

**PAPER PRESENTED BY MR JOHN KEHINDE – DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND HEAD, HEALTH EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT NCDC FMOH ON 03/11/2015**

**PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGES OF OUTDOOR AND AIR POLLUTION DIRECT**

It is a pleasure for me to be here as the first Director Environment in Nigeria under the FMOH. The topic before me is public health challenges of outdoor air pollution direct.

Air pollution especially air quality and transportation is a public health challenge and measures should be taken to checkmate the menace. The Federal Ministry of Environment and other development partner especially the WHO and the Centre for Science and Environment India.

The discharge of transportation unwanted gases created public health problems through inhaling the dangerous gases as carbon monoxide, nitrous oxides which are discharged into the atmosphere

These particular gases are so dangerous to the lungs of both human and animals, and need to be checkmated. People exposed to these gases might later in life develop cancer, while some others develop asthma and other cardiovascular diseases problems. The concerns about the adverse effects of these poisonous gases need to be given proper attention for the well-being of humanity. The essence of this workshop is to interact together with Scientists, Environmental health officers and other partners to plan for clean-up programme in order to mitigate the effects of such gases on human.

Some state government noted the effects of traffic/transport air pollution, taken some drastic action by limiting or reducing motorcycles plying our major roads. But what happens in our villages and rural areas where motorcycles are largely use. Ladies and gentlemen, today in Nigeria Cancer is the no 2 killer disease in Nigeria. The Federal Ministry of Health and WHO recently marked Cancer Day which helped to educate the populace on how to prevent the killer diseases in Nigeria. Gas emission is man-made or human induced and every person using transport facilities like cars, buses, lorries and motorcycles need to maintain them periodically in order to checkmate this menace.

Our FRSC, VIO, and the Police have to rise up to their responsibilities by continually inspecting and disbanding vehicles discharging poisonous gases into the environment.

The Federal Ministry of Health also in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Environment should jointly carry out factory inspection to checkmate or control the excess gases being generated from the factories that always cause air pollution which is hazardous to human health.

The 3 tier of government in Nigeria need to train and employ more Environmental Health officers who will be able to carry out routine premises and factories inspection in order to mitigate factory and home air pollution. We note the problems of firewood use for cooking. In this regard, provision of gas-fired stoves as an alternative is very necessary. Our public health and Environmental health laws need to be reviewed urgently to address the urbanisation and industrialisation air pollution challenges. I call on our National Assembly to please urgently look into the public health, Environmental health and Nigeria Centre for Disease Control bills before them in order to enable the users have tools or empower laws to carry out their work effectively. We say "Clean Environment, Healthy Nation" "Health is wealth and prevention is better than cure"

Thanks for listening.