

MISL AUGUST MONTHLY REPORT 2024

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK BREASTFEEDING WEEK 1ST-10TH August, 2024

In pursuit of the theme: “Closing the Gap Breastfeeding Support for All” MISL, engaged with both Pregnant women (at three-semester) and lactating mothers from three communities (Mount Aureole, Moa-Wharf, and Fourah Bay) through series of sensitization sessions at strategic points and meetings at head Quarters 2 Lower Dan Street, Freetown



MISL engaged Lactating mothers during World Brest-feeding Week

Couple with the various forms of community engagement, MISL conducted a 2hrs meeting on Saturday 10th August, 2024 in Fourah Bay, Freetown municipality to raise pregnant and lactating mothers’ awareness amidst closing the gap breastfeeding support for all. Upholding the importance of the meeting held on Saturday 10th which was inter-earlier scheduled to hold on Tuesday 6th considering meeting budget constraints and participants consent. The engagement was conducted relatively as plan except that meeting commenced about 40 minutes as a result of expected participants (mothers) late arrival and

shifting meeting location from the open space office building frontage to office indoors building safety-net for mothers and their babies harsh weather of rain and the cold breeze it brings.

Nevertheless, attendance was good (91%) and participation high resulting to an interactive session.

In the 2hrs engagement, meeting was called to order by Mr. Martin Ibrahim Bangura, MISL project Manager I, upon having registered 80% expected participants' arrival followed by prayers led by participants in both Muslim and Christian denomination/ways. He continued by declaring the purpose of the engagement which in a nutshell to raise awareness to the communities on breastfeeding week, its nature, relevance and the role of mothers during the baby's breastfeeding period. He then gave the scope of the meeting in order to play safe on participant's expectations.

Next were presentations from two renowned career path experts with reasonable experience in Midwifery and Civil Society Organization (CSO). Presentation by Nurse Abubakar Bangura focus on:

- What health services do mothers and their babies' needs?
- To what extend does existing services meet the needs of mothers and their babies?
- What makes health services mother and their babies' friendly?
- And how health services are best delivered to mothers and their babies?

On the second presentation Madam Jemilatu Bangura a Midwife and CSO Program manager delivery content detailed on themes including:

- Health services needed by pregnant mothers during antenatal visits. During labor and postpartum, how these services are delivered and the role of pregnant and lactating mothers in babies' nutrition. Mothers role she emphasized key in baby's growth and development.

Also, mothers have to ensure they comply with scheduled and unscheduled routine visits to the nearest health facility; follow nutrition guidelines, comply with all necessary lab tests and results as key prevent infection risk, facilitate early detection and treatment. Benefits of appropriate breastfeeding was further buttressed and hammered home closing the gap on mothers in the practice of

discarding the first milk after labour (colostrum) see reasons and justifications of harnessing the colostrum despite the numerous conflicting messages and cultural perceptions banked on previously. Mentioned was made also, on the link between breastfeeding and immunization.



The lead facilitator illustrating some of the correct and awful sitting positions for breast-feeding a child

Given questions and response session parents were observed curious as they anxiously several questions some of which pertains to:

Implications on mothers who embark on breastfeeding their babies on single breast;

- ✓ Causes of frequent high temperature on babies;
- ✓ Reasons why some babies deny/reject sucking from their mothers' breast and more.

Parents composed short song that shed light on babies' dependence on breast milk key to improve social born between baby and mother, improve growth and development of the baby. The song was sung while each and every lactating mother follows suit facilitator demonstration on positioning and breastfeeding the baby on both breasts. However challenges erupted on positioning the baby, the mothers' correct sitting posture to avoid risk of postural defect, back, and ankle. And muscle pain.

The engagement ended with vote of thanks by a lactating mother and snapshots during and after gift presentation.



Some of the donated items during the World Brest-feeding week



Pregnant Women receiving donation from MISL after the World breast-feeding week 2024



Lactating mothers receiving donation from MISL after the breast-feeding week workshop 2024



A Group photo after the workshop on World Brest-feed Week 2024



MISL Monthly Review Meeting

MISL (CSOs - Health Network). This report looks at feedback from Health Alert Civil Society Organization (CSO) and deliberations in a meeting held on Thursday, 1st August, 2024 at Civil Service Training College, State House Avenue. The meeting spanned to 5 hours, and the attendance was good as over fifty five (55) CSO representatives attended out of 60 expected CSOs all over Sierra Leone

At the commencement of the seminar introduction was done by individual representative accounting on organization name, region(s) represented, and verifying the organization's Vision, Mission and core functions in the Health Sector.

The agenda sheets were distributed, reviewed and followed strictly. Declaring the meeting purpose by the Director Health Alert CSO, Mr. Victor Lansanah Koroma who drew inferences from a meeting held at the Ministry of Health and Sanitation MOHS and Sierra Leone Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) reminding CSOs in attendance to reflect their minds on the decisions and resolutions met on FULL PORFOLIO PLANNING PROGRAM (FPPP).

Upon abreasting members with the content of implementation standards resolved at government and CSO level, website addressed was given for each representative of CSO present to register as a national Civil Society Organization devoid of duplication specifying on eight thematic interventions for EPI program activities – namely governance, service delivery, demand generation, health management information system and monitoring evaluation, supply chain, management finance, human recourse management, and communication – based surveillance. According to Mr. Victor I. Koroma, “there has been a global fund for all the thematic areas” but strategies to access funding is streamlined by each CSO to fill in the one thematic area of interest in the form and submit electronically. (Bitily/SLECSO for registration of the CSO and <https://tinyurl.com/SLECSO> for choosing the thematic area of interest.

Following this development, the EPI program manager (MOHS) Dr. Desmond Mali Lamgbai made a statement on the expanded program. In his statement, he briefly expressed sentiments on attendance being gender balance and expect CSOs to continue to build and support female participation as key in EPI business typical of

mobilizing mothers and pregnant women to utilize health resources. He further mentioned the following:

- That the MOHS will have to partnership with CSOs throughout the country.
- He urged CSOs to source funding as the MOHS is supporting CSOs in partnership with other development organizations and or countries.
- He expressed happiness having observed the increase in number of CSOs in implementation of EPI programs which case demands him to welcome and encourage all CSOs to resist the challenges and score resistance.

He concluded by responding to questions from attendances and bid farewell with his personal contact mobile phone number.

The meeting progressed to responses from CSO Health Alliance (host) to answer the remaining questions.

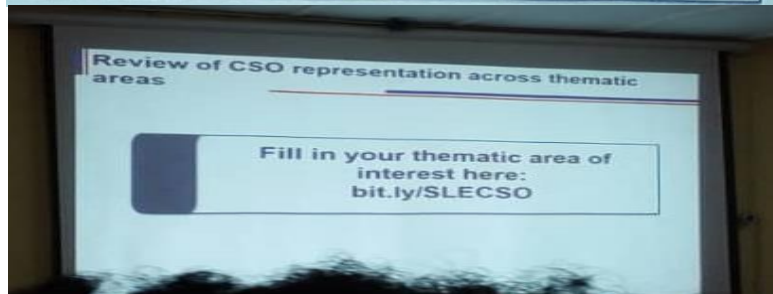
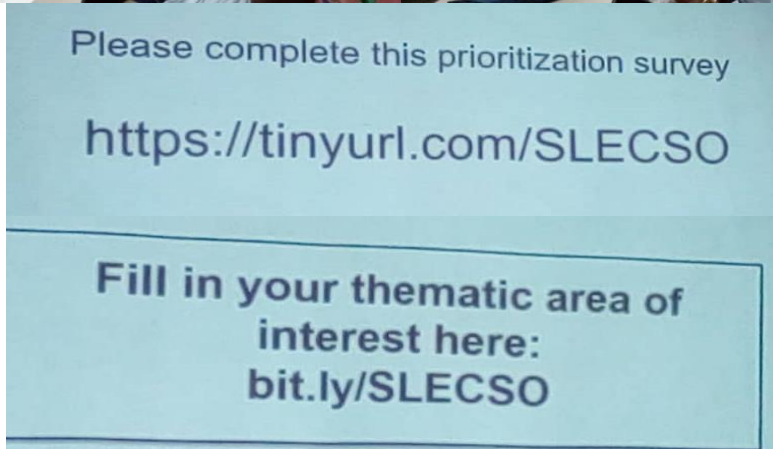
The questions remain at present include how do CSOs collaborate with the various units in the MOHS. He shared experienced gained when working with international organizations in Sierra Leone which circumstance he described donor driven which requires repatriation of donor funds.

He however continued by urging CSOs to maintain integrity and accountability as it has been a challenge for international partners to wholly entrust their funds as information was given for CSOs to consume.

- Vaccines that are available in Sierra Leone include: Hepatitis, the 5 combine vaccines given to under five children (diphtheria, hepatitis, Tb, Polio etc.). Malaria, Ebola, Corona, ROTA, HIV etc.
- Second country dialogue summit coming soon were CSOs will be invited.
- To access fund from MOHS, EPI unit, CSOs have to apply with proposal at hand.
- That International Development Partners have invested \$12m on EPI national programs \$2m allocated to CSOs.

To sum, the meeting which brought together CSOs all over the country about sixty CSOs participants particularly women was to share expenses and find workable solutions towards supporting Government to do more in improving the Health Department in Sierra Leone.

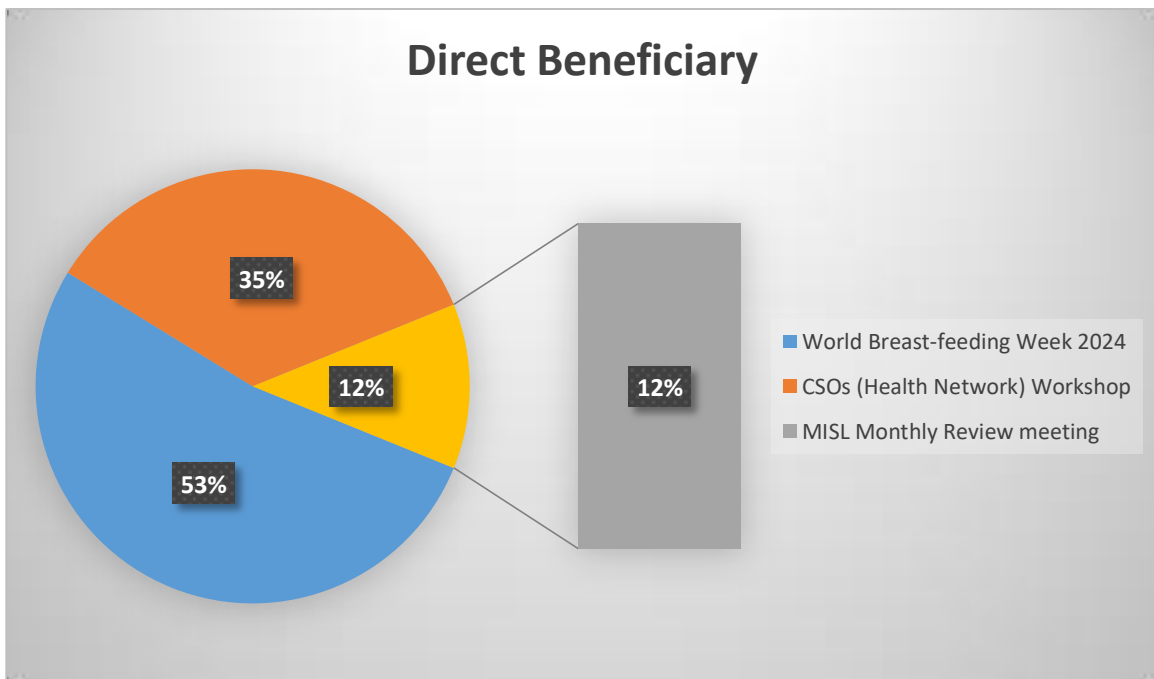
The engagement however, looks at issues on immunization which funds from Gavi will be dedicated into the course of implementation of EPI program activities.



Thematic area	Bottlenecks	Intervention
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of regular review meetings at different levels Inadequate coordination among programs/directors and health partners which leads to duplication of efforts Inadequate funding to support NITAG activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate monthly review meetings into the work of in-charges Establish collaborative platforms for information sharing and joint decision-making Explore financing mechanisms and partnerships with employers to support NITAG activities
New Vaccine Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unavailability of some essential life-saving vaccines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Typhoid and HepB birth doses
Surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete data, discrepancies in data, and delayed reporting Untimely reporting of VPD surveillance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train staff for essential VPDs to the next level Provide adequate reporting

Beneficiary of August operation

No	Activity	Direct beneficiary	Indirect beneficiary	Total
1	World Breast-feed Week	30	300	330
2	(CSOs- Health Network) show casing the activities of MISL	50	100	145
3	MISL Monthly Review Meeting	7	35	42



Direct Beneficiary

87

Indirect Beneficiary

435