

December 2021



UNITED NATIONS  
NIGERIA



# NEWSLETTER



## UN Calls on Nigeria To Scale Up Its Afforestation Strategies



United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, inspects a seed exhibit at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Ibadan.

As Nigeria strives to combat deforestation and protect the environment through afforestation, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, has reaffirmed the United Nations support to the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN), an organisation under the Federal Ministry of the Environment, in scaling up its afforestation strategies.

"We will support the scaling up of FRIN afforestation strategies and encourage governments at all levels, and the private sector to maintain the forest cover to protect the planet from massive emissions, biodiversity losses and pollution." She emphasised..

Ms Mohammed further reassured of the commitment of the United Nations to providing technical support to Nigeria in addressing deforestation challenges in the country.

"Our visit to Ibadan has been a response to see how the United Nations can support the government to increase forest cover," she said.

The UN Deputy Secretary-General who planted a tree called, 'Canaries Schweinfuthii' (African Elemi), known as 'Atile' or 'Atili' in Hausa Language, added that the challenge of protecting the forest is huge as poverty still make people use a lot of forest reserves to survive.

The Director-General of FRIN, Professor Adeshola Adepoju appreciated the UN for the visit, adding that the institute would work on the necessary areas where improvement is needed.

He also gave account of the number of structures that have been raised in FRIN between 2016 and 2021 and how the institute had planted trees on about 500 hectares of land in a frame.

### HIGHLIGHTS

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United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, plants a tree at FRIN, Ibadan.

He, however, called for support from state governments on FRIN's afforestation programme.

At International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Ibadan, Ms. Mohammed was taken through an exhibition that showcased some of the Institute's activities and innovations which addressed climate change issues and food insecurity in Africa, including the genebank, crop improvement work on various crops, including cowpea, and forest and biodiversity conservation activities.



DECADE OF  ACTION

## Matthias Schmale Assumes Duty as UN Resident Coordinator For Nigeria

Following Mr Edward Kallon's end of assignment in November, as the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, has appointed Mr. Matthias Schmale as the new Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (a.i.) in Nigeria.

Prior to this position, Mr. Schmale, a German national, worked with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in different capacities: Acting Chief-of-Staff (August – October 2021) responsible for providing support to the Commissioner-General and Deputy Commissioner-General; Director of Operations (October 2017 - August 2021) leading almost 13,000 strong team in providing essential services and humanitarian aid to more than 1.4 million Palestine refugees in Gaza; Director Representative Office, New York (January 2017 - October 2017); Director for Syria (September 2016 - December 2016); Director Lebanon Affairs (April 2015 - September 2016).

Before his career with the UN, Mr. Schmale worked at senior management level at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for fifteen years including being the Under Secretary General for six years in Geneva, Switzerland. He is very familiar with trends affecting humanitarian and development work within sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, the Middle-East and Europe.

Mr. Schmale holds a Diploma in economics, University Berlin, 1988; and a Doctor of Philosophy in Development Economics, University Berlin, 1992.



Mr. Matthias Schmale

## New UN Resident Coordinator Sends Season's Best Wishes

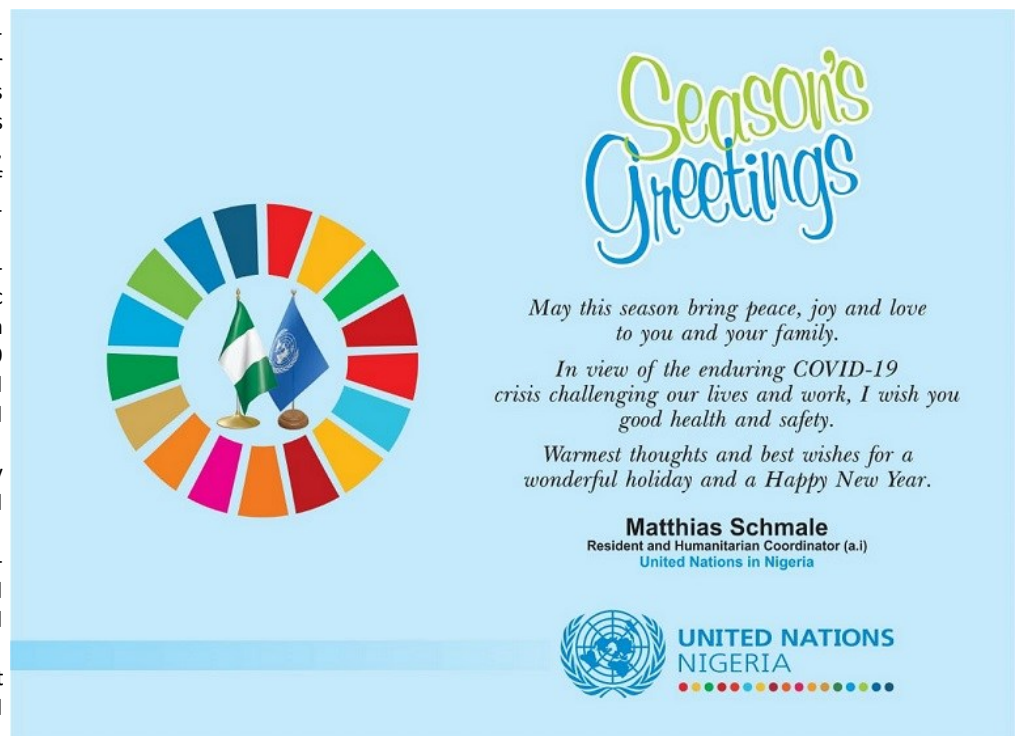
The new Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (a.i.) for Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale, has shared a digital card of season's best wishes of good health, safety, peace, joy and love to UN staff members, partners and all Nigerians.

Conscious of the spike in COVID-19 cases and the socio-economic impact in Nigeria, Schmale said, "In view of the enduring COVID-19 crisis challenging our lives and work, I wish you good health and safety."

The full message read, "May this season bring peace, joy and love to you and your family.

In view of the enduring COVID-19 crisis challenging our lives and work, I wish you good health and safety.

Warmest thoughts and best wishes for a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year."



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**  
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

## "I Am Impressed By The Potentials Of Youth Empowered For The Future Of Work In Nigeria" - Amina J. Mohammed



United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (Middle); Founder of RAIN, Dr. Olusola Ayoola (2nd from the left) and some trainees in a selfie photo session at RAIN facility in Ibadan.

On her visit to the Robotics and Artificial Intelligence Nigeria (RAIN) Ibadan, on 4 December 2021, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, has expressed her positive impression of Nigerian youth. "I am impressed by the potentials of youth empowered for the future of work in Nigeria." She noted.

The Deputy Secretary-General further emphasised that 'our future is in good hands' as demonstrated by the young, bright minds at the Robotics and Artificial Intelligence Nigeria.

Numerous projects were on display during the visit to showcase what RAIN Centre has been doing over time. These included the Carbon Emission Police with Real-Time Mapping; Biotic arm for arm amputee; Public Amenity Access Control; Smart Energy Assistant; Person and Object tracking; among others.

Receiving the Deputy Secretary-General, the Founder of RAIN, Dr. Olusola Ayoola, expressed his delight at the opportunity to showcase some of the works which the young researchers at RAIN are doing, particularly in relation to the sustainable development goals SDGs.



Founder of RAIN, Dr. Olusola Ayoola (Right) presents a portrait to the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (Left)



United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed inspects a biotic arm for arm amputee.

"All the researchers at RAIN have their projects cut out for them. Your visit is no doubt a huge motivation for us all, with clear certainty that the effort we are putting forward is finally being recognised, in fact, on a global scale." He said.

He explained further that RAIN was in a position to solve the technical challenges faced by companies in Nigeria and around the world.

He cited examples of an energy management home assistant developed for a company in the UK; as well as an early pandemic warning novel solution which incorporates medical patients experience management (MEDEP), a solution RAIN recommends to deploy for the World Health Organisation (WHO).

"Our most treasured solution is our drone-based carbon emission police. A solution we have developed to tackle global climate change. This solution is novel because, it does not only track the reckless abuse of the environment across geographical locations in real time but it also helps to detect the hideouts of bandits and terrorists in forested areas through the detection of their transportation, power generation and cooking emissions." He added.



## FG, UN Hold High-Level Discussion on National Social Protection Policy



Hon. Minister of Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen (2nd from the left); Hon. Minister of State, Finance, Budget, and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba; Hon. Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Hajiya Sadiya Faruq Umar; Hon. Minister of Labour and Employment, Sen (Dr). Chris Ngige; Permanent secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning, Mrs. Olushola Idowu; ILO Country Director, Mrs. Vanessa Phala.

The story of how a social health protection program helped a 35-year-old Rubabatu Lauwali, a mother of four who lost her teaching job in Sokoto State was part of the remark of the United Nations Resident Coordinator at the High-Level Consultation on the National Social Protection Policy held on 14th December 2021 hosted by the Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning in collaboration with the Joint SDG Fund programme on Institutionalising Social Protection to Accelerate SDG implemented by ILO, UNDP, WFP, and UNICEF.

“Evidence has shown that countries with robust social protection system including social protection policy are able to respond fast in time of crisis” Mrs. Vanessa Phala, ILO Country Director for Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone

The objective of the event was to present the draft policy to head of ministries implementing social protection programmes. This consultation is needed to promote ownership of the policy among Implementing Ministries and to accelerate the submission and approval of the policy by the federal executive council (FEC).

In attendance at the event were the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Hajiya Sadiya Faruq Umar, Minister of Labour and Employment, Sen (Dr). Chris Ngige, Minister of Women Affairs, H.E Dr. Pauline Tallen, Minister of State, Finance, Budget, and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba. The permanent secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning, Mrs. Olushola Idowu, The representative of the Resident Coordinator, Mrs. Rushnan Murtaza, The ILO Country Director, Mrs. Phala Vanessa, UNDP Deputy Representative, Development Partners, and the members of the technical working group on Social Protection.

Speaking at the event, the Minister of Labour and Employment, Senator Dr. Chris Ngige said Social protection is one of the tools to achieve the Decent Work Agenda. As a result, we must ensure that social protection is extended to the informal sector as the worker in this sector constitutes 60 percent of our Labour force. The Minister lauded the review process and confirmed that the observation of the Ministry of Labour and Employment are well captured in the document. We will all work

quickly to ensure the submission and approval of the policy by the federal executive council (FEC).

The Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Hajiya Sadiya Umar, said the review of the National Social Protection Policy would not have come at a better time than now. In her statement, she expressed that the policy will define a clear line of engagement, track progress, and spend on social protection transparently in line with Mr. President’s vision.

She stated, “my few thoughts for our consideration during this dialogue as you are aware, by design, the different pillars of the social protection system operate through various institutional arrangements (at the Federal and State levels) and across several Ministries, Departments, and Agencies of Government. This has created fragmentation in roles and responsibility for implementation and could be remedied through a joint coordination platform for the sector. I am therefore pleased above all to note that the agenda of the Social Protection Policy Dialogue helps us build the groundwork for the achievement of this vision in a more systematic and collective way”.

The Minister of Women Affairs, Her Excellency Hon Mrs. Pauline Tallen stated that women are the drivers of the family, and therefore, the policy should include support to women and children.

In his remarks, the Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba, showered encomium on all the Ministers of stakeholder Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) as well as Donors and Heads of other Government Agencies for their support towards the realization of the review of the elapsed National Social Protection Policy (2017-2020). The Minister highlighted that the objective of the review is to address emerging issues, identify gaps and give the policy national ownership that will carry the sub-national governments along.

The Ministers assure all that the draft policy will be presented to the Federal Executive Council for approval when all necessary observations by the stakeholder Ministers are agreed upon.

During the dialogue, the revised policy was presented by the Deputy Director for Social Development, Dr. Sanjo Faniran. After his presentation, comments were made by the ministers on the composition of the social protection council, extension of social protection to informal workers.

## Mobilizing Women For Continuous Voters' Registration In Nigeria



Ayo Mohammed, National Education Commissioner for the Nigeria Girls Guides Association (Left), and Victoria Toluhi, NGGA State Commissioner for Kogi State (Right) and other staff during one of the online Continuous Voters Registration for women in Lokoja, Kogi State.

It is a queue of women at a secondary school in Ajaokuta, Kogi State. Seated at a desk in front of the women are officials of the Nigeria Girl Guides Association (NGGA) who have come to register them on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) online continuous voters registration portal.

"I've come to register so I will be able to vote in the coming elections. And so that when a woman comes out to contest, I will be able to vote for her", said Khadijat Abubakar, a trader in Kogi State, as she waited to collect the printout of her online registration.

Khadijat Abubakar is one of thousands of women being registered online by the Nigeria Girls Guide Association (NGGA), with support from UN Women and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), as part of the Continuous Voters Registration (CVR) by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). Ahead of the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, INEC has commenced the Continuous Voters Registration (CVR) nationwide since June 2021. The exercise which will last till June 2022 is being conducted physically and online; although the online process requires visiting the INEC office to finalize the process.

Registering online fast tracks the process of registration and collection of voter's card when a registered voter visits an INEC office to collect his or her voter's card. To improve women's participation in the continuous voter's registration, UN Women in collaboration with the Nigeria Girl Guides Association (NGGA) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) is conducting sensitization and mobilization of women to register via INEC's online CVR portal, and physically at INEC offices. This is to ensure that more women are registered and are eligible to participate in the upcoming elections.

This initiative is strategic because most women in rural areas have limited access to computer facilities and may not be able to take advantage of the online registration alternative. But with the Nigeria Girl Guides Association (NGGA) sensitizing and registering women online, this challenge is addressed.

The online CVR registration drive for women is being conducted by the NGGA in selected states in all the geo-political zones of Nigeria. These states include Benue, Kogi, Borno, Sokoto, Edo, Ekiti and Ebonyi state. Access to the registration portal has been provided by Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), which is also monitoring the registrations.

It is important to note that decades after Nigeria independence, there is still a huge gender gap in governance, leadership and political participation – elected and appointed positions. At the federal level women's representation at the National Assembly, which consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives, is about 4%. A report by National Bureau of Statistics shows in 2018, State Houses of Assemblies had only 5% of women's representation, with women also making up only 5% of principal officers at the State Houses of Assemblies. Only 15% of deputy governors are women, while there has never been a female elected governor in Nigeria. At the local government level, the number is still low for women.

Huge gender inequality exists in appointed positions. There were only 7 women in 43 ministerial appointments in 2019 – women making up only 16% of the appointments. In the states and local governments, women's representation in appointed positions is also low.

One of the strategies that would improve women's representation in leadership and political participation is women translating their population size and voting power to increased number of women in leadership positions. Two things become important – first, ensure women have their voter's card and second, ensure they are sensitized on strategic political participation, within political parties and during elections. These are the objectives of the ongoing CVR efforts.

The Nigeria Girl Guides Association has deployed its personnel to different local governments in selected states to register women online. This was often preceded by engagements with gate keepers of communities, to educate them on the objectives and expected outcomes of the initiative. There were advocacy visits to traditional leaders and district heads. The traditional leaders and community heads subsequently mobilized women to come out and participate in the online registration exercise. The women who were registered were issued printouts; with this, they can collect their voter's card at the local INEC office.

"What we are doing here is to make sure that all the women and young women have their voter's cards so that they can come out and vote. We have brought the online CVR registration closer to them", said the Ayo Mohammed, Evidently, this intervention would improve the number of women registered and increase knowledge of voter integrity amongst women.

## Delivering Equity In HIV Care In Hard-To-Reach Nigerian Communities

Fifteen months ago, Adetimi Bayo named her child Goodnews because ever since her birth, good help has come to her mother. She had been on antiretroviral (ARV) treatment since she was 17, a few years before the birth, as part of the key populations targeted in Nigeria. Key populations are significant in Nigeria's national commitment to provide treatment to everyone living with the virus. And organizations like the Heartland Alliance work with some of the most stigmatized groups in remote areas, such as the coastal southern state of Akwa Ibom where Bayo lives, to help deliver equity to the hard-to-reach corners of the country.



Adetimi Bayo



A nurse hands Bayo her monthly supply of ARV medication.

Since 2016, the World Health Organization has recommended differentiated service delivery of HIV care to increase service efficiencies and impact. It is a people-centred approach that simplifies and adapts HIV services to the needs of different communities living with HIV. Now more facilities across Nigeria have integrated HIV care with general health care. And each centre has tailored its approach to the requirements of a local population, including key populations. In Akwa Ibom, Heartland Alliance operates four 24-hour one-stop shops with provision for group pick-up of medication among peers and even village visits. When Bayo was pregnant, the Heartland staff told her how she could prevent passing HIV to her baby. She reached out to them immediately at the birth of Goodnews. Now staff members like Ekaete, a nurse midwife, occasionally drive 40 minutes on difficult road to hand Bayo her monthly supply of ARV medication.

“We remove barriers. We take it to the people for them to actually have access to the service they need,” says Dr Ngozi Noel Ogamba (above), State Team Lead with Heartland Alliance in Akwa Ibom. In 2019, Heartland Alliance opened a family centre. “We saw that women who got pregnant did not go to health facilities for their prenatal care, and those who had children living with HIV did not access care for their children because of the stigma associated with it. We as a programme intensified our prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission. We also started providing ARV services to children living with HIV and this helped improve access to health care for children from the marginalized groups.”



“We have been able to ensure that 100% of our clients are retained in care and that we provide quality pharmaceutical care, so we are able to monitor them: Side effects, any adverse drugs reactions and even beyond pharmaceutical care, we are able to guide them and provide the support they need in their therapy,” says Anya Chidinma (above), a pharmacist with Heartland Alliance in Akwa Ibom. “We are also able to get the services across to them in the hotspots. We have had a lot of positive feedback as a stigma-free and friendly service.” She says they operate similarly with their other services: viral load testing, psychosocial support and even cervical cancer screening – “We are able to take it down to the community.”

## Delivering Equity In HIV Care...continued from page 7

Despite COVID-19 related restrictions, staff and clients say services have not been affected. It is reflection of the respect for clients' needs that people like Edidiong Ugbong say has made a difference in managing his condition. "The response I got here was fast," he says, referring to five years earlier when he was sick and diagnosed. "I came and they took me to the lab – they responded very fast, without shouting at me. And when I went to the pharmacy, it was the same thing, they assisted me very fast."



Edidiong Ugbong (Left)



Bayo her baby, Goodnews.

Unconventional service delivery of the life-changing drugs to people living with HIV is helping to change the course of the disease in Nigeria, which now has the world's fourth-largest HIV burden. It was the second-largest HIV burden in 2019. "I have been living with HIV since 2017. The health workers at the facility treat me very well. They understand when I need a refill and when I call for any help and assistance," says Bayo. Heartland staff helped Bayo find a home when she had none, clothes for her child and even training to set up a small business. And the best good news? At age 15 months, Goodnews remains free of HIV.

## UNIC Hosts Amina J. Mohammed, Mounts Art Exhibition on Climate Change



A cross-section of the exhibits at the Library Auditorium of UNIC Lagos.

Soremekun also briefed the Deputy Secretary-General about the activities of the Centre, and subsequently presented the 2022 UN Nigeria Calendar titled, "Protecting the Planet."

Ms. Mohammed noted the translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) into the Nigerian local languages by UNIC.

She expressed delight at the art exhibition on climate change.

The United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos Nigeria, on 3 December, received the UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, at its Ikoyi office premises.

The Deputy Secretary-General who was on a familiarisation visit, was treated to an art exhibition of 17 climate change solutions as part of #NaijaClimateNow campaign initiated and being promoted by Creative Youth Community Development Initiative-Solution17 for Climate Action, in collaboration with UNIC Lagos.

Receiving Ms. Mohammed was the National Information Officer, Oluseyi Soremekun, who represented the UNIC Director, Mr Ronald Kayanja, and conducted the Deputy Secretary-General round the office facility.



Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (Left) and UNIC National Information Officer Oluseyi Soremekun

## Public Service Announcement Against Trafficking Of Women And Girls



A scene from the short film

“So You Wan Travel Abroad?”, the worried character, played by the renowned Nollywood actress, Stephanie Okereke-Linus, asked the young woman who has been told she will be taken abroad by a flamboyant woman. The woman is probably an aunt, a family friend, or an old acquaintance of her mother.

Just like many who have returned from Europe to tell grim, heart-wrenching stories of unimaginable ordeals and others whose grave no one will ever find, the story of the young woman in the short film does not end well.

Through a thought-provoking short film, Stephanie Okereke-Linus, with support from UN Women and the Italian Government, makes a Public Service Announcement (PSA) against trafficking of women and girls; under the auspices of the Preventing Forced Migration and Trafficking in Women and Girls in Nigeria Project, funded by the Italian Government.

The trafficking of people for sex and labour is a global issue fueled by poverty, desperation, conflict, inequality, and greed.

According to the United Nations, 50 per cent of detected victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation, 38 per cent were exploited for forced labour. Female victims continue to be the primary targets, with women making up 46% and girls 19% of all victims of trafficking. UNODC 2019 report shows that women and girls together account for 72 per cent of all human trafficking victims detected globally, with girls representing more than three out of every four child trafficking victims.

NAPTIP reports show that 60-80% of the victims of Europe sex trade are Nigerians. NAPTIP further contends that 75% of those who are trafficked within Nigeria are trafficked across states, while 23% are trafficked within states.

Reinforced border security and international cooperation has not been able to eliminate this global crime, as the decision of the victim to travel with the traffickers is one of the factors responsible for the proliferation of trafficking in persons. If young people are informed enough to resist the enticement of travelling abroad, cases of human trafficking would reduce.

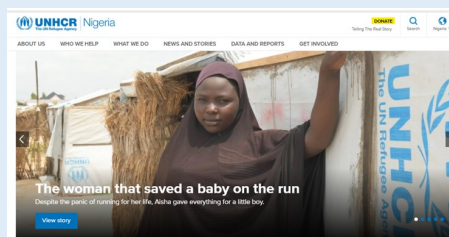
Film has been proven to be an effective tool for education and sensitization on human trafficking and related issues. It has been used by development partners and activists to address global and local issues, with the aim of stimulating social change. Principally, this is the aim of the Public Service Announcement.

Using a unique theatric style, the human rights advocate and actress walks through different scenes in the short film where actors are portraying the steps in luring victims and the eventual consequences.

In this short film, Stephanie is the voice of reasoning, urging the actors, and the viewers to make better choices for themselves and avoid the deceit of human traffickers. The film is a powerful tool that can be used by government, educationists, development partners, and civil society organisations in the fight against trafficking of women and girls.

### UNHCR Nigeria Launches New Website: [www.unhcr.org/ng](http://www.unhcr.org/ng)

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has launched a new website in Nigeria. Packed with multimedia stories, facts and figures, it gives a voice to refugees and internally displaced people. It features UNHCR's work for them, vacancies as well as opportunities to do business with the organization. It has never been easier to support people forced to flee in Nigeria than with this website, and to stay up to date about refugee and IDP women, men and children across the country. The website can be found under [www.unhcr.org/ng](http://www.unhcr.org/ng)





## UN Projects Build Livelihoods And Raise Food Security In Yobe State



Habiba displays the children's dresses she made

The UN World Food Programme is collaborating with the Yobe State Government and other partners to respond to the immediate food and nutrition needs of displaced people in Yobe State. WFP also works with partners to assist the people to learn new skills in farming, food processing, tailoring, carpentry and other activities that will enable them to generate income and rebuild their lives.

In 2021, over 5,600 households (more than 25,700 individuals) in three local government areas of the state received WFP livelihoods support through WFP's partners – the Centre for Community Development and Research Network (CCDRN) and Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI).

Indeed, WFP and its partners and donors plan to provide livelihood and food supplies to over 40,000 households in Yobe State in 2022. Habiba and Alhaji Abubakar are among the persons who have used the support of WFP and its partners to turn around the lives of their families.

Habiba, a mother of seven who lives in Kasaisa community, narrates how WFP and COOPI trained and empowered her to provide for her family through the livelihoods programme.

"I discovered my talent for dressmaking through the WFP and COOPI programme. They trained me and many others in different trades," says Habiba.

"We were trained by professionals and we were provided with materials and tools needed to start. I started practicing with the materials given to me. It took me two months to make my first dress. I was so happy when my friend liked what I sewed. I knew I could make dresses and other things to sell and make profits out of it. Now, whenever I see a design I like, I try to replicate the same design with my needle and thread."

Habiba became very good in her craft and started attracting many customers who wanted her to make dresses and other clothing items for them. "Now I make baby clothes, sweaters, cotton shoes for children, and other things you could think of."



Caps made by Abubakar ready to be sold

This handcraft has enabled me to be self-reliant. I sell these baby clothes for around N3, 000 to N4, 000 (complete set). I also make designs and take them to the market to sell. I make a good profit of about N2, 000 after buying materials and other items needed. This has been helpful for me and my family."

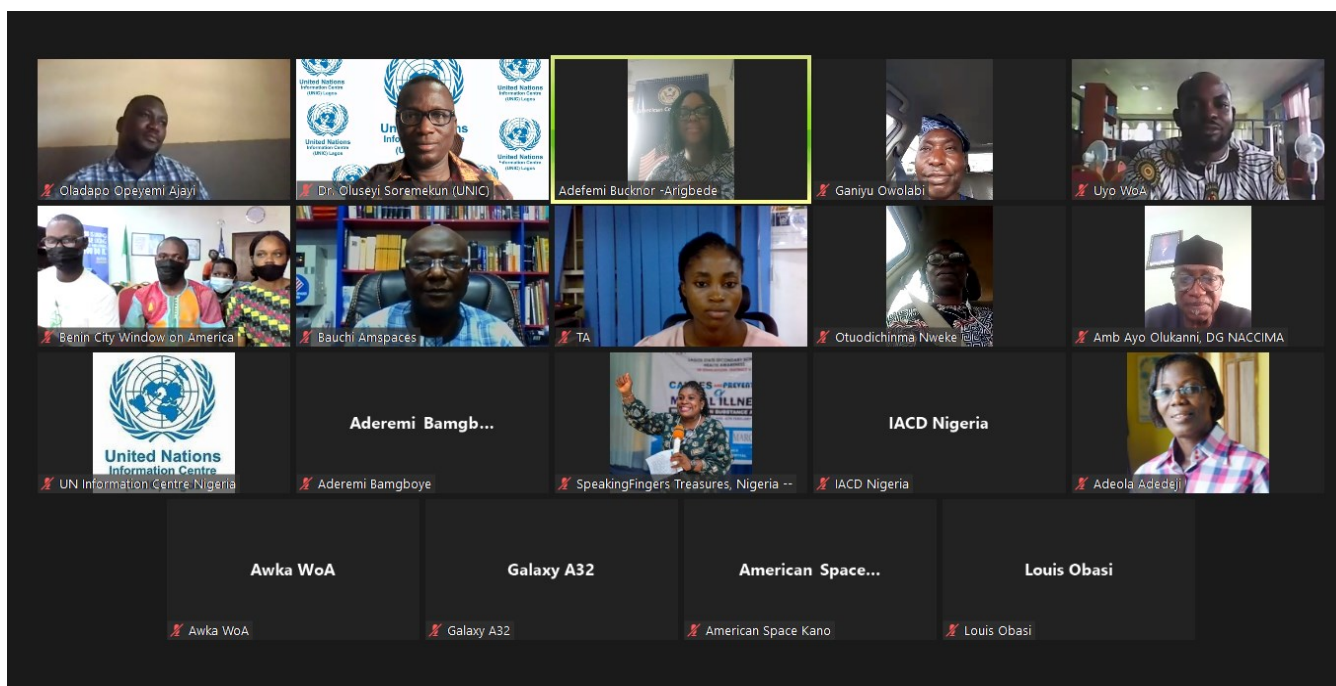
Alhaji Abubakar, 49, who resides in Kasaisa, narrates how the WFP livelihoods project made him self-reliant.

"I used to farm only to sustain my family. I had a small farm in Kasaisa which provided food for me and my family. Then I came in contact with COOPI/WFP in 2019. I joined the cap-making group and since then, it has been a life-changing experience. We were given tools and materials to practice with and in no time, I noticed I just wanted to make caps, because I knew how the cap business is in Yobe State, and if one knows how to make a good cap, customers will locate you."

Abubakar started making caps of different styles, designs, and quality – to attract customers. He also learnt from the programme how to package and label his caps to attract customers.

"Before I knew it, my business started growing. My friends and community members were bringing customers to me. I sell the quality caps for N20, 000 to N30, 000 and the ordinary caps for N5, 000 to N15, 000. Those that can't afford the expensive caps can afford the cheaper ones. I make a good profit after deducting the cost of materials and labour. Now I don't depend only on my farm produce. I am also teaching my son how to make the caps so he can be self-reliant."

# Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) At 20: UN Organises Webinar To Fight Discrimination and Intolerance in Nigeria



A cross-section of participants at the virtual commemoration of the 20th anniversary of #DurbanDeclaration and Programme of Action (DDPA),



National Information Officer of UNIC, Oluseyi Soramekun, addresses the audience at the webinar

In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of #DurbanDeclaration and Programme of Action (DDPA), the UN Information Centre in Nigeria (UNIC) in collaboration with Initiative for Information, Arts and Culture Development in Nigeria and the American Corner Ibadan organized a hybrid panel discussion themed ‘Enhancing Cultural Diversity and Inclusion: Panacea for fighting Discrimination and Intolerance in Nigeria’.

In his opening remarks, the National Information Officer of UNIC, Mr Oluseyi Soramekun stated that ‘The World Conference Against Racism which led to the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) revealed the challenges of intolerance in societies which have brought about multiplicity of issues around development and peaceful co-existence.

He emphasised the rising cases of antisemitism, xenophobia, online hate speech, intolerance, discrimination, ethnic profiling, ethnic consciousness, tribal and religious groups.

He called on government and all persons to eschew violence, racial and religious discrimination, to take action to combat racism and ethnic intolerance.

According to him, Article One of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) says, “Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”



Join our Webinar in Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the

## Durban Declaration & Programme of Action (DDPA)



Theme: **“Enhancing Cultural Diversity and Inclusion: Panacea for fighting Discrimination and Intolerance in Nigeria.”**

Wednesday 15th Dec. 2021

2:00PM WAT

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 475 606 5305

Passcode: IACDng#21

He therefore enjoined everyone to respect Nigeria's cultural diversity; her religious plurality and heterogeneity of her society.

A panel of discussants called on government to do more in upholding and respecting the human rights of citizens, reduce ethnic tensions, deprivation and inequalities at all levels.

They advised everyone across communities to take action to combat and address the rise of online hate speech and ethnic profiling, racism, discrimination, inequalities and all related intolerance. Respect for the rights of people and cultural differences were stressed, and the need for government and the civil society organizations to do more in the area of advocacy and education to change mindsets and stereotypes.

## UN Gathers Key Stakeholders To Boost Youth Employment And Digital Skills Development In Nigeria's Digital Economy



*ILO Director addresses the audience.*

On 2 December 2021, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) brought together key digital economy and youth employment stakeholders. Participants discussed pilot initiatives undertaken in Nigeria as part of the Joint Programme on Boosting Decent Jobs and Enhancing Skills for Youth in Nigeria's Digital Economy. Participants also identified best practices to scale up joint action for decent job creation and skilling for youth in Nigeria's digital economy.

Many young Africans face barriers to accessing decent work, which the COVID-19 pandemic has only made worse. In Nigeria, two-thirds of young people are unemployed or underemployed, and most work in the informal economy. At the same time, the digital transformation across the continent has the potential to create new jobs and to build back better. Nigeria is already home to a well-developed technology ecosystem and has the largest e-commerce market in Africa. The country's ICT sector has steadily grown, even during the pandemic.

Against this backdrop, the ILO and ITU – in support of the African Union (AU) and with the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth – are implementing a joint programme to empower African youth, ensuring they benefit from new opportunities in the digital economy.

The goal of the programme is to enable more young Africans to access decent work in the digital economy. This is being achieved through country-specific interventions that promote job creation, strengthen digital skills and improve employment services. The programme is generating new evidence for data-driven action and solutions.

In Nigeria, the ILO and ITU are strengthening the knowledge base on the country's digital economy. This includes an assessment of skills supply and demand in the digital economy. The

assessment identifies skills gaps in priority sectors, opportunities for improving youth skills development and detect specific needs that, if addressed, can generate new employment opportunities for young people. The assessment will survey young people, employers and youth employment stakeholders. Its recommendations will inform further programme implementation.

The ILO and ITU have also been working with key partners to advance innovative digital skills and job solutions. The Nigerian SDGs Youth Network, a coalition of youth-led civil society organiza-



*A group photograph of stakeholders at the programme on Boosting Decent Jobs and Enhancing Skills for Youth in Nigeria's Digital Economy*

tions, is implementing a Skills for Employment Programme. The initiative equips youth with digital skills with the goal of placing them in internships with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the digital space. The Joint Programme also engages representatives from the Generation Connect Africa Youth Group in its activities.

## Cameroonian Refugees In Nigeria Pass 70,000 Mark, UN Renews Call For Help

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is today reiterating its call to the international community for urgent additional support for refugees in Nigeria, where the number of refugees from Cameroon has now passed 70,000, nearly 80 per cent of whom are women and children.

“This is not just a number, these are people behind these numbers, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, people just like you and I, that have been forced to flee their homes to seek safety and save their lives,” says UNHCR’s Country Representative Chansa Kapaya. “70,000 refugees are 70,000 daughters and sons.” Their dreams and plans were disrupted by violence in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon where a conflict between secessionist Non-State Armed Groups and the army is displacing people from their homes since 2017.

Recent arrivals and UNHCR’s protection monitoring confirm killings, abductions, forced evictions and other forms of violence, with armed groups attacking schools and hospitals. Over 8,000 Cameroonian women, men and children have arrived in Nigeria’s Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Benue, Enugu, Cross River and Taraba States in the past 12 months, many in hard-to-reach rural areas. UNHCR, together with the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs, registered them. 59 percent found refuge in local communities.

The rest lives in four settlements which UNHCR helped build on land generously provided by the government. Nigeria has a progressive open-door approach to refugees, allowing refugee girls and boys to go to school just like nationals and their parents

to work where they can. With support from UNHCR, Nigeria provides primary health care to refugees and nationals alike.

“UNHCR commends Nigeria because it is on its way to become a champion in implementing the Global Compact on Refugees,” says UNHCR’s Representative Chansa Kapaya, “but Nigeria needs support”.

The most pressing needs of Cameroonian refugees are food, shelter, improved health care and education as well as livelihood opportunities. With rising food prices, the economic hit of COVID-19 and the refugee influx, needs are on the rise with serious risks of gender-based violence and negative coping mechanisms such as begging and survival sex.

The amount of support UNHCR can deliver is increasingly falling short. Cash for food, for instance, had to be reduced since 2019 due to insufficient funding. US\$97.7 million is needed to respond to the needs of a total of some 78,000 refugees and asylum-seekers of different nationalities and to IDP needs - protection, camp management/coordination, shelter and non-food items such as blankets and jerry cans.

So far, not even half of this amount (45 per cent, as of 23 November) has been received. UNHCR calls on donors and development agencies not to forget Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria.

## UNIC, GECCI Host Post-COP26 Youth Dialogues Across Nigeria



A cross-section of panellists at the Nigerian Youth Post-COP26 Conference at Damaturu, Yobe State, North-east Nigeria.

In its quest to keep the outcome of COP 26 conversation alive in the context of Nigeria, the UN Information Centre in collaboration with Global Environmental and Climate Conservation Initiative (GECCI), has organized a Nigerian Youth Post-COP26 Conference in Yobe State (Northeast), titled, "The Outcome of COP26 and Where Do We Go from Here?" as part of a series of panel discussion engagements across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria.

The panelists highlighted the different challenges of climate change in the north eastern region and the threat of climate change to agricultural sustainability and poverty alleviation.

They called for access to finance by farmers, improved agricultural infrastructure and the deployment of new technologies and innovation to mitigate the effect of climate change and the need for the youths to show a lot more interest in agriculture.

# PHOTO NEWS



## Captions, from left to right in a clockwise direction

1. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed (4th from the left) and UN RC/HC (a.i) Mr Matthias Schmale (Right) met with North-West Governors in Abuja: Deputy Governor of Zamfara State, Barrister Mahdi Aliyu Gusau; Governor Mohammed Badaru Abubakar of Jigawa State (2nd from the left); Kaduna State Deputy Governor, Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe (3rd from the left); Governor Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State (5th from the left); Governor Abubakar Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State (6th from the left); and a representative of Katsina State Governor.
2. Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (a.i.) for Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale, receives the UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed in his office at Abuja Nigeria.
3. UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed pays a courtesy visit to the Lagos State Governor, H.E. Babajide Sanwoolu.

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