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UNITED NATIONS  
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# NEWSLETTER



## UN Humanitarian Chief Pledges Support For Nigeria

## HIGHLIGHTS



UN, Sokoto State Work to Reduce Poverty... P. 3

Empowering Women Living With HIV/AIDS In Nigeria...P.6

Nigeria Adopts Roadmap For Global Compact On Refugees ...P. 10

WAKA Well Campaign ...P. 14

### UNRC Mathias Schmale Visits North-East, Meets Critical Stakeholders



UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale (Right) and Governor Zulum Babagana of Borno State at the Government House in Maiduguri.

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC), Martin Griffiths (Right) speaking with internally displaced persons (IDPs) and humanitarian partners during a visit to Damasak, Borno State, north-east Nigeria. Photo: UNOCHA/Christina Powell

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC), Martin Griffiths, concluded a four-day visit to Nigeria yesterday. The UN humanitarian chief travelled to the country to see first-hand the humanitarian situation and response in the north-east, and to raise international awareness about the deteriorating humanitarian situation and bring attention to the ongoing regional conflict affecting the Lake Chad basin.

In Nigeria, the USG/ERC met with the Vice-President and members of the Federal Government, the Chief of Defence Staff, as well as the Governor of Borno State. In the north-east, he met with Nigerians who have been affected by the violence, as well as humanitarian partners, in Maiduguri, Bama and Damasak.

The conflict in the Lake Chad basin has taken a heavy toll on communities across border areas of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger, putting more than 10 million people at risk and in need of humanitarian assistance.

During his visit to Damasak, on the border with Niger, Mr. Griffiths heard from women and families displaced by the violence. They told him of their hopes to return home, yet they despaired that they were unable to plan for a better future given continuing insecurity and attacks by armed groups.

Mr. Griffiths said: "It's heartbreaking to see the deep impact of the violence and repeated displacement for so many. Yet the people I met demonstrated amazing courage in the face of vicious violence, killings, kidnappings, repeated displacement and sometimes bare survival. In Bama, women told stories of having escaped from years of armed group captivity only weeks ago. It is our duty to help them rebuild their lives."

"I also had the chance to meet with the Governor of Borno State, who conveyed the commitment of authorities to improve security and build resilience for the most vulnerable. We will redouble our collective efforts to improve protection of civilians and humanitarian access, and seek durable solutions out of crisis wherever possible."

Continue on page 2...

To strengthen humanitarian response, coordination, and support in north-east Nigeria, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale, has visited critical stakeholders in Borno State as part of his first official visit to the conflict-affected region.

Schmale interacted with internally displaced people, both men and women groups at Bama and Muna IDP camps, Borno State to hear from them what their needs are, and how they would want the humanitarian community to support them. He listened to the deeply moving accounts of severe hardships by women IDPs in Borno State and empathised with them. Continue on page 2...

## UN Humanitarian Chief Pledges Support...continued from page 1

“It is clear we share a common objective: upholding the dignity of Nigerians and finding ways to ease the suffering too many of them face today. People are yearning for security, livelihoods and better access to social services, and we stand ready to make this a reality with the Government and our humanitarian partners.”

Mr. Griffiths also met with humanitarian workers in Bama and Damasak and heard first-hand of the challenges they face in reaching people in need. He said: “Brave humanitarian workers, most of them Nigerians themselves, work tirelessly and often at great personal risk to help others. I deeply admire their commitment and, in turn, commit myself to advocating for their safety, and for the necessary support to the people they serve.”

In 2021, the humanitarian community reached more than 5 million people in need in Nigeria. The 2022 Nigeria Humanitarian



*Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC), Martin Griffiths (Right) speaking with the mother of a baby who is being treated for severe acute malnutrition (sleeping beside her) at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) nutrition stabilization center in Bama, Borno State. Photo: UNOCHA/Christina Powell*

Response Plan, slated for launch in February, requires just over \$US1 billion. It sets out the humanitarian community’s plan to assist 8.4 million people in need this year.

## UNRC Matthias Schmale Visits Borno State...continued from page 1

The Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator also had constructive discussions with Borno State Governor, Professor Zulum Babagana, and military officials, who challenged humanitarian community and the UN in Nigeria to do more in support of efforts to help vulnerable people overcome aid dependence and build more dignified lives.

To underscore the importance of traditional institution and military establishment to peace and security of the region, Mr Schmale paid a courtesy visit to the Shehu of Borno, Alhaji Abubakar Ibn-Umar Elkenemi; and the Theatre Commander of Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK), Maj-Gen. Christopher Musa in Maiduguri.

He also visited Bama and Dikwa towns and met with internally displaced people, local government authorities including the Commander, 21 Special Armoured Brigade Bama, Brig.-Gen. Adewale Adekeye; the Executive Chairman of Bama Local government areas, Hon Abba Kolo, and his Dikwa LGA counterpart, Hon Muhammad Alhaji Gumsama.

Sharing his experience in Borno State, Mr. Schmale said, “Thousands of displaced women and men in Damasak, Borno State, hope that one day soon their homes will be safe enough to return to. I heard about the insecurity they continue to fear, the assistance they need and their efforts to care for themselves and their families.”



*UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale, engages with Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Borno State*



*UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mr. Matthias Schmale (Right) receiving a souvenir from Theatre Commander of Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK), Maj-Gen. Christopher Musa in Maiduguri.*



**Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**



## UN, Sokoto State Government Work to Reduce Poverty And Enhance Social Protection



Cash Working Group (CWG) members briefing beneficiaries

Sokoto State, located in the Sahel zone and the northwest of Nigeria, ranks among the Nigerian states with the lowest human development indices, particularly for health, nutrition and education. However, in the efforts to reduce poverty and vulnerability among the people, the Sokoto State Government initiated various projects and programmes, in partnership with the Federal Government and development agencies.

One of such projects is the UN Joint Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Programme. The Joint SDGs Programme focuses on children, adolescents, the elderly and women – including pregnant and breastfeeding women, while addressing disparities they face in health, education and nutrition, using cash transfers and social health insurance.

By connecting health insurance to a cash transfer programme, the project is exploring innovative routes in social protection, with the double aim to increase impact as well as establishing sustainable, effective and efficient social protection collaboration in Sokoto State.

The SDGs Programme is implemented by four UN agencies: UNICEF (the lead agency), the World Food Programme, the International Labour Organization and the UNDP, as well as the Government of Nigeria.

This initiative targets some 6,000 vulnerable people with Health Insurance Scheme in three Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state, where the people can access health services free of charge in some designated health facilities in these LGAs: Bodinga, Wamakko and Wuruno. The vulnerable groups identified for the Social Health Insurance programme are the aged; people living with disabilities; pregnant women; breastfeeding mothers; children under five years old and adolescent girls.

Of the 6,000 people benefiting from the Free Social Health Insurance programme, some 2,500 pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and caregivers of children under two years old will receive prepaid cash transfers to help them with transportation fares to the health centres in order to increase the uptake of the free healthcare services at these health facilities.

The growing adoption of government-led cash transfers in

adaptable forms globally necessitated setting up the Sokoto State level Cash Working Group in early 2021. The group reports periodically to the state level Technical Working Group (TWG), made up of key high-level government officials. The state level Cash Working Group (CWG), drawn from different Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the state, aims to ensure a smooth and effective delivery of social protections programme's objectives in Sokoto State.

The MDAs in the working group were the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. Others are the Sokoto State Contributory Health Care Management Agency; the State Universal Basic Education Board; the Sokoto Cash Transfer Unit; the Zakaat and Endowment Commission; the Sustainable Development Goals Unit and the Sokoto State Operation and Coordinating Unit.

As part of its key deliverables in the UN Joint SDGs Programme, for the most part of 2021, WFP trained members of the CWG on a structured coordination of the programme in order to ensure effective and efficient digitisation of the cash transfers and distribution of the prepaid cards to the targeted beneficiaries.

The training programme included conducting a WFP-led capacity needs assessments; hosting virtual and in-person workshops for the CWG members to better understand the cash transfer project design, delivery, and assurance phases and processes; the monitoring and evaluation process, handling/referral of protection related issues as well as the Complaints Feedback Mechanisms (CFM) processes specific to the cash transfer programme.

The trainings resulted in growing awareness and recognition of the need to develop cash working group coordination structures that steer both strategic and technical issues regarding cash-based and voucher intervention programmes in Sokoto state. The workshops also underscored the need to align these programmes to the National Social Protection Policy, while also piggybacking on already existing MDA structures – rather than duplicating them or mounting parallel programmes that, in most cases, are not cost effective. Overall, the trainings, delivered by the UN Joint SDGs Programme, strengthen the capacity of the Sokoto State's agencies for effective cash-based traders.



## 'The Stage Is set For The Transformation Of Our Country' – Agba



L-R: Dr Faizat Badmus-Busari, UN SDG Joint Programme Manager; Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire, Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs; Dr. Philip Ugbodaga, Special Assistant, representing the Hon. Minister of State for Budget and National Planning; Margaret Fagboyo, Special Adviser on Development Partnership and SDGs, representing Governor of Ekiti State and Chairman of the Nigerian Governors' Forum; and Claire Henshaw, Programmes Specialist, UNDP, representing UNDP Deputy Resident Representative.

During the National Dialogue for the Establishment of SDG Innovation Hubs in the Six Geo-Political Zones in Nigeria, it was revealed that the updated National Development Plan has strategies in place to transform the country. "With the recent approval of the National Development Plan 2021 – 2025 by the Federal Executive Council at its meeting of 10th November, 2021, the stage has been set for the transformation of our country.

The plan has a robust social protection component and seeks to lift 34 million Nigerians out of poverty by 2025 and 100 million Nigerians out of poverty in 10 years. The commitment of President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR towards laying the foundation to meeting these aspirations remains unwavering." said Prince Clem Ikanade Agba, Minister of State for Budget and National Planning at the National Dialogue for the Establishment of Innovation Hubs.

Institutional frameworks and initiatives, such as the SDG Innovation Hubs, are aimed at contributing to social protection mechanisms with the propensity to improve the socio-economic conditions of vulnerable persons. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs (OSSAP-SDGs), successfully conducted a national dialogue with the Private Sector Advisory Group on SDGs (PSAG) alongside six states selected for the establishment of the SDG Innovation Hubs. These states representing the six geo-political regions in Nigeria include Lagos, Delta, Enugu, Sokoto, Nasarawa and Gombe.

The dialogue was hosted under UNDP's component of the UN Joint SDG Fund Programme on Institutionalising Social Protection for Accelerated SDGs Implementation in Nigeria. It received robust participation from government officials, including the State SDG Focal Persons and representatives, private sector actors, diverse stakeholders and the media.

The UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Lealem Dinku, represented by Ms. Clare Henshaw, Programmes Specialist, emphasized the need for collaboration and partnership to help realise the Global Goals. He stated: "Through joint effort from every stakeholder, we will overcome the funding challenges in implementing of the SDGs in Nigeria. Joint effort in implementing the SDGs will promote innovations and accelerate achievements in the overall implementation of the SDGs. It will also help build strong institutions and foster sustainable development."

Speaking at the event, Governor of Ekiti State and Chairman of the Nigerian Governors' Forum, H.E. Dr. Kayode Fayemi affirmed Nigerian's Governors Forum's support to the initiative: "We are here to contribute and learn from other participants on how to take this initiative to greater heights. Considering that the SDG Hub is a Community of Practice which can be replicated to facilitate SDGs implementation, Ekiti State looks forward to hosting the second phase of this initiative. That way, whatever is being done and achieved in the first phase can be replicated and lessons learned shared across the regions."

The Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs, Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire reiterated the significance of establishing and maintaining partnerships to the success of the proposed innovation hubs. "Effective partnership (horizontal and vertical) is therefore, essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. This will unleash innovative ways of working to mobilize the requisite expertise and leverage on the available resources to create shared accountability in an increasingly constrained fiscal environment," she stated.

During the dialogue, the Private Sector Advisory Group on SDGs demonstrated keen interest and commitment to support the regional hubs'. As a key next step, priority SDG areas, as well as areas requiring support from each State SDG Office, will be strategically aligned with the PSAG clusters for intervention and follow-up. The hubs are expected to take off on or before the end of April 2022.

## Nigerian Correctional Service Partners UN To Provide Dignity Kits To Women In Custodial Centres



A Cross-section of dignity kits handed over to the Nigerian Correctional Service in Abuja by UNFPA & UNODC . Photo: UNFPA

Globally, women in prisons are a minority and their needs do not often receive adequate attention from relevant authorities. In Nigeria, only 2% of all persons presently in detention are women. There are only three custodial centres across the country dedicated exclusively for women, while many female inmates are being housed in separate wings of custodial centres with an otherwise male prison population. As a result, women’s needs are inadequately addressed.

In 2021, the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) in coordination with the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) and the Nigerian Correctional Service conducted with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Population Fund, Heartland Alliance Nigeria, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the Federal Ministry of Justice (FMOJ), and Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Nigeria (SOGON) a rapid situational assessment of women’s health, including sexual and reproductive health in custodial centres in Nigeria.

While the final report is pending publication, some of the preliminary findings reveal some significant gaps in terms of access to public health services by women in detention. While the UN Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rule) state that “The provision of health care for prisoners is a State responsibility” and that “Prisoners should enjoy the same standards of health care that are available in the community, and should have access to necessary health-care services free of charge without discrimination on the grounds of their legal status”, the reality in Nigeria, as it is the case in many other countries, remains that access to health services for diagnosis and treatment of common health conditions among people in custodial centres is often inadequate.

There is high prevalence of psychopathology among people in Nigerian custodial centres, with depression being the most

common; and yet there are only a few psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and psychiatric nurses presently employed by the Nigerian Correctional Service.

Moreover, awareness and knowledge regarding the transmission of infectious diseases such as HIV, Hepatitis and Tuberculosis as well as the perception of risk of infection are low among people in custodial centres in Nigeria, especially among females.

The study further showed that many women in detention have limited access to even the most basic health and hygiene products.

UNODC and UNFPA therefore joined forces in responding to this immediate need and partnered with the NCoS in the provision of 346 Dignity Kits containing foldable mattresses, mats, buckets, blankets, towels, insecticide treated nets, wrappers, pants, rubber slippers, reusable menstrual pads, hand sanitisers, toilet soaps, and polyester packaging bags.



## Empowering Women Living With HIV/AIDS In Nigeria



Participants at a UN Women supported Workshop for Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, in Abuja.

“In the past, my rights were violated, I was stigmatized, I was violated physically and emotionally, and I didn’t know where to channel it. However, with this training, I am well informed and empowered. Hence, whosoever violates my rights, whether husband, public, community, whether in the workplace, I now know how to channel it and get justice”, said Stella Obianuju, a woman living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, who participated in one of the trainings for leaders of the Association of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria (ASWHAN) towards the reduction of gender-based violence and stigmatization.

The Association of Women Living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria (ASWHAN) is an umbrella body of support groups of Women Living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria with over 850 support groups registered under it across the country. It advocates for the recognition of positive women’s right in Nigeria and seek to put in place comprehensive HIV and AIDS prevention, care, and support services.

In Nigeria, gender inequalities and low socio-economic status of women and girls continues to fuel women’s susceptibility to HIV infection, gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination and other forms of abuse. Women living with HIV/AIDS face multiple forms of discrimination, stigma, and discrimination because of their HIV/AIDS status. In recognition of these differential needs, National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) with support from partners have taken critical steps in mainstreaming gender in the HIV/AIDS responses. Despite the efforts, the leadership of the Association of Women Living with HIV&AIDS in Nigeria (ASWHAN) faces challenges in achieving their goals.

It is in this context, UN Women through the Enhancing Institutional and Technical Capacity of Women and Girls Living with HIV for more inclusive and Sustainable HIV Response in Nigeria Project (EITC) and in collaboration with UNAIDS, NACA, UNESCO and other partners undertook targeted interventions. These interventions include conducting a gender assessment to generate relevant gender data to support the national HIV/AIDS response. Secondly, supporting ASWHAN to produce a strategic framework and funding plans to strengthen its operational base and capacity to undertake interventions to eliminate gender-based violence, stigma, and discrimination. Thirdly, conducting

capacity building and advocacy workshops on Gender Based Violence, Stigma, and discrimination for selected ASWHAN national executives and state coordinators.

Also as part of the interventions was the development of a Toolkit for Action developed by UN Women and film producers of the film: Making the HIV Response Work for Women. The toolkit is aimed at enhancing understanding of HIV/AIDS gender issues and drive advocacy and actions for women living with HIV/AIDS. It is intended to be used by national governments, civil society, various UN and development partners in their advocacy work on gender equality and HIV.

The UN Women in collaboration with UNAIDS, UNESCO, NACA and other partners organised capacity building and advocacy workshops on gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination for the national and state executives/coordinators of ASWHAN with selected representatives from the federal and state ministries of women affairs; NACA, SACAs, NEPWAN; and other networks and stakeholders.

Objectives of the training was to deepen the knowledge and understanding of Women Living with HIV on sexual and gender-based violence prevention and stigma reduction; strengthen the advocacy and leadership skills of the organisation’s executives; inaugurate SGBV focal persons among the trained participants for follow-up and coordination of GBV response in the network; develop actionable work-plan for ASWHAN’s GBV interventions across Nigeria.

The 3-day workshop was held in Abuja and Lagos. The workshop took into consideration the specific goal of ensuring that participants understood the root causes and drivers of GBV and stigma as well as help identify concrete prevention and mitigation strategies to address observed cases. The training was participatory and hands, with several plenary sessions, brainstorming activities, role plays, group discussions, and experience sharing.



## Supporting Women Entrepreneurs Through Value Chain Addition



Rabiya, CEO of Teraab Industries (right) interacts with a client. Photo: UN Women/ Faith Bwibo

UN Women collaborates with several partners to implement the project 'Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment Through Climate-Resilient Agribusiness in Nigeria' in Ebonyi and Niger states. These partners include the Standard Bank Group, as Stanbic IBTC, FAO, UNIDO and International Labour Organization (ILO), the Governments of Ebony and Niger States (through the respective ministries of agriculture and women affairs), the Niger State Commodity and Export Promotion Agency, the National Shea butter Producers Association, and Food For All International (FFAI).

Women cooperatives from three project local government areas (LGAs) including women entrepreneurs working on shea butter agri-business associations selected to benefit from project interventions in Niger State. UN Women collaborated with Government counterparts and the state chapter of the National Shea Products Association of Nigeria (NASPAN) in Niger state trained about 200 women in cooperatives and entrepreneurs on product re-branding, product certification and catalogue for international markets. This has increased beneficiary's product's value, demand, and sale on the shea butter value chain.

Rabiya, a graduate resorted to set up her own business after her search for employment was futile. Her company Teerab specializes in making body balms, hair creams and oils, organic shampoo, and body soaps.

She narrated at her booth during the 3- day Nigeria National Shea Exhibition in October 2021, 'With my bachelors' degree, I knew I could start my own venture to support my family. I came for training for 6 weeks for certification in Value chain addition. 'I have attended workshops and seminars organized by UN Women that have improved my knowledge on value addition to Shea. I also use my time researching organic products, marketing, packaging'.

She urged women to keep improving themselves through continuous learning.

200 women entrepreneurs from 6 cooperatives in Niger State were trained on improved skills and technologies for processing



Aunty J displays her products at a Shea Butter exhibition in Abuja. Photo: UN Women/ Faith Bwibo

various shea butter products including high-quality soaps and other varieties of cosmetics, and on enhanced branding of products to meet both the local and international markets standards.

Aunty J used to sell raw shea butter and is one of the 200 women entrepreneurs trained on shea butter processing into different cosmetic products.

'I used to sell raw Shea Butter, then I improved to start processing the shea butter into cream, bar soap, oil, shampoo among other products. Since my eight years of doing business, the training provided by UN Women was one of the best for my enterprise. We are looking forward to receiving the machines that will assist with processing and linkage to more markets. I am thankful as this business has helped me support my husband and family.

Through the interventions of the project support, the Niger and Ebonyi States governments reviewed their agricultural policies from a gender perspective, which has created the enabling environment for women's access to lands and other productive agricultural resources in the two states.

# Holocaust Remembrance: Shun Discrimination And Prejudice - UN



A Cross-section of students displaying placards with various messages to promote tolerance and peace. Photo: Akinyemi Omolayo/ UNIC

In observing the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, Nigerian students have been urged to shun all forms of ethnic discrimination and prejudices in their relationship with others.

“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,” the National Information Officer of the UN Information Centre (UNIC) in Nigeria, Oluseyi Soremekun, quoted Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as he addressed over 600 students from 82 secondary schools and scores of teachers at Oshodi and Agege in Lagos.

The observances were organized by UNIC in collaboration with Lagos Education District I, Agege; and Lagos Education District VI, Oshodi.

Soremekun highlighted the events leading to the holocaust and why it was important for young people to know the holocaust history and apply its lessons for today's world. “No ethnic group or religion is superior to another. Act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood and love and shun all forms of discrimination and prejudice.” He added.

The Tutor General and Permanent Secretary of Lagos Education District VI, Mrs Oyebisi Oludara Okelola, called on everyone to be tolerant of one another. In Nigeria, we must be united as a people and stem all forms of tribal and ethnic differences including all stereotypes against various tribes.” She said.

Mrs Okelola emphasized, “You must make up your mind that No Life is less important.”

In her remarks, the Tutor General/ Permanent Secretary of Lagos Education District I, Barrister (Mrs) Margaret Solarin, represented by the Director of Co-Curricular, Science and Technology, Mrs. Omoaka Emike, advised the students to eschew hatred and racism. She advocated love across cultures and religions.

Earlier, the Knowledge Management Assistant of UNIC, Bolanle Olumekor, presented 'Facts about the Holocaust' after screening of the film 'Path to Nazi Genocide' which highlighted the carnage, devastation and brutality of the holocaust. UNIC also mounted an exhibition titled, 'Some Were Neighbours: Choice, Human Behaviour, and the Holocaust'.

The exhibits examined the role of ordinary people in the Holocaust and the variety of motives and pressures that influenced individual choices to act. The exhibit also looked at indi-

viduals who did not give in to the opportunities and temptations to betray their fellow human beings, reminding us that there is an alternative to complicity in evil acts—even in extraordinary times.



Tutor General and Permanent Secretary of Lagos Education District VI, Mrs Oyebisi Oludara Okelola. Photo: UNIC/ Akinyemi Omolayo



National Information Officer, UN Information Centre (UNIC) in Nigeria, Oluseyi Soremekun. Photo: UNIC/ Akinyemi Omolayo



Knowledge Management Assistant of UNIC, Bolanle Olumekor, curates the exhibits on the holocaust remembrance. Photo: UNIC/ Akinyemi Omolayo



## ‘Line Up Live Up’ Empowers Youth And Inspires Civil Society In Nigeria



Youth Footballers from the Turf Season Academy under the Line Up, Live Up Programme. Photo: UNODC

The contribution of sport to sustainable development and peace has been broadly acknowledged. It promotes inclusion, fosters social change and empowers a communities and individuals alike. There is growing evidence that sport can be used to effectively engage young people through tailored interventions that challenge harmful stereotypes linked to violence, crime and drugs and instill positive behavioral attitudes.

UNODC’s Youth Crime Prevention through Sport (YCP) initiative uses sports and sports-based learning to teach young people key personal and social skills and help them to build their resilience and leadership in standing up as changemakers, engage their communities, and create safe public spaces for positive youth development.

Line Up Live Up (LULU), a flagship programme under this initiative, has been implemented in more than fourteen countries across the globe. Through interactive sessions and a tailored methodology, Line Up Live Up “transfers” sport experience into real life situations. It enhances the knowledge of participants on risks related to violence, crime and drug use, ad-

resses young people’s attitudes and how these are affected by their normative beliefs. Most importantly, it provides them with the practical skills on how to handle situations in which they are confronted with violence, crime, drugs and other anti-social conduct in their schools, workplaces, families and social groups.

To further enhance the positive effects of Line Up Live Up UNODC works closely with civil society and youth led organisations, providing grants, capacity building and sport equipment to eleven NGOs in Brazil, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, South Africa and Uganda. However, many more have been inspired by the Line Up Live Up programme and seek to integrate life skills and other leanings outcomes in their work with youth, using sport.

In Nigeria, Turf Season, a Grassroots Football project in Lagos Nigeria, helps local youth, aged 16 to 24 years old to access education and career opportunities, and lead lives free from crime, drug abuse and anti-social behaviour. It uses sports and media to impact society, support the local economy and create jobs. Turf Seasons, offers weekly training sessions, football camps and exhibition games to engage local grassroots talents nationwide.

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## UNOPS Delegation Visits Governor Zulum of Borno State

The Director of UNOPS Ghana Multi Country Office (GHMCO), Ms. Ifeoma Esther Charles-Monwuba, recently led a delegation including UNOPS Nigeria team, to pay a courtesy visit to H.E. Professor Babagana Zulum the Executive Governor of Borno state. The visit was to reinforce UNOPS commitment in the completion of the construction of the oxygen plant that is currently being built in both Maiduguri and Biu.

The GHMCO Director appreciated the Governor for meeting with UNOPS and further discussed UNOPS’ capacities in the areas of Infrastructure, Procurement, Human Resource Management, Finance Management, Advisory Services, and Project Management.

She highlighted Borno State Government's commitment to

handle the descoped component of the project, as part of the State’s contribution to the project, to which the Governor re-affirmed his promise.

Governor Zulum disclosed his plans to procure more solar derived refrigerators and requested UNOPS support in the procurement process. He also revealed the government’s plans to build a teaching hospital for which he sought UNOPS technical support in the construction and in the procurement of medical equipment and related items.

He assured UNOPS of making unscheduled visits to the construction site to inspect the quality of construction work with a view to ensuring high standards.

## Nigeria Adopts Roadmap For Global Compact On Refugees



A cross-section of stakeholders at the Technical and Ministerial Validation Meeting for Nigeria Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) Roadmap.  
Photo: UNHCR/ Emmanuel Campos

Nigeria took another important step to implement the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), which guides countries, development partners, humanitarians, companies and other stakeholders in their whole-of-society approach to large refugee movements. The GCR is designed to help host communities get the timely support they need, and to help refugees get better inclusion (with access to health, education and livelihood opportunities) for productive lives. It aims at solutions to their plight from the start.

The National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs and the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development (FMHDS) held a ministerial validation meeting to endorse the Roadmap for Implementation of the GCR on 30 November 2021. Attended by 120 participants from Federal and State governments, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and other UN organizations, donors, regional bodies and refugees, the event provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to reaffirm their commitments.

The Roadmap is a tool to identify and advance concrete steps to implement the pledges Nigeria made at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, which include the inclusion of refugees, IDPs and returnees in the National Development Plan, strengthening its protection capacity, increased access to and availability of durable solutions as well as engagement in regional efforts addressing root causes of displacement.

Following the endorsement of the Roadmap, the Honourable Minister of the FMHDS, Hajiya Sadiya Umar Farouq, presented it at the High-Level Officials Meeting (HLOM) on the GCR in Geneva on 14 and 15 December 2021 that brought together governments, international organizations, NGOs, academia, private sector, refugees and refugee-led organizations.

The HLOM saw new pledges and highlighted progress in implementing the GCR, but also necessary action at global and national levels. "More progress is needed to step up support, including through bilateral development cooperation and our work with international financial institutions," said Gillian Triggs, UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection. "We need to bring more local actors, including refugees, as partners to the table. Further efforts to ensure access to education are urgently re-

quired, especially at the secondary level. Inclusive policies that enable access to work and alleviate poverty need to be translated into action."

Nigeria has a favourable environment for refugee inclusion where they enjoy freedom of movement, the right to work, and inclusion in national services such as education. Further improvements are expected from Nigeria's implementation of its GCR pledges. For this, a range of entities will need to join hands across many sectors, including the Ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture, Women Affairs and Social Development, Industry, Trade and Investment, but also the National Population Commission, the National Human Rights Commission, the National Agencies for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and for Emergency Management as well as Nigeria's Bureau of Statistics.

### Great Green Wall (GGW) Is Not Only About Tree Planting - Communication Officers Told

Communications Officers of Ministries Of the Environment, and National Agencies for the Great Green Wall (GGW) in the Sahel region have been told that the Great Green Wall is not just about tree planting, but about the impact of land restoration efforts on people and communities.

This was emphasised at a 3-Day Communications Capacity Building Workshop on the GGW, on-going in Dakar Senegal from 11-13 January, and organised by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and hosted by CINU DAKAR Centre d'Information des Nations Unies (UN Information Centre, Dakar)

Representing Nigeria at the workshop were the Head of Communication at the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (GGW), Mrs Pauline Sule; the Agency's Information Officer, Obadiah Bulus; and the National Information Officer of the UN Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, Oluseyi Soremekun.

In Nigeria, under the GGW, 8 million trees have been produced and planted; 1,396 jobs created, and 1,205 people trained on food and energy security as well as maintenance of biodiversity.

## UN Consults Stakeholders To Formulate 2023-2027 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework



*A cross-section of dignitaries and officials*

The United Nations in Nigeria has organised a one-day critical stakeholders' consultations in Lagos, involving representatives of government, CSOs and the academia, on the formulation of 2023-2027 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

It was aimed to obtain inputs, ensure buy-in, and strengthen partnership for sustainable development of Nigeria.

"We need your inputs, in order to have a @UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027, that reflects the needs and aspiration of Nigerian people," Reuben Bamidele, National Programme Officer, UNIDO Nigeria, said in his remarks.

In a tweet @matzschmale, the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (a.i.), Matthias Schmale, described the consultative meeting as an "exciting and important process started by the UN in Nigeria to consult with key stakeholders and partners on how to continue and strengthen development cooperation with Nigeria's government for the purpose of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and leaving no citizen behind."

The Director of Budget in Lagos State, Mr. Obajomo Ibrahim, who represented the Lagos State Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, Mr. Sam Egube, commended the United Nations for making the Cooperation Framework design process people-centered and inclusive.

The discussion was led by a Consultant, Prof. Lanre Olaniyan of the University of Ibadan.

The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) is the UN development system's collective offer to support countries in addressing key Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) priorities and gaps.



*Director of Budget in Lagos State, Mr. Obajomo Ibrahim, addresses the participants*



*National Programme Officer, UNIDO Nigeria, Reuben Bamidele, addresses the audience at the stakeholders' consultation programme in Lagos.*

## School Meals In Nigeria Fight Child Hunger, Boost Local Economies And Increase Attendance Levels



School children keen to learn at a primary school in Lagos where the Federal Government provides school feeding. Photo: FMHADMSD

As schools reopen in Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development (FMHADMSD) with technical support from the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) announces, it will be taking to the next level, the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (NHGSFP), launched by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2016. This decision results from a joint assessment conducted in the first quarter of 2021 to identify ways of improving, scaling-up and sustaining the NHGSFP.

Home Grown School Feeding initiatives promote nutrition education and better eating habits and encourage the diversification of production with a special emphasis on local crops. WFP is backing the next stage with a significant transfer of ICT equipment. This includes tablets with access to the PLUS Schools Menus – a free tool to help state Nutrition Officers design nutritious menus for schools.

The hardware will not only support the Ministry's efforts to digitalize its monitoring and evaluation system, but also enable the national roll out of the PLUS School Menu Tool developed by WFP to standardize cost-effective menu development.

By 2021, this breakthrough initiative serves school meals to over 9 million students in 53,000 public primary schools, making it one of the largest school feeding programmes in Africa. It has also led to a significant increase in school enrollment across the country. Moreover, the programme has provided a much-needed boost to local economies by buying the products of 100,000 smallholder farmers and providing jobs to more than 120,000 cooks from low-income families.

Schools provide local farmers with a predictable outlet for their products, leading to a stable income, more investments and higher productivity. The children enjoy healthy, diversified food; this makes it more likely that they will stay in school, perform better, and improve their adult job prospects.

In line with one of the key pillars for sustaining the NHGSFP, several partnerships have been realised across various relevant

Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Government, which have truly strengthened the collaboration and cooperation for a more effective service delivery. Key partners include the National Youth Service Corp, Ministries of Agriculture, of Education, Information, Trade and Industry, Water Resources amongst others.

Honorable Minister Sadiya Farouq, Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development said, "The NHGSFP remains an important intervention of the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari. Through it hunger, malnutrition, poverty, education can all be addressed. It is an investment that is fully funded by the Federal Government of Nigeria because of its sheer potential as a development driver. We at the FMHADMSD are here to ensure that this programme is strengthened and sustained so that it can continue to support the needs of the children, families, women and communities it targets. The technical support from the World Food Programme is therefore timely, relevant and well appreciated.

According to Dr. Umar B Bindr, National Coordinator, National Social Investment Programme "Already the FMHADMSD's NHGSFP has gained significant momentum and results in its digitization plans through the ongoing nationwide enumeration exercise which will see to the verification of existing data of pupils and schools on the programme, while setting the stage for reaching an additional 5 million Nigerian children, as approved by President Muhammadu Buhari. This is an important move towards ensuring that the program is data driven, transparent and evidence based."

Ronald Sibanda, WFP Country Director a.i. noted that "One of the best ways of fighting hunger and preventing malnutrition among children is to provide them with a healthy school meal. Nigeria is a good example of where the Government has taken the lead from day one and invested resources and funding into the design and implementation of its National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme. This is a great initiative and WFP is very pleased to provide technical support for the Government of Nigeria."

# Youth's Involvement In Peace Building Is Non-negotiable And Essential for The Achievement of SDGs - UN



A cross-section of participants at the 'Bridges to Peace Bootcamp' held in Lagos.

"The involvement of young people in conflict resolution and peace building is non-negotiable and essential to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)."

This was stated by the National Information Officer of the UN Information Centre (UNIC), Oluseyi Soremekun, in his opening remarks at a 2-day training workshop, 'Bridges to Peace Bootcamp' titled, 'Empowering youths to take actionable steps towards peace building processes in their immediate communities'.

The workshop, held on 20 –21 January 2022 at UNIC Lagos premises, was organised by Peace Shapers in collaboration with UNIC and the American Negotiation Institute.

He explained that the 17 SDGs could be categorized into 5 'Ps': Planet, Prosperity, Peace, People, and Partnership. "Peace is central. There cannot be development without peace. It is important for young people to commit themselves to peace building." Soremekun added.

The National Information Officer further highlighted the components of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 a ground-breaking resolution on Youth, Peace and Security which recognises that "young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security".

According to him, UNSCR 2250 identifies five key pillars for action: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships and disengagement and reintegration.



Founder of Peace Shapers, Seun Kolawole addresses the participants



Team Lead, TMI For Africans, Tolulope Makinwa, facilitates a session during the workshop



National Information Officer of the UN Information Centre (UNIC), Oluseyi Soremekun, addresses the participants

Soremekun urged leaders in both public and private sectors to give youth a greater voice in decision-making and to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes.

In her remarks, the Founder of Peace Shapers, Oluwaseun Kolawole, urged the youths to use their voices, energies and platforms to make an impact in the society.

"If young people keep running away from being involved in shaping the change, how will the situation improve?" She asked, and added that "We need to step up whatever actions that are already in place and raise awareness at the grassroots. There is a need for an all-inclusive approach to building a just, peaceful and sustainable world".

## WAKA Well Campaign Promotes Safe Migration Pathways And Local Opportunities To Young People In Edo State



Aerial view of the audience at launch of the third phase of the IOM X awareness-raising campaign, WAKA Well. .

The International Organization for Migration, with funding from the German Federal Foreign Office, has launched the third phase of the IOM X awareness-raising campaign, WAKA Well. The first iteration of the campaign was launched in 2019; WAKA Well by IOM X is an awareness-raising campaign in West Africa designed to place migration prone communities on the driving seat of information campaigns informing potential migrants, particularly the youth, of their migration-related decisions.

Building on the project's first phase, IOM X West Africa phase 3 aims to produce media content targeted at youth aged 13-40 in Oredo and Ikpoba Okha in Benin city, Edo state, to promote safe migration and local opportunities in Nigeria. The campaign adopts a participatory and evidence-based Communication for Development (C4D) approach in designing and crafting its activities' messages and media concepts.

"IOM is deeply committed to empowering young people in West Africa to make informed migration-related decisions, thus helping to reduce vulnerability to exploitation that can result from irregular migration. Having involved the communities in the development of the content, I believe that this campaign will inspire young people and their communities to act against human trafficking," said IOM Chief of Mission Frantz Celestin

The Waka Well campaign has been highly impactful in creating social and behavioural change within the target audience. In 2019, the campaign generated a 13 per cent increase in behavioural intent to practice safe migration. It is believed that the third phase of the campaign will generate even more awareness on opportunities that exist in Edo state and help youth make informed migration choices. The video content developed through this participatory and consultative process was launched on 16 December 2021 in Benin City at a media launch aimed at drawing the attention of the media, the target audi-

ence and their communities to the IOMX WAKA Well campaign videos to appreciate partners who were part of the process. The media launch featured a panel discussion on local opportunities to discourage irregular migration, theatre performance, and music and comedy performances by returned migrants. The video content comprises two short drama and comedy video skits titled 'Legit Hustle' and "I for no waka loss", which highlights the dangers of human trafficking while also sharing messages to help young people make informed migration decisions. The videos also direct the viewers to the WAKA well website for information on safe migration pathways and local opportunities available in Edo state.

Information on safe migration pathways and local opportunities in Edo state is accessible on the WAKA Well website at [wakawell.info/nigeria](http://wakawell.info/nigeria)

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Those stories need to be told.  
We need to know that in  
conflict, there are no winners.

Amina J. Mohammed  
UN Deputy Secretary-General

## UN Strengthens Surveillance System, Leverages Collaboration With Traditional Leaders On Health In Borno State



*Shehu of Borno, Dr Abubakar Ibn Umar Garbai Al-Amin El-Kanemi (Left) receives the WHO Country Representative (WR), Dr Walter Kazadi Mulombo (Right) , at his palace in Maiduguri.*

Preparatory to the Supplementary Immunization Activities (SIA) in Borno State, the WHO Country Representative (WR), Dr Walter Kazadi Mulombo, has solicited advocacy train to the Shehu of Borno, Dr Abubakar Ibn Umar Garbai Al-Amin El-Kanemi, to canvass support for the success of the exercise. The high-level meeting held at the Palace of the Shehu of Borno in Maiduguri recently, was to enhance collaboration with the traditional leaders and aimed at the delivery of essential health services in the state.

In his opening remarks, Dr Mulombo appreciated the traditional leader and district heads for their support to various health interventions in the state.

“You were supportive in mobilizing and encouraging the residents of Borno state to adhere to the COVID-19 preventive measures. You played a key role, and cases have drastically plummeted in Borno state.

“On our part, we have been providing support in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of public health programmes aimed at preventing, promoting, and protecting the health of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states. This support is in line with the goals and objectives of the National Health Plan. Although we are reviewing our emergency responses across the BAY states, we solicit your support in mobilizing the people Borno state during the measles and Yellow fever vaccination campaign”, he said.

The SIA was conducted against measles and Yellow fever. The campaign implemented by the Borno State Government, with support from the WHO and other partners, reached over two million people.

Pledging the continual support, Alhaji Al-Amin El-Kanemi, said as heads of the traditional institutions, they would use their positions to mobilize the people and ensure all eligible persons in the area get vaccinated.

Commending WHO and partners for the humanitarian response and health interventions in the region, he suggested that WHO organize a training for the traditional leaders to empower them with skills required to support health interventions, including disease prevention, detection, and reporting.

Also, as part of the strategies to strengthen the surveillance system in the state, the WR donated 20 phone tablets, 20 power banks, and phone accessories to the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and Borno State Ministry of Health (MoH) with funding support from ECHO (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations). The items would assist in enhancing surveillance reporting and strengthen the system (SORMAS – Surveillance Outbreak Response Management and Analysis System).

Receiving the items, the Director of Public Health, MoH, appreciated WHO and promised to use the technology effectively.

Measles and Yellow fever are highly contagious diseases but vaccine-preventable. This year, Nigeria recorded sporadic outbreaks of yellow fever and measles due to low routine immunization coverage. The SIAs are strategies for delivering vaccination to children otherwise missed by routine services in the hard-to-reach areas, the underserved groups and communities or to older susceptible individuals.

## Nigeria Takes Steps to Stop Migrant Smuggling

The smuggling of migrants is a big business in Nigeria with criminal networks charging large sums of money to move people in and out of the West African country or facilitate their transit.

In recognition of the magnitude of this crime, its impact on the security of the country and the safety of the migrants involved, Nigerian authorities are now working closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime through the 'Strengthening Transregional Action and Responses against Smuggling Of Migrants (STARSON)' project.

"Nigeria is already well-equipped to combat human trafficking through its specialized counter trafficking agency, NAPTIP, but more focus and action is needed on migrant smuggling," says Aondoaver Kuttuh, UNODC Adviser on Migrant Smuggling in Nigeria.

"Even in terms of the legal framework, it was not until 2015 that migrant smuggling was clearly articulated in the Immigration Act, and many crime prevention agencies are still struggling with the concept."

The former police officer and lawyer will be mentoring senior immigration officials at key Nigerian border crossings with Niger and Cameroon and in cities that serve as hubs for migrant smuggling activities in Nigeria and Ghana.

"With an improved understanding of migrant smuggling, the authorities will be in a better position to detect, investigate and prosecute cases of this crime and assist any intercepted smuggled migrants in line with the existing legal obligations," adds Mr. Kuttuh.

Nigerian nationals who are smuggled out of the country are primarily heading to Europe and travel through Niger and then further to Libya, Morocco, or Algeria. Others are hoping to reach North America or the Gulf States.

UNODC research indicates that the smuggling process is highly organized. For the popular crossing into Niger, migrants are usually taken by regular transport to a northern city where they contact a smuggler who will help them to reach the border. After moving into Niger on foot, another contact person will meet them.

"And this is how the process continues," says Aondoaver Kuttuh. "The smuggling networks have contacts all along the routes. The migrants themselves rely on a telephone number for the next contact. Sometimes they do not even know where they will end up going."

"When I talked to immigration officials about migrant smuggling and the kind of suffering that the migrants endure, they begin to realize that the migrants are really not the problem. They need to focus on the smuggling networks."

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## UN Warns Of Nigerian Education Crisis As World Celebrates International Day Of Education Amid COVID-19 Concerns

As the world celebrates the International Day of Education today, UNICEF welcomed the government's pledge to increase Nigeria's annual domestic education expenditure by 50 per cent over the next two years, and by 100 per cent by 2025. In Nigeria's N17 trillion 2022 budget signed into law at the end of 2021, 7.2 per cent is allocated to the education sector. This is a step forward – an increase from 5.7 per cent allocated for 2021 – though there is still a long way to go to reach the internationally recommended benchmark that countries spend 15-20 per cent of their national budgets on education.

"The Nigerian Government has committed to increasing funding for education, which is a very important step - far too many Nigerian children today are not in the classroom – and for those who are, far too many are not getting a solid education that can translate into good prospects for their futures," said Peter Hawkins, UNICEF Representative in Nigeria.

At least 10.5 million children are out of school in Nigeria – the highest rate in the world. A full one-third of Nigerian children are not in school, and one in five out-of-school children in the world is Nigerian.

While the education crisis in Nigeria is affecting children across the country, some children are more likely to be affected than others: girls, children with disabilities, children from the poorest households, in street situations, or affected by displacement or emergencies, and children in geographically distant areas are all disproportionately affected by the education crisis, according to UNICEF.

"Millions of Nigerian children have never set foot in a classroom – and this is a travesty," said Peter Hawkins. "Perhaps equally tragic is the high number of children who make it into a classroom, but never make the transition from primary school to secondary school – thereby cutting off their chances for a secure future."

It is estimated that 35 per cent of Nigerian children who attend primary school do not go on to attend secondary school. Half of all Nigerian children did not attend secondary school in 2021.

"As we celebrate the International Day of Education today amid concerns in much of the world about the impact of COVID-19 on education, we must take a close look at what is happening to our children in Nigeria, and the opportunities they are missing out on when they lack education. We need to look towards communities – leaders, parents, teachers and caregivers – and together, find the best strategies to ensure that all children enroll into school, have access to continuous learning and ensure they emerge with quality skills that equip them for a prosperous future."

"We need to especially ensure that girls have access to learning – so they can receive an education that will begin to address issues of gender inequality. All girls have much to offer to find solutions to Nigeria's challenges – and we have to nurture their creativity and innovation."

"We also need to ensure that children are safe when they are in school – no child should be afraid to enter a classroom – afraid their school might be attacked or that they will be kidnapped. And no parent should fear sending their children to school.," said Peter Hawkins.

In 2021, there were 25 attacks on schools. 1,440 children were abducted, and 16 children killed.

In March 2021, no fewer than 618 schools were closed in six northern states (Sokoto, Zamfara, Kano, Katsina, Niger, and Yobe) over the fear of attack and abduction of pupils and members of staff. The closure of schools in these states significantly contributed to learning losses for over two months.

UNICEF said that Nigeria's education system can be transformed through adequate funding to ensure schools are safe; the application of gender-responsive policies, including recruitment of female teachers and improved facilities for girls; the creation of multiple and flexible learning pathways for students, such as digital and transferable skills learning; the integration of foundational numeracy and literacy in Qur'anic schools; and teacher training in the latest methodologies.

"All Nigerian children deserve a fighting chance – no matter who they are or where they are. And this must include an education. It is not only their right – it is the smartest and best way to secure the future of Nigeria as a whole," said Peter Hawkins.



## 'Through The Cash Transfer, I Can Now Buy Grains In Cash Upfront'

Elizabeth Ezekiel wears many hats. She is a mother, farmer, and small-scale entrepreneur. She is a beneficiary, among the 10,000 reached through the Risk Communications and Community Engagement Project.

Her daily routine involves cooking, doing house chores then heading to the market where she has a small stall. Her sentiments as a beneficiary of the cash transfer disbursed funds:

'Before the project, I buy farm products from wholesalers on credit and sell at the roadside (retail) and then pay back the money once I make some small profit. I now have a shop and don't need to collect grains on credit, the cash transfer has enabled me to buy it in cash upfront, and I am grateful for that.'

One challenge in her business is sometimes the lack of customers to buy her products- but if the customers come, she gets money to support her family.

Elizabeth is now banked and uses her bank account to receive money from her children and save for her future. She hopes that her farming and business will grow and scale up to farm more and sell more farm products.

In her words, 'I am grateful for the project but would love to have additional support as the cost of grains is skyrocketing by the day. If she can get more money, I can invest more back into my business.'

The 55-year-old single mother of 5 closes the market around 5.30 pm and goes home to carry out her motherly duties.

UN Women is working in collaboration with government institutions at both Federal and State levels (Federal and State Ministries of women Affairs) National Social Safety Nets Coordinating Unit (NASSCO) and three women led CSOs including the Women's



Elizabeth Ezekiel (right) attends to a customer at her local market in Bauchi. Photo: UN Women/ Faith Bwibo

Wing of Christian Associations in Nigeria (WOWICAN), the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN), the Nigeria Girl Guides Association and the United Bank of Africa (UBA), The partners have joined forces to implement the Risk Communications and Community Engagement Project in 10 States namely Lagos, Akwalbom, Borno, Bauchi, Ebonyi, Edo, Delta, Sokoto, Gombe, and FCT. Through the project, 10,000 vulnerable women and girls identified as the worst-hit by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic are provided with unconditional cash support in the form of palliative. A key element of the intervention is facilitating the leadership role of women and girls in the response and community cohesion as well as ensuring their continuing access to essential services.

## UN Women Disburses Cash Transfer To Small Scale Women Entrepreneurs



Saraya beside her grain shed. Photo: UN Women/ Faith Bwibo

Every morning, Saraya, a mother of 7 wakes up, prepares a meal for the family, gets her daughter ready for school and then sets off to the market. She sells food produce in the market woman and one of the beneficiaries of the Risk Communications and Community Engagement Project (RCCE) in Bauchi State.

Saraya recalls how she and her family struggled with their livelihood even before the COVID-19 pandemic. According to

her, the restrictions due to the pandemic made it more challenging for her to have a sustainable income to support her family. "Life was challenging, even before the restrictions brought about by the Covid19 pandemic. I mostly depend on farming- which relies heavily on the rainy season and changing weather patterns. I also used to hawk some foodstuff along the roads, to make some extra income" Saraya noted.

She received cash transfer through the RCCE project to enable her start-up a small-scale entrepreneurial venture. She said, "Through the cash transfer, I managed to rent a shed for my products, which boosted my groundnut and grain business. With the profit made, I deposit some money into my savings account; and use the rest to reinvest back into the business."

Saraya makes a profit of around \$4 per 500g of groundnuts. She hopes that the payoff will be more if she is supported to buy the grains in bulk. She beams with joy when asked how the project has impacted her family. "Sometimes I used to cook food without oil- now, with profit, I can buy palm oil or vegetable oil to make soups and stews. My family's diet is tastier and more nutritious as I can now add fish for protein. I am happy and appreciate the money that I received from this project; it has benefitted me and my business in addition to my family."

# PHOTO NEWS



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

1. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Geaffrey Onyeama (3rd from the right) receives the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC), Martin Griffiths (4th from the right) in his office in Abuja. The UN delegation includes the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mathias Schmale (4th from the left) and other senior OCHA staff.
2. A group photograph of the Director of UNOPS Ghana Multi Country Office (GHMCO), Ms. Ifeoma Esther Charles-Monwuba (2nd from the left) and her delegation with the Borno State Governor, H.E. Professor Babagana Zulum (Middle), in Maiduguri.
3. A group photograph of UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mathias Schmale and OCHA staff in Maiduguri.

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