

## HOW MUSLIM SCHOLARS AND IMAMS WERE EMPLOYED TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINATION

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### Introduction

As of 29 April 2022, there have been 510,270,667 and 255,716 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 6,233,526 and 3,143 COVID-19 deaths respectively reported to WHO globally and in Nigeria.

COVID-19 vaccines are a critical tool in the fight against the pandemic

Before the Islamic scholars can be regarded as the ambassadors of the Muslim community responsible for promoting the vaccines for enhanced acceptance by the community their capacity was first built with the necessary knowledge on all issues relating to the COVID-19 vaccines.

### Purpose of the Sensitization

To equip participants with new skills and knowledge on issues relating to COVID-19 and the vaccines.

To address frequently asked questions about the vaccines, which agitate the people's minds for clarifications.

To design an enforceable, sustainable, credible, and clear communication by the trusted leaders, unequivocally stating and demonstrating the importance of getting vaccinated and the immense benefit to the well-being of their followers.

### Conclusion

The sensitization ensured information reached the community as well as limited the spread of unfounded rumours or news that increases vaccine hesitancy which could hinder the targeted goals.



### Summary

To create support for the COVID-19 vaccines roll-out plan in Nigeria, sensitization meetings with Islamic scholars on the vaccination brought together key stakeholders in the communities before the introduction of vaccines.

### Advocacy and Sensitization

Sensitization workshops and Town Hall meetings were organized by National Primary Health Care Development Agency in collaboration with Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Northern Traditional Leaders Committee on Primary Health Care Delivery, and the Presidential Steering Committee on COVID-19, because of scepticism or outright rejection of the COVID-19 vaccination was genuine and could not be wished away.

### Sensitization Result

The feedback received from individuals seeking information on testing and vaccination schedules indicates successful sensitization and enhanced vaccine acceptance by the community; with sustained sensitization, these numbers can be improved upon.

### Recommendation

This adopted approach should therefore be strengthened to achieve the targeted vaccination status in Nigeria.