

MIXED GRILL

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY WIFE OF THE RIVERS STATE GOVERNOR, ON THE LAUNCHING OF NATIONAL WOMEN COALITION ON AIDS (NAWOCA), RIVERS CHAPTER MONDAY, 7th DEC. 2009 AT BORO PART, PORT HARCOURT. PROTOCOL:

Today marks another milestone in our collective efforts to address the problems of HIV/AIDS in our society. Since this pandemic started in 1981, AIDS have continued to unfold in different ways, affecting every area of human endeavour.

Probably the most traumatic of the consequences of HIV/AIDS is the impact on women.

In recent years, there has been a progressive shift in the burden of HIV/AIDS to women and girls as a result of increasing vulnerability of women to HIV infection.

Recent studies in Africa show that women and girls are 3 times more likely to get infected than boys.

Also HIV related disease is now among the leading causes of death among women of reproductive age in Sub Saharan Africa.

This rising burden of HIV among women has become a source of family tension, instability and poverty.

In addition to high infection rate, women also carry the burden of nursing and caring for their infected husbands, children and seven relatives, thereby complicating the situation of women in the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Low Socio-economic status of women, gender inequality, widowhood and cultural practices against gender equity, childbearing and violence constitute indirect factors that are driving high infection rates among women.

There is also the problem of increasing number of children born with HIV infection acquired from their mothers, and those orphaned by AIDS which are direct consequences of HIV infection in women.

Indeed, HIV infection has also become a major threat to child survival, which has the tendency to reverse all the gains being recorded by child survival strategies put in place by the International community.

These extra-ordinary challenges posed to womanhood and mankind by the HIV epidemic need to be confronted with so much vigor.

It is against this backdrop that the First Lady of the Federation, Her Excellency Hajiya Turia Yar'Adua, on her return from the wives of African heads of State Conference on maternal and child mortality abroad advocated the involvement of women in AIDS Advocacy through the formation of NAWOCA. Hajiya Turia Yar'Adua in collaboration



Lady Dame Amaechi

with the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), launched the National Women Coalition on AIDS (NAWOCA) in August 2007. May I also acknowledge that Nawoca has flagged off its activities in the six geographical zones of Nigeria.

In furtherance of the objectives of the coalition, the wives of the 36 state governors are poised to face the challenge through the establishment of State chapters of NAWOCA and intensive campaign and other enlightenment programmes on HIV/AIDS to every household in Nigeria.

In fulfillment of my promise at Omoku during the last World AIDS Day that NAWOCA Rivers chapter will be established within one week, we are gathered here today performing the official launch of Rivers NAWOCA.

In the coming months, Rivers Women will lead vigorous advocacies and campaigns to prevent further spread of HIV in our state.

The women of Rivers State and I are ready, poised and committed to carry the messages from LGA to LGA, community to community, and even door to door to educate our men, women, youth and leaders on HIV prevention.

We will prosecute this campaign with every resource available to us. We are determined to work towards a drastic reduction of the high prevalence rate of 7.3% in Rivers State.

NAWOCA Rivers will also advocate improvement in general conditions of people living with the virus, especially women.

There is also a need to improve access to income generating activities to women living with HIV to improve their socio-economic status, and empower them to provide for themselves rather than depend on handouts and

living at the mercy of society.

May I at this juncture appreciate the effort of Rivers State Government under the able leadership of my husband, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi who is here today and has graciously spared us his time despite his tight schedule, he has devoted very huge resources to the prevention and campaign against HIV/AIDS. Governor Amaechi is acknowledged in the country as a leader who runs a gender sensitive government giving women their pride of place in appointment, at all levels including the public service assignment among others. Worthy of commendation is the Secretary to the State Government, Hon. Magnus Abe and the Speaker, Rivers House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Tonye Harry, very illustrious sons of Rivers State who have demonstrated their interest in the wellbeing of our people especially the women. Not forgetting members of the State Executive Council, especially the Commissioner for Health, Dr Sampson Parker and Barrister Nyesom Wike whose advice and support have made today a glorious NAWOCA launch.

My heart goes to children who have become orphans owing to the loss of their parents to this unfortunate epidemic.

Under ESI scholarship scheme, we will do our best based on available resources to cushion the effects on the loss of their bread winners and to alleviate their plight.

Rivers women will not relent to give you succor to enable you grow up in the society like any other child.

These children must be given all opportunities to benefit maximally from every social service provided by the State Government such as free education and Health care services.

I charge wives of the chairmen of Local Government Areas to launch NAWOCA in their respective areas starting from early 2010.

I solicit the support of the LGA chairmen, Royal fathers, Religious and Community leaders to this noble effort aimed at addressing HIV infection in women, children and the general public.

The fight against AIDS must be total; and all hands must be on deck.

This is a war we cannot afford to lose, because losing it will have direct consequences.

I therefore launch NAWOCA Rivers State chapter in the name of God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.

Thank you all and God Bless you.

THE BEAM NEWSPAPER

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Quarter page - 35,000	Quarter page - 40,000	Front page Solos N30,000
14 x 5 - 60,000	14 x 5 - 60,000	Back page Solos N25,000
12 x 5 - 55,000	12 x 5 - 55,000	Back Ear Piece N10,000
11 x 5 - 50,000	11 x 5 - 50,000	Front Ear Piece N15,000
10 x 5 - 45,000	10 x 5 - 45,000	Bottom Strip N25,000
14 x 4 - 48,500	14 x 4 - 48,000	Center Spread N240,000
10 x 4 - 46,500	10 x 4 - 40,000	CORPORATE/PUBLIC NOTICE
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7 x 2 - 22,000	7 x 2 - 22,000	Front Ear Piece N22,000
6 x 2 - 20,000	6 x 2 - 21,000	Bottom Strip N35,000
5 x 2 - 16,000	5 x 2 - 20,000	Centre Spread N300,000
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