’ underlying vulnerabilities and priorities. It is often only local actors that can access crisis affected communities in remote and insecure environments. Local actors are key for this and have distinct strengths, as they often play a crucial role in ensuring early response and access, acceptance, cost effectiveness, and link with development (i.e. reducing the impact of future crises). In order to achieve these benefits, the specific objectives of localization are to increase investment in local actors and to improve partnerships and coordination between international and local responders. Localization is also about complementarity, which looks to a balance between local and international action in order to maximise the comparative advantages of both, and increase effectiveness of the humanitarian response in a given context. International humanitarian action remains extremely important. However, IFRC feels there needs to be far greater recognition of the role of local actors.

Local actors have clear areas of strength leading to an improved humanitarian response:

• Local actors are fast because they are close;

• Local actors often have access that no international actor can achieve. Example MAKESAFE Humanitarian Safety Services Ltd MRE While humanitarian access has been extremely constrained for all actors NE , MAKESAFE has had much more than most.

• Local actors have a strong local understanding of local circumstances, politics and culture.

• Local actors are in a strong position to link preparedness and response.

• Local humanitarian action – particularly when led by volunteers – is generally cost effective when compared to efforts directly led by international personnel, remunerated at international rates.

We will continue to encourage humanitarian actors in Implementing localization capacity strengthening commitments through : encouraging INGOs and donors to increase and support their multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders, including preparedness, response and coordination capacities, especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters, recurrent outbreaks and the effects of climate change. We should achieve this through collaboration with development partners and incorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements.

In order to be successful, external partners capacity strengthening efforts should:

• **Prioritize:** It is critical that capacity investment be made in national and local governments in disaster prone contexts, in particular to national disaster management agencies, civil-protection authorities, and local governments. Civil society actors in Nigeria are also crucial for reaching inaccessible populations and must also be included.

• **Have appropriate timing**: This investment should be targeted at local actors in high-risk contexts, well before a disaster or emergency strikes, should be part of an overall strategy to reduce and manage risks at the national level, and should not disappear after the emergency phase ends.

• **Support the organizational development of local and national responders,** including for financial management, domestic resource mobilization, project management, accountability and reporting, community engagement and good governance.

• **Ensure that financing during emergencies also looks to support long-term sustainability**: rapid scale up or down of activities has significant costs for local and national actors. Funds need to come not only during the emergency, but before and afterwards, promoting longer term sustainability.

• **Invest in local and national responders with sustained attention, time, and energy:** It is a long-term effort that will require multi-year funding that is flexible enough to adapt to the changing needs of an organization and its environment. We must move to a system that encourages true partnership between humanitarian organizations and local implementing partners. Long term core funding is a vital component of this.

• **Ensure appropriate internal controls**: Effective local action can only happen if there is a supportive enabling environment for local action, including adequately strong internal mechanisms among grantees to ensure the responsible use of international funds as well as transparency, including safeguards against the diversion of funds to corrupt or other non-humanitarian purposes.

In Implementing localization partnership commitments, humanitarian actors to :

[E]engage with local and national responders in a spirit of partnership and aim to reinforce rather than replace local and national capacities.

[I]ncorporate capacity strengthening in partnership agreements

Shift from a sub-contracting to a partnership approach between international and local/ national humanitarian actors.

• Listen to local and national actors: This is about listening not only to the needs expressed by local actors, but to their proposed solutions to address these needs.

It is the belief of the FMHADMSD that in general , Local designed solutions can be more durable. Calls across the humanitarian sector for greater localisation of humanitarian responses, which are rooted in, and led by, local communities reinforces a core commitment to working through local civil society organisations and networks. FMHADMSD is joining a range of national and international actors in an initiative that intends to practically shift the way the humanitarian system operates to enable national actors to play an increased and more prominent role in humanitarian response.

**Prioritise Participation.** WHAT: Donors have made little progress towards promoting beneficiary participation in the humanitarian programme cycle, or including this in their overall strategic framework. GHD principle 7 (see Annex) calls upon donors to support the “adequate involvement of beneficiaries in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a humanitarian response”. In particular, women tend to be excluded from decision-making, and yet they make up at least half the population. Promoting participation will help ensure that real humanitarian needs are met: delivering not just a rapid response, but the right response to the right people at the right time. As the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership points out, crisis survivors often have acute needs, and can no longer rely on their usual economic, social or psychological support systems. Recipients of aid cannot choose between delivery agencies – so they cannot signal they are unhappy with a service by switching provider. Survivors – particularly women – often lack access to formal procedures for participating in assistance decisions, as traditional governance and representation structures are under considerable strain in a crisis situation. Systems to register and respond to complaints about relief programmes are rare. Donors and aid workers – the usual decision-makers – do not consume the aid, and thus have only a limited basis for judging its utility. Insufficient volume or inappropriate targeting of food aid could have life-or death consequences for those who are left out. At FMHADMSD we have introduced the concept of IM to monitor the effectiveness and impact of all NSIP programmes in their immediate localities Where they find programmes ineffective they report thus sharing M&E responsibility with beneficiaries . We will insist on beneficiary driven not donor/NGO driven interventions.

**GENDER .** There is growing recognition that war, civil unrest, and natural disasters intensify the risks faced by women and girls and exacerbate the practice of early and forced marriage, sexual exploitation, trafficking and forced prostitution, food for sex, disruption of education . THUS FMHADMSD prioritizes issues of girls and women as well as pays increasing attention to violence against women and girls in crisis situations, and prioritises it humanitarian responses.

**INEQUALITY/INCLUSIVENESS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Apart from women and children strategy should include vulnerable groups such as IDPs, refugees , migrants, PLWD, the elderly. These groups are often forgotten when designing humanitarian response. It is no longer so as the FMHADMSD has established agencies dedicated to these groups. In addition to NEMA, NAPTIP and NCFRMI and NEDP who either as primary or supplementary mandate cares for such groups, the Ministry has established a commission for the elderly and for PLWD.

**Build strong partnerships.** Humanitarian stakeholders agree that effective humanitarian action must be based on strong, equal and principled partnerships with NGOs and multilateral agencies, and most donors now recognise and support the interdependence of the humanitarian community. The GHD principles call on donors to support and promote the roles of the various members of the humanitarian community (GHD principle 10), to “strive to achieve predictability and flexibility in funding. NHCC

**Develop rapid response mechanisms.**  A sudden-onset crisis requires a rapid, appropriate, ideally same-day response – something that currently poses a big challenge for various reasons sometimes out of control of FMHADMSD and its agencies. Significant delays in providing desperately needed funds then risk translating into missed opportunities to kick-start the emergency response. Disasters also often lead to a major spike in donor staff workload. We are making made significant progress in this area with a view to developing a range of new funding mechanisms to support “timely funding” (GHD principle 5, see Annex), “maintain readiness to support the implementation of humanitarian action”. These include reverting where applicable to global pooled mechanisms for rapid response, especially the CERF mechanism, which provides rapid disbursements to UN actors for crisis response.

WHY: First and most important, an effective rapid response mechanism will ensure that the response reaches disaster survivors and supports local initiatives as quickly as possible. Second, rapid response tools reduce the excess workload for donor personnel, giving staff and partners more time to properly analyse the evolving situation on the ground, and significantly reducing the risk of inappropriate or inadequate donor funding decisions. Third, the deployment of a rapid response helps FMHADMSD deal with the media hype that surrounds a disaster event, ensuring that the country has provided an effective response.

**Work to clarify the role of the military.** WHAT: Military actors also play a very important role in a humanitarian crisis response. Nevertheless, implementing coherent and meaningful partnerships between civilian and military actors, guided by humanitarian principles, best practices and value for money, continues to pose a significant challenge for most donors. While the new security environment is posing a number of challenges for donors seeking to affirm the “primary position of civilian organisations in implementing humanitarian action” Guidelines and the related 2003 Military and Civil Defence Assets Guidelines (OCHA, 2006 and 2003), which stipulate that military actors should be used as a “last resort”, where the military bring unique capabilities that are lacking amongst civilian actors (GHD principle 20, see Annex). FMHADMSD is leading efforts to encourage civil and military actors to engage in outreach with each other on these sensitive issues to find workable solutions and compromises that are consistent with the shared humanitarian imperative. The reality is the humanitarian imperative calls for the delivery of life-saving aid in the most effective manner – and this may at times justify the use of military assets. In the initial stages of a major disaster, for example, the military’s comparative advantage in heavy-lift capacity or specialist engineering may be the fastest, most effective way of supporting the civilian delivery of life-saving aid. In other circumstances, however, the delivery of humanitarian assistance by the military is probably less effective, especially in terms of value for money. The situation becomes more complicated when military actors are party to the conflict. Any humanitarian assistance that is delivered by – or whose delivery is protected by – these troops could be misinterpreted as a tool to support the war effort, rather than as a neutral good designed to save lives and livelihoods. The resulting perception – that humanitarian assistance is not neutral – may already be adversely impacting safe humanitarian access (GHD principle 17, see Annex) in some hostile environments. 6 The humanitarian community continues to assert that upholding the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality maximises humanitarian space, allowing access to the maximum number of beneficiaries.CISEC Framework and the NHCC

**Promote recovery and resilience**. Donors continue to struggle to “deliver humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of recovery” (GHD principle 9, see Annex) – something that should be a key element of the overall strategic framework. At a bare minimum, donors need to ensure that humanitarian programming does not undermine future development work, and verify that development programming is building on humanitarian knowledge and results. Ideally, donors should also go further, using their humanitarian funding to support spontaneous, community-led recovery initiatives and focusing on strengthening the resilience of vulnerable communities – including women, who play a central role – to likely future crises and shocks. To do this, donors need to: improve co-ordination between humanitarian and development instruments; review the sometimes cumbersome procedures, lack of predictability and flexibility, and short funding timeframes that restrict holistic responses in protracted crisis situations; systematically integrate the humanitarian context and programming objectives into their country strategies; and support innovative approaches, such as cash-based programming, to rebuild livelihoods and repair small-scale infrastructure.

WHY: While the initial response to any crisis is necessarily focused on saving lives, the overall objective remains the recovery of conflict- and disaster-affected communities. The sooner work to build a sustainable recovery begins, the more effective it will be, allowing affected communities to return to normal lives and livelihoods as quickly as possible, and helping prevent the recurrence of crises (UNDP, 2008).

**Reduce disaster risks. WHY:** Risk reduction is critical if donors are serious about reducing the vulnerability of people and property, and about protecting economic growth. This is particularly important as the world faces the challenges of climate change and COVID. Effective risk reduction serves as an important insurance strategy for development investments in these high-risk countries, and as a key mechanism for avoiding costly future emergency responses.

WHAT: Donors are beginning to recognise the importance of risk reduction in their strategic frameworks and programming, and this is to be commended and encouraged. We will continue to nudge donors/INGOs to strengthen national capacity to “prevent, prepare for, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises” (GHD principle 8, see Annex), and to implement donor and partner country commitments under the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. In practical terms, this means anticipating disasters, reducing risk exposure, strengthening the resilience of vulnerable communities, using risk transfer mechanisms where appropriate, and strengthening national and international response capacity and leadership. At FMHADMSD we are focusing on preparedness, including work to strengthen early warning systems and to boost the capacity of local communities and civil society organisations to respond to crises. Example we are working with ECOWAS on early warning. To do this,we are working to develop a risk reduction policy with high-level buy-in, advocate for risk reduction to be mainstreamed across all development planning and programming, focus on crisis mitigation opportunities , and adjust funding streams to ensure a continuous risk reduction focus throughout the crisis cycle. But above all, we need to change mindsets – ensuring citizens, development staff and partners are aware of why risk reduction is important, providing the tools to implement the often very simple and common-sense measures to reduce risks, and investing in risk training for key staff.

Based on a presidential directive FMHADMSD led an intracisternal Working Group including all State SEMAs/equivalent to develop a national flood policy. ? FMHADMSD is currently working with other national stakeholders to line up activities to celebrate the WHD on 19 August with the theme climate change .

**HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE NEXUS’ NEXUS.** Conflicts are increasingly protracted; climate-related shocks are more intense and frequent. Both contribute to a cycle of vulnerability. Sustainable development and durable solutions to displacement are not possible without peace. Humanitarian relief, development programmes and peacebuilding are not serial processes: they are all needed at the same time. To reflect this understanding, the concept of a ‘humanitarian-development nexus’, or a ‘humanitarian-development-peace nexus’ has developed. It focuses on the work needed to coherently address people’s vulnerability before, during and after crises. It challenges the status quo of the aid system, which is overstretched and operates with little coordination between project-based development and humanitarian interventions, resulting in it not effectively meeting the needs of the most vulnerable people. The emphasis on a more coherent approach offers many opportunities. Meeting immediate needs at the same time as ensuring longer-term investment addressing the systemic causes of conflict and vulnerability – such as poverty, inequality and the lack of functioning accountability systems – has a better chance of reducing the impact of cyclical or recurrent shocks and stresses, and supporting the peace that is essential for development to be sustainable. The implementation of a nexus approach could provide a substantial opportunity to enhance gender justice, including through long-term support to women’s rights organizations and ensuring that women’s rights are integral to both immediate responses and longer-term outcomes. Similarly, the potential emphasis on local leadership and the development of national and local systems to accountably provide essential social services offers the opportunity for more sustainable, appropriate and transformative responses. The current dialogue includes a welcome emphasis on early warning, early action and prevention Achieving the right mix of humanitarian, development and peace approaches, and how they are integrated, is critical. Recognizing and responding to these changing contexts has become the new norm for many multi-mandated organizations, which are transforming themselves alongside the wider aid system. This is the case with the FMHADMSD which ahs developed a national‘humanitarian-development-peace nexus’ document to be launched on WHD on 19 August. However, truly delivering a humanitarian-development-peace (‘triple’) nexus approach goes beyond a framework. It will involve rethinking finance mechanisms, ways of working, the expertise needed and reflection on how we set standards and define success. Notably, more deliberate and consistent integration of conflict sensitivity and enhancing local capacities for peace is needed. FMHADMS on behalf of the FGN will continue to work with local and international partners that generally have experience of delivering both humanitarian and development interventions and easily transition from one to the other. In FMHADMSD , a change in thinking is being promoted so that we transcend the humanitarian-development divide by working towards collective outcomes based on the comparative advantage of both. Programme Officers and Technical Advisors will be encouraged to work closely together in a co-ordinated way, conducting joint needs assessments that include risk analysis.

**Monitoring & Evaluation, Learning and Innovation. FMHADMSD’s**  provides guidance on all stages of the humanitarian project cycle including developing appropriate Monitoring and Evaluation systems. FMHADMSD uses Results Based Management (RBM) as our system of monitoring progress towards our goals. Specific guidance on the use of Results Based Management for Humanitarian Projects such as the NSIP have been developed with appropriate indicators across the wide range of sectors covered in humanitarian interventions. Humanitarian actors working in Nigeria are expected to use the outcomes and indicators articulated in all country strategies and projects in order to facilitate aggregation of results and progress across the organisation. This set of strategic global indicators for humanitarian programmes is incorporated into our project design and approval systemsin order to facilitate coherent aggregation of our results across all of Nigeria and enable us articulate the wider impact of FMHADMSD ’s work. We are developing a repository of tools allowing FMHADMSD ’s Humanitarian staff and researchers quick access to standardised tool for all humanitarian projects.

We envisage an incremental move towards the use of digital data gathering tools to track progress against indicators.This will ensure the time between collecting and having access to useful information is shortened allowing for more responsive programming. Training on digital data gathering and use of multi-media learning tools will be provided. EG CURRENT IM. The development of indicators, monitoring tools and digital data gathering tools is primarily focused on maximising the ability of FMHADMSD and partners’ staff to learn from the monitoring process in order to be able to adapt strategies and approaches to the needs of women, men, boys and girls within the crisis affected communities we seek to assist.

With regards to learning and innovations, the relatively young FMHADMSD has had to learn and evolve as it faces several challenges. The HM Hajiya Sadiya Umar Farouq has noted many areas of improvement and innovation as the ministry seeks to deliver humanitarian interventions as best as it can. In the process, a broad set of lessons, and a corresponding set of good practices, have come to light, and I will outline a few of them .

**CRITICAL ENABLERS OF OUR SUCCESS.**

**Prioritising Accountability** . We will continue to strive towards humanitarian programmes that adhere to internal requirements and external standards on quality and accountability, with particular emphasis on improved accountability to affected communities. Over the course of the Strategic Plan, we will continue to improve accountability standards in a very practical way in all our humanitarian programmes. Programmes will be supported to work towards the Core Humanitarian Standards of community engagement, information sharing, feedback mechanisms and staff conduct .

1. **Holding Humanitarian Actors /Donors Accountable. We are designing policies and processes as proof that humanitarian actors/ NGOS/ donors are remaining true to their humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, humanity and independence.**  Also GHD and Do No Harm principle
2. Adapting to changes and feedback. In developing /reviewing any strategy will be based on the findings of constant internal and external review of FMHADMSD Humanitarian Programmes as well as lessons learnt from a number of key evaluations. In addition, FMHADMSD drew on information and research from local and international institutions.

**CONCLUSION**

I will end by stating the commitment of the HM FMHADMSD and her staff to ensure :

• Enhanced organisational level expertise that informs effective decision-making in relation to the fulfilment of FG’s humanitarian mandate

• Strengthened humanitarian commitment across all organisational functions

• Technical expertise in line with international standards and best practice in core humanitarian competencies for staff and partners, with a particular focus on humanitarian protection.

Humanitarian action – saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity during and in the aftermath of crises – remains a clear priority for the FG through coordinating and collaborating all stakeholders to evolve STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA . Humanitarian affairs and disaster management being the multi-stakeholder inter agency and inter-ministerial undertaking it is, the support of all the stakeholders assembled here , towards overcoming Nigeria’s’ humanitarian challenges will remain important. The HM extends a hand of fellowship to all. THANK YOU