



UNITED NATIONS  
NIGERIA



# NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2022



## SRSR Annadif Visits Nigeria, Meets INEC, Reiterates UN Support For Peaceful And Credible Elections



*L-R: Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof. Mahmood Yakubu; Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSR), and Head of United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mr. Annadif Khatir Mahamat Saleh; and UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schamle at the INEC headquarters Abuja.*

On 26 June 2022, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSR), and Head of United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mr. Annadif Khatir Mahamat Saleh, arrived Abuja Nigeria, for a two-day working visit.

The Special Representative had a series of meetings with the Nigerian authorities, the main political parties, representatives of civil society organizations, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the Inter-Party Advisory Council (IPAC), the United Nations country team, as well as the diplomatic corps.

During his various meetings, Mr. Annadif stressed the importance of the position of Nigeria in West Africa and the Sahel. He recalled the need for all Nigerian actors to remain mobilized so that Nigeria continues to play this major role in the consolidation of peace and democracy in the sub-region, and in the continent. In this regard, he called on the international community to enhance its support to Nigeria, which is facing many challenges, particularly security ones.

As the general elections approach, the Special Representative praised the work done by the Independent National Elections Commission (INEC) towards the organization of peaceful, credible and transparent elections.

To all his interlocutors, Mr. ANNADIF indicated that the next elections constitute a major opportunity to strengthen peace, democracy, development continue and good governance in Nigeria. He encouraged the Nigerian authorities,...continue on page 5

### HIGHLIGHTS

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UN Hands Over Scaled-Up Oxygen Production & Supply In Borno State...P.16



Spotlight Initiative



EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls



FRED

Foundation for Resilient Empowerment and Development

IN SUPPORT OF



Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls



# GBV SITUATION ROOM

## FACT SHEET:

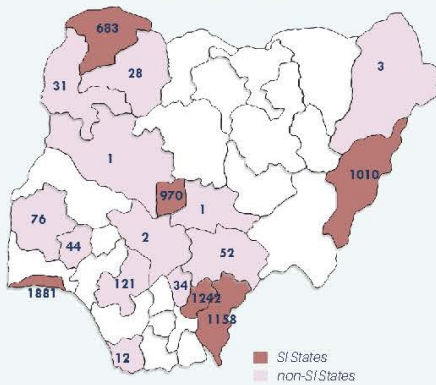
January 2020 - July 2022

### GBV INCIDENCE

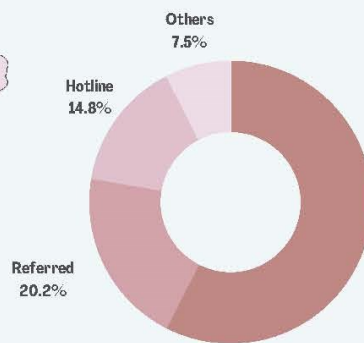
7,349  
INCIDENCE REPORTED



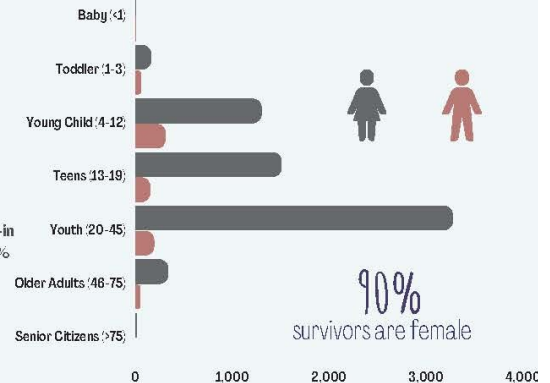
MAP OF NIGERIA SHOWING STATES REPORTING GBV INCIDENCE



PREFERRED CONTACT CHANNEL



AGE DISTRIBUTION



### KEY FACTS



3,266 (44.4%) incidence were reported within 72hrs

#### Access to Services

\*1,315 incidence were reported same day



In 4,281 (58.25%) of reported incidence, the relationship with perpetrator was non-intimate

#### Perpetrator Type

\*Non-intimate includes strangers or a person with whom the survivor/victim had only superficial relationship



1,071 (14.57%) survivor/victim had no form of education

#### Educational Level



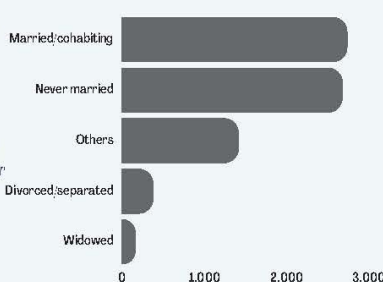
Sexual and physical violence accounts for 72.3% of violence reported

#### Type of GBV Reported

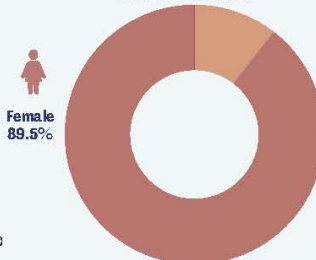
\*901 cases of emotional violence was reported

### MARITAL STATUS

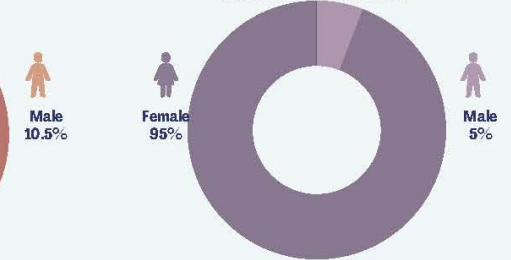
68% of survivors are females who have never been married or are married.



NEVER MARRIED



MARRIED/COHABITING





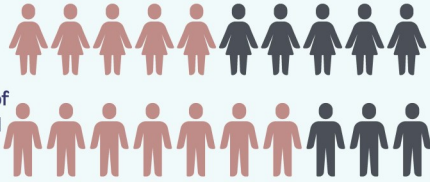
Spotlight Initiative



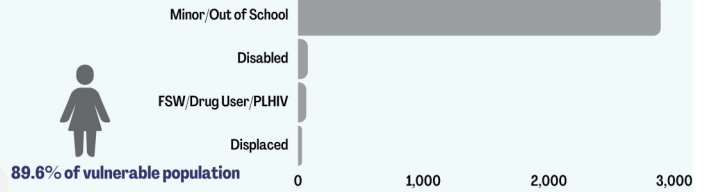
### EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls

#### MINORS EXPERIENCING GBV

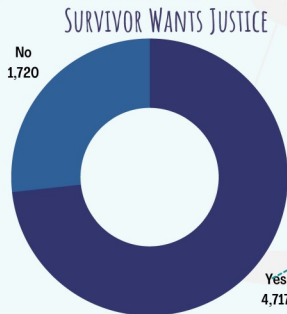
About **50%** of females reporting GBV were <18yrs compared to **70%** of males who reported GBV in the same age band



#### VULNERABLE POPULATION



#### ACCESS TO JUSTICE

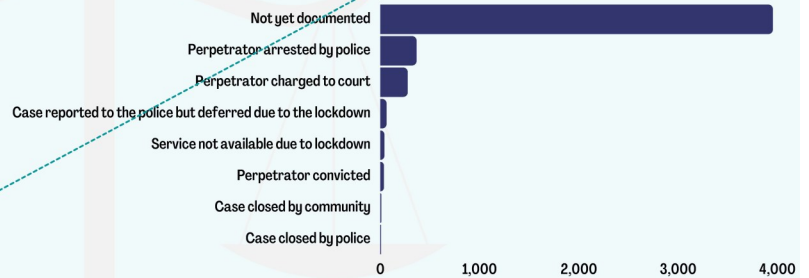


OUTCOME OF PROSECUTION

32

CONVICTIONS RECEIVED

#### STATUS OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE



384

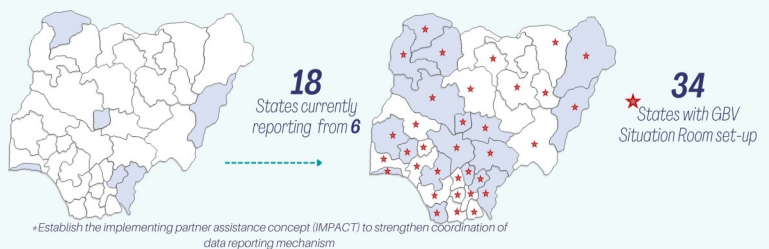
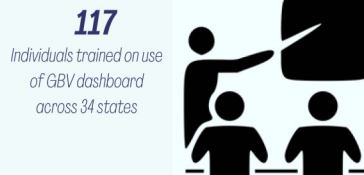
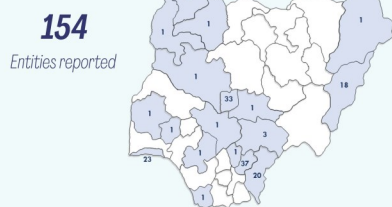
CASES CLOSED

#### GBV SERVICE PROVISION

15,538 SERVICE PROVIDED



#### ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED



## FG, UN, Partners Launch ‘The New Dawn: 35 YEARS of the Nigerian Response to HIV and AIDS’



Honourable Minister of State for Health, Dr Adeleke Mamora (Middle); Amb. Mary Beth Leonard, the US Ambassador to Nigeria (3rd from the right); WHO Country Representative, Dr Walter Kazadi Mulombo (2nd from the right) and the UNAIDS Country Representative, Dr Erasmus Morah, displaying the publication.

UNAIDS, in collaboration with the Federal Government of Nigeria and partners, has on 14 June 2022, launched a landmark publication titled, “From the Darkest of Days to A New Dawn: 35 years of the Nigerian Response to HIV and AIDS” to document the 35 years journey of HIV/AIDS response in Nigeria.

The ceremony which took place at the UN House in Abuja, had in attendance, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation of Nigeria presiding, together with Health Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister, First Lady’s Office, UN Resident Coordinator, US Ambassador, all three past and current Director Generals of the National AIDS Control Agency (NACA) and three past Coordinators of the Network of People Living with HIV in Nigeria (NEPWHAN), along with several other HIV activists in the country.

In the audience at the UN House was Ms Ebube Taylor, a young HIV Advocate, who addressed the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, first in 2011 at the age of 11 years, and then again in 2016, aged 16 years. Today, Ebube is 23 years old and a recent university graduate. When asked how she found the confidence to face the UNGA at such a tender age, her response was striking but not surprising: “I was nervous at first but with my mum by my side I was able to speak”.

Mr John Ibekwe, the first president of NEPWHAN, was also present at the UN House. Mr Ibekwe, who found out about his HIV status during his marriage preparations in 1996, was the first healthy-looking Nigerian to publicly declare his HIV positive status in 1997. This led to the immediate termination of his job by his employers. He and his wife later went on to demonstrate the success of the early days of the PMTCT programme, by giving birth to an HIV free baby in 1998. The United States President, Mr Bill Clinton, had an amazing encounter with John and his wife during his mission to Nigeria in 2000. Later that year, President Clinton invited the couple to dinner at the White House in Washington to share their PMTCT success story as well as their struggles.

The New Dawn publication, which has been in the making for over three years, is a joint effort of the United Nations system working on AIDS in Nigeria, NACA, the Ministry of Health and NEPWHAN. It tracks the evolution of the country’s HIV response into its current state of maturity. Told through a compendium of articles written by over 150 key actors, the publication captures stories of trials, sacrifices, partnerships, and commitments of those tasked with tackling the AIDS epidemic and those who have been living through it. It also articulates critical historical developments and game-changing achievements in the HIV response, through the pre-donor era, the donor era, and the present day in which the Government of Nigeria is increasingly taking financing responsibility for the HIV response, despite the COVID-19 pandemic challenges.

The Secretary to the Government of the Federation of Nigeria, Boss Mustapha, stated: “As a country, our experiences and structures in the HIV/AIDS response were quite instrumental to our response to COVID-19. For example, the AIDS Indicator and Impact Survey (NAIIS) and other frameworks for our response, and some of its health technologies, were adapted to responding to COVID-19. It is commendable that Chapter 4 of this publication has carefully documented lessons from the HIV response that were quickly adopted to curtail COVID-19 in the country, which could have been easily dubbed a third world war”.

Honourable Minister of State for Health, Dr Adeleke Mamora, stated that, “The presentation of this publication today is timely and could be described as a stocktaking report on the national HIV/AIDS response’. It is timely because we are now a few miles to the 2030 UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets. Lessons from this publication create a platform for us to build on”.

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mathias Schmale, noted that, “This publication is a very good example of the effective coordination, collaboration and ownership between different UN agencies, the Government, the people of Nigeria and civil society. It shows when we partner, we can achieve daunting tasks which we have seen in the HIV response”...continue on page 5.

# The New Dawn: 35 YEARS of the Nigerian Response to HIV and AIDS

... continued from page 4

| Between UNGA 2016 and 2021, what has changed to bring us to a New Dawn?   |   |
|---|---|
| At the 2016 UNGA  | By the 2021 UNGA  |
| Nigeria/West Africa <b>holding back the continental response to HIV</b>   | Nigeria firmly positioned as the <b>next HIV turn-around country</b> , after South Africa   |
| <b>Low ART coverage</b>   | <b>Increased ART coverage</b> from 24% in 2015 to 86% in 2020   |
| <b>Data-poor country</b> – Nigeria data could not be trusted  | <b>Data-rich country</b> - 2018 NAIIS, IBBS, MOT provided required data to set realistic targets and guide policies   |
| <b>Weak national ownership</b> with <b>inadequate coordination</b> between Government and partners  | <b>Re-establishment of the National Treatment and PMTCT Program (NTPP)</b> in 2018 and <b>National Alignment</b> of Government, PEPFAR and Global Fund investments                  |
| <b>Unsuccessful Global Fund applications</b> , with significant governance challenges, resulting in imposition of Additional Safeguard Policy | Nigeria has the <b>largest Global Fund portfolio</b> in a single country, with over US\$ 1.1 billion for 2021-2023, and <b>radically reformed CCM</b> with a KP representative      |
| HIV response <b>wholly dependent on donor funding</b> with no pathway for domestic financing  | <b>Increased domestic HIV financing</b> with 50,000 additional Nigerians on ART annually, using government resources, and establishment of private sector-led <b>HIV Trust Fund</b> |

Dr Gambo Aliyu, Director General of NACA, highlighted, “the publication is a rich inventory of insights and great lessons to guide health workers, researchers, and policymakers in addressing Nigeria’s finished business in HIV/AIDS”.

Said Abdulkadir Ibrahim, National Coordinator, NEPWHAN, “The New Dawn is the first of its kind to chronicle all the stories right from the beginning till date. We feel inspired to see our stories captured, our journeys shared and feel connected with our significant inputs to this publication.”

Her Excellency, Mary Beth Leonard, the United States of America Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, said: “Since 2003, the United States has contributed over US\$ 6 billion to strengthen the systems side of the equation. This publication recognizes the decisions that we have made together as individuals, institutions and bilateral partners, and salutes a few of the special individuals that have helped us to achieve this great success. We are proud of what we have done together, systematically, and strategically. Our key partnerships with the national and state governments, UNAIDS, and the Global Fund were instrumental in determining what systems and strategy we needed to gain traction and outpace HIV”.

Maria Kirova, Head of the High Impact 1 Africa Department, the Global Fund, acknowledged the historic development of the New Dawn and said, “The Global Fund is proud of its partnership with Nigeria and remains committed in supporting Nigeria in its efforts to build resilient and sustainable systems for health to end the public health threats of HIV, TB, Malaria, COVID 19 and other health emergencies”.

UNAIDS Country Director, Dr Erasmus Morah, stressed that, “In a world getting increasingly noisier, knowledge documentation and management, and ownership of the narrative is everything.” He went on to quote Plato, that “those who tell the stories rule society,” and reminded of an African saying, that “until the lion learns to write, every story will glorify the hunter”. He further remarked that, “as much as history credits, glorifies, vin-

dicates or convicts historical actors, a good story also builds relationships, makes people care and motivates them to push harder for the last mile”.



UNAIDS Country Representative, Dr Erasmus Morah (Left) welcomes the Honorable Minister of State for Health, Dr Adeleke Mamora (Right); to the UN House

## Annadif Visits Nigeria... continued from page 1

... as well as all actors to redouble their efforts to ensure the effective participation of women and youth in the electoral process.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel commended the United Nations country team for the quality of its engagement with the people of Nigeria. He reaffirmed United Nations’ engagement to continue working closely with the government and people of Nigeria towards consolidating peace, development and democracy.

The objective of the mission is to strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and Nigeria, particularly in view of the organization of the general elections scheduled for 2023

## Facility For Wellbeing And Protection Of Conflict-Affected Population In North-East Handed Over To Government of Nigeria



Handover of the Multipurpose community centre in Malkohi Community Yola. IOM 2022

A Multi-Purpose Community Centre (MPCC) built by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was officially handed over today (15.06) to the Adamawa State Government. The USD 2 million project was constructed with funding from the Republic of Korea and aims at preventing gender-based violence (GBV) and improving the well-being of the affected population.

“The Multi-Purpose Community Centre was established at the right time when the State needed additional facilities to compliment the needs of affected populations,” said Elaja Tumba, Commissioner at the Ministry of Reconstruction Rehabilitation and Resettlement.

This project aims to deal with the root causes of GBV while enhancing the capacity and skills of community members including women and girls. The Multi-Purpose Community Centre provides a safe space for activities such as lay counselling, basic emotional support, skills development and other activities targeting especially children and teenagers to promote positive coping mechanisms, resilience and facilitate healing and recovery of affected communities.

“Since the inception of the centre in 2020, IOM together with the World Food Programme have been working closely with Ministry of Women Affairs, State Emergency Management Agency, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Reconstruction Rehabilitation and Resettlement and community members to provide full support to those in need,” said Prestage Murima, IOM Nigeria Chief of Mission a.i.

To support the handover process of the Multi-Purpose Community centre to the national authorities, a transition plan has been developed in close consultation with the community and other stakeholders, particularly the Adamawa State Government, who will be responsible for the centre.

“I am convinced the Multi-Purpose Community centre will continue to thrive under the management of the State Government to promote and strengthen a response system that complements existing local resources,” Murima added.

According to the Nigeria Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022, GBV, including sexual violence, is widespread in the region, in part due to the ongoing conflict, insecurity, and living conditions in camps for IDPs and informal settlements. Generally, women and girls in Adamawa State have restricted mobility due to the ongoing conflict, exacerbated by the prevailing gender norms that tend to discriminate against women and girls. Communities hosting IDPs are vulnerable in most cases, and the IDPs’ needs strain scarce community resources.

“The joint project is an excellent example of operationalising the Humanitarian – Development and Peace Nexus and Delivery as One approach. It aligns perfectly with the UNSDCF objectives and contribute to address in a holistic way the needs of affected populations,” Serigne Loum, Head of Programme at WFP Nigeria.

The crisis in Northeast Nigeria has led to increase in GBV, including sexual violence. This initiative promotes women’s and girls’ psychosocial wellbeing, create social networks to reduce isolation or seclusion, enhance integration into community life, participation and generate conditions for their empowerment.



**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

## EU Commits To Sustaining Efforts Against Gender-Based Violence In Nigeria



UN Women Representative, Beatrice Eyong, and EU Ambassador to Nigeria, H.E. Samuela Isopi, during the courtesy call. Photo: UN Women / Anthony Abu

On 17 June 2021, UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Beatrice Eyong, made a courtesy call to the EU Ambassador to Nigeria, H.E. Samuela Isopi. UN Women has been one of the lead partners in the implementation of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative in Nigeria. The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030. It is the world's largest targeted effort to end all forms of violence against women and girls.

Discussion between the two principals was around accelerating efforts toward ending violence against women and girls in Nigeria. Though there has been increased investment in interventions to curb the rate of gender-based violence in Nigeria, the COVID-19 pandemic has seemed to deplete the gains made over the years.

Reports show that from forced and early marriages to physical, mental, or sexual assault on a woman, nearly 3 in 10 Nigerian women have experienced physical violence by age 15. According to a 2021 UN Women Report, at least 48 per cent of Nigerian women have experienced at least one form of violence since the COVID-19 pandemic (UN Women 2021). The incidence of Gender Based Violence (GBV) grew astronomical during the COVID-19 lockdowns and was aggravated by the activities of the insurgency in the Northeast.

Ms Eyong informed the Ambassador of the laudable milestones achieved by UN Women in its effort in ending violence against women and girls in Nigeria. With the support of UN Women and other agencies and partners, 33 states of Nigeria have passed the Violence Against Persons

(Prohibition) Act, or similar law; about 91% compared to 25% in 2019. Other achievements included a partnership with state governments to establish and manage GBV centres that provide services for victims; and a partnership with the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) in transporting victims to service centres at low or no cost. Through Spotlight, UN Women has also trained personnel of key institutions to enhance their capacity in responding to GBV victims and managing GBV emergencies and related issues.

Ms Isopi lauded the UN Women for its sustained efforts in curbing the rate of violence against women and girls and providing succour for GBV survivors. She reiterated the European Union's commitment to supporting GBV interventions that would reduce cases of violence against women and girls, improve awareness of prevention measures, and enhance judicial efforts in the prosecution of offenders.



**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

## Lagos State Joins Exclusive Refugee-Friendly Cities, #Withrefugees



Lagos State Governor, Mr Babjide Sanwo-Olu (Middle), UNHCR Nigeria Representative, Ms. Chansa Kapaya (Left), Honourable Federal Commissioner for NCFRMI, Hajia Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim (Right), following signing the Cities with Refugees Declaration. Photo: UNHCR/Great Agha

On Monday, 27 June 2022, the most populous city in Africa and business hub of Nigeria, Lagos State, joined more than 280 cities in the world as a refugee-friendly city. This action is for global solidarity as the world reached a devastating milestone of over 100 million people presently displaced from their homes. Lagos state solemnly declared: welcome newcomers, especially refugees, into their communities.

As part of the activities that marked World Refugee Day 2022 commemoration, NCFRMI, the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons, and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, considered Lagos State, the commercial capital and one of the cosmopolitan cities in Nigeria as a refugee-friendly city. This consideration is because Lagos State has the most significant urban refugee and asylum seeker caseload in Nigeria, (3,000 out of 6,900) providing a welcoming environment where refugees thrive and work towards self-reliance.

The Nigerian cosmopolitan hub joins the exclusive club of inclusive cities: Abuja, Calabar, Kampala, London, Los Angeles, Mexico, Montreal, Paris, and several others to provide the necessary framework and create inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and settlements that include comprehensive responses to refugees and migrants. UNHCR launched the #CitiesWithRefugee initiative in 2018.

The Campaign is in line with the GCR (Global Compact on Refugees), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2018 and calls for solidarity with and inclusion of refugees and affected countries. The #CitiesWithRefugees initiative has witnessed over 280 cities in more than 40 countries to call for more local authorities and municipalities to welcome and include refugees in their communities. Nigeria hosts over 84,000 refugees and asylum-

seekers, mainly from Cameroon and other countries such as DRC, Syria, CAR, Turkey, Lebanon, Mali, Niger.

The Executive Governor of Lagos State, His Excellency, Mr Babjide Sanwo-Olu, signed the declaration “#CitiesWithRefugee” in the presence of the Honourable Federal Commissioner of NCFRMI, Hajia Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, UNHCR Representative to Nigeria, Ms. Chansa Kapaya, and a host of other dignitaries.

### UN Inter-Agency Group on Youth Engages Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Dev't.



For effective coordination to deliver as one, the United Nations Inter-Agency Group on Youth held a meeting to strengthen collaboration with partners.

The Representative of the Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Nigeria Ebiho Agun, presented the Nigerian Youth Employment Action Plan 2021-2024, and sought the UN support in the implementation of the plan.



## UN Facilitates MOU Between Nigerian and Bahrain Workers for promoting migrants' workers' rights

To ensure the rights of migrant workers in the Gulf States, the ILO initiated collaboration through signing of a Memorandum Of Understanding (MoU) between workers' unions in Nigeria and Bahrain to strengthen inter-regional dialogue for improved protection and promotion of rights of the migrant workers.



A cross-section of dignitaries at the ceremony.

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the General Federation of Workers Trade Unions in Bahrain (GFBTU) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on advancing trade unions' effective contribution to protect and promote rights of migrant workers along the Africa - Arab states migratory corridor.

Adopting a union – union relationship approach, the MOU amongst other objectives seeks to provide the space and opportunity for engagement between the two organisations, working collaboratively towards improving the conditions of work and rights of migrant workers in both countries.

The ceremony took place on the 6th of June 2022, on the side-lines of the 110th Session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland where Mr. Hassan Al-Halwachi, Deputy General Secretary signed on behalf of GFBTU, and Comrade Ayuba Wabba, President of the NLC signed on behalf of the Congress.

In 2021, the International Labour Organization (ILO) within the framework of the FAIRWAY global programme supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, signed an Implementation Agreement with the Nigeria Labour Congress. Amongst other aspects of promoting effective labour migration governance and improving rights of Nigerian migrant workers, the NLC desirous of advancing inter-regional engagement and dialogue, commenced engagement and consultations with GFBTU which culminated in signing the MOU.

The MOU is seen as an important first step towards formalizing and enhancing greater collaborations and the establishment of a working relationship between the two organisations.

It establishes a joint Committee tasked with the responsibility of ensuring effective administration of the normative provisions of the MOU.

Going forward, it is expected that both organizations roll-out engagement to facilitate operationalization of the MOU, including through constituting membership and convening maiden meetings of the Joint Committee.



Mr. Hassan Al-Halwachi, Deputy General Secretary signed on behalf of GFBTU, and Comrade Ayuba Wabba, President of the NLC signed on behalf of the Congress.

## Hydroponics-grown Animal Feed Improves Livelihoods, Incomes In Nigeria



Nana feeding her goats

Over the past decade, the Malakyarari community of Borno State in Nigeria have been affected by conflict, which has negatively impacted livelihoods and household incomes. The conflict has threatened healthcare provision, caused internal displacement, and limited land usage for agriculture and livestock production.

This poses a problem because Malakyarari is situated in a semi-arid climate with a short annual rainfall duration and has rapid desertification rates of five kilometres per year. Because most of the land in Malakyarari has been used for trenches for security measures during armed attacks, there is even less space for the community to use for agricultural purposes.

50-year-old Nana defeats the odds by growing animal feed in Malakyarari's challenging environment by using low-cost and locally sourced material, enough for her livestock, and selling excess feed to her neighbours. Nana benefited from H2Grow, a hydroponics project under the World Food Programme Innovation Accelerator. In 2021, H2Grow facilitated the training of over 170 women in the community to grow animal feed with 90 percent less water on limited land.

Before the hydroponics training, Nana received four goats as part of WFP's General Food Distribution emergency support that reached 193 households. The knowledge she gained increased her number of goats from four to 17 by 2021 and improved her income.

"I am passionate because it is easy to produce animal feed using maize seeds. I used to spend huge sums of money on livestock feed," says Nana. "Before I was introduced to the animal feeding units by WFP, I would spend about 2000 Naira (US\$ 4.75) a day to feed my goats. I now spend 1000 Naira (US\$ 2.75) in two days," she says.

WFP Programme Assistant, Delphine Ekpang, explains that most livestock farmers in the Malakyarari community

are mainly pastoralists as their goats graze on natural grasslands and feed on cereal stalks after harvest.

"Before we introduced the hydroponic animal feed units, the majority of the Malakyarari community fed their goats residues of harvested maize and legumes from neighbouring farms for a fee ranging from 1500 Naira (US\$ 3) to 3000 Naira (US\$ 7) per 50 kg bag," Delphine explains.

"Some herders would let their goats roam freely in search of pastures, which exposed the goats to theft, diseases and weight loss," Delphine adds.

WFP and its partner Christian Aid continue to support people like Nana with veterinary support and guidance on quality animal feed production maintenance to avoid mould, which causes livestock diseases.

"We do routine visits and make sure people like Nana are supported. This sustains the hydroponic animal feed project so that the community continually benefits from the gains," says Delphine.

Delphine says she would like everyone in the Malakyarari community to adopt the hydroponics animal feed because of the beneficial opportunities, like livestock increase and improved incomes.

"I would like to see livestock farmers in Malakyarari adopt hydroponics production because good opportunities exist not just by producing the feed for household livestock, but also for sale to other livestock farmers because the market is potentially vast within the community," Delphine says.



# UN Launches World Drug Report 2022: Highlights Trends On Cannabis Post-Legalization, Environmental Impacts Of Illicit Drugs, Others



Cannabis legalization in parts of the world appears to have accelerated daily use and related health impacts, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)'s World Drug Report 2022.

The report also details record rises in the manufacturing of cocaine, the expansion of synthetic drugs to new markets, and continued gaps in the availability of drug treatments, especially for women.

According to the report, around 284 million people aged 15-64 used drugs worldwide in 2020, a 26 per cent increase over the previous decade. Young people are using more drugs, with use levels today in many countries higher than with the previous generation. In Africa and Latin America, people under 35 represent the majority of people being treated for drug use disorders.

Globally, the report estimates that 11.2 million people worldwide were injecting drugs. Around half of this number were living with hepatitis C, 1.4 million were living with HIV, and 1.2 million were living with both.

Reacting to these findings, UNODC Executive Director Ghada Waly stated: "Numbers for the manufacturing and seizures of many illicit drugs are hitting record highs, even as global emergencies are deepening vulnerabilities. At the same time, misperceptions regarding the magnitude of the problem and the associated harms are depriving people of care and treatment and driving young people towards

harmful behaviours. We need to devote the necessary resources and attention to addressing every aspect of the world drug problem, including the provision of evidence-based care to all who need it, and we need to improve the knowledge base on how illicit drugs relate to other urgent challenges, such as conflicts and environmental degradation."

The report further emphasizes the importance of galvanizing the international community, governments, civil society and all stakeholders to take urgent action to protect people, including by strengthening drug use prevention and treatment and by tackling illicit drug supply.

In many countries in Africa and South and Central America, the largest proportion of people in treatment for drug use disorders are there primarily for cannabis use disorders. In Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and in Central Asia, people are most often in treatment for opioid use disorders.

Great inequality remains in the availability of pharmaceutical opioids for medical consumption. In 2020, there were 7,500 more doses per 1 million inhabitants of controlled pain medication in North America than in West and Central Africa.

This year's report also highlights that illicit drug economies can flourish in situations of conflict and where the rule of law is weak, and in turn can prolong or fuel conflict.

Women remain in the minority of drug users globally yet tend to increase their rate of drug consumption and progress to drug use disorders more rapidly than men do. Women now represent an estimated 45-49 per cent of users of amphetamines and non-medical users of pharmaceutical stimulants, pharmaceutical opioids, sedatives, and tranquilizers.

The treatment gap remains large for women globally. Although women represent almost one in two amphetamines users, they constitute only one in five people in treatment for amphetamine use disorders.

The World Drug Report 2022 also spotlights the wide range of roles fulfilled by women in the global cocaine economy, including cultivating coca, transporting small quantities of drugs, selling to consumers, and smuggling into prisons.

## World Drug Day: UN, NDLEA Sensitize Governors' Wives On Drug Use, Treatment, Prevention And Care



Some members of the Governors' Wives Forum and the sensitisation forum.

Encouraged by the active advocacy by the Governors Wives Forum who have been at the forefront of advocating for improved access to drug prevention and treatment services in Nigeria, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency and the UNODC partnered to sensitize the Forum on critical issues related to drug use, prevention, treatment and care.

The 2-day sensitisation event, organized to mark the World Drug Day, was held on 28 and 29 June 2022, and had in attendance, the wife of the Vice President of Nigeria, H.E Mrs. Dolapo Osinbajo as Special Guest of Honour as well as the First Ladies of Abia, Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Benue, Delta, Ekiti, Enugu, Imo, Kaduna, Kebbi, Kwara, Ogun, Niger, Sokoto, Taraba, and Yobe States, and the representatives of all other States. Other participants included, the senior management of the NDLEA led by the Chairman/Chief Executive Brig Gen. Mohamed Buba

Marwa (rtd.), the UNODC Country Office Team led by the Country Representative Dr Oliver Stolpe, and representative of the European Union Delegation (EUD) to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Ms. Eleni Zerkeldou.

## UN, Partners To Mitigate Conflict Between Farmer And Herder Communities In Adamawa State



Cross section of participants at the COMITAS Project Steering Meeting IOM 2022

Farmer-herder violence has increased in Nigeria over the past ten years with geographic concentrations in North-Central, North-Eastern and North-Western States. In Nigeria, these conflicts between farmers and herders have been fuelled by competition over natural resources due to demographic growth, expansion of human settlements, privatisation of land, year-round farming practices, environmental degradation, and climate change.

Growing land pressures, social inequalities, changes in land use and access to resources, livestock theft and distrust among communities have made traditional dispute resolution processes ineffective in some areas, contributing to the escalation of the conflict.

To contribute to the mitigation of conflict over natural resources, the International Organization of Migration (IOM), together with Search for Common Ground (SFCG), and Mercy Corps are collaborating on the pilot project “Contributing to the mitigation of conflict over natural resources between farmer and herder communities in Adamawa State, Nigeria”, or in short COMITAS.

On June 22, IOM, its partners, stakeholders, and government officials converged in Abuja for the second high-level project steering committee meeting to provide project updates and share lessons learned and findings.

“The farmer-herder crisis is affected by environmental factors and climate change which call for ecosystem restoration. The crisis requires an early warning and early response system and the building of social cohesion to promote peaceful coexistence,” mentioned Prestage Murima, Chief of Mission a.i. at IOM Nigeria.

Amongst the achievements of COMITAS is the establishment of an Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system. The EWER system consists of the Transhumance Tracking Tool (TTT) information management system which has been established in 35 communities, peace-

building platforms at the community, local government, and state levels in 10 communities in Adamawa State.

According to data from the latest Transhumance Tracking Tool report (May 2022), 287 alerts were recorded by the TTT Early Warning tool in May. These alerts consist of 255 (89%) events and 32 (11%) massive/sudden movements. On average communities have been able to immediately respond to more than 33% of the alerts to prevent the escalation into conflict.

“I would like to thank all the partners for working on the COMITAS project. It is aligned to the policies and priorities of the Adamawa State Government and the needs of communities affected by the farmer-herder crisis,” noted Robert Ahidjo of the State Coordination Office for World Bank and other development partners in Adamawa State.

“The EU intends to continue promoting peace and stability in Nigeria, building on the success of the COMITAS project,” said Jérôme Rivière, Programme Manager for Peace and Security of the EU delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS, representing EU Ambassador Samuela Isopi.

The project is improving trust in authorities and enhancing collaboration between farmers and herders communities on natural resources management to enable them to address the challenges they face due to climate change and environmental degradation which has led to increased food insecurity and migration.

“This initiative is making a positive contribution to the National Livestock Transformation Plan. It is imperative to scale up the pilot project and reach more communities affected by this crisis,” added Dr. Andrew Kwasari, Senior Special Advisor to the President on Agriculture.

It is also contributing to improved inter-communal perceptions by strengthening media outlets' capacities in conflict-sensitive reporting and broadcasting peace messaging.

This initiative is funded by the the instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP) of the European Union.



## In Lagos - Nigeria, Covid-19 Vaccination Sites Move To Local Markets In Highly Populated Districts

To scale up COVID-19 vaccination in Lagos state, UNICEF, with the support of the UN Basket Fund, is helping the state make the vaccines available in famous local markets for eligible populations in the six districts with high density populations.



Ruth Olatunbosun



Vaccination campaign tagged "#KeepCovidoutofLagos"

convince her family, friends, and other youths about the urgent need to take the COVID-19 vaccination without further delay.

Ruth was not the only delighted visitor to the Mile 12 market on this day. Alhaja Bolanle Oseni, the veteran woman leader of the market, was the first to be vaccinated, positioned in the middle of the market while receiving the shot to demon-

When 24-year-old Ruth Olatunbosun left home to get food items for her family from the famous "Mile 12" market in Kosofe district – with a population of over a million people, she had no idea she would be getting her first dose of the covid-19 vaccination as well. Like most young people in her district, Ruth believed there was no urgency to receive the vaccination due to the decline in the reported COVID-19 infection cases in Nigeria.

However, convincing information from the mobilization team of the Lagos State Primary Healthcare Board and the National Orientation Agency at the vaccination campaign tagged "#KeepCovidoutofLagos" brought about a change of heart for Ruth. She joined the queue of people waiting to be registered and was given the shot. "This is convenient and has saved me from making the trip to our health center far from my house," she said. She is now lending her voice to

strate leadership by example and to allay fears around safety concerns over COVID-19 vaccines. "I got vaccinated because I am convinced that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, she tells her colleagues.

Alhaja Oseni went from shop to shop, convincing other market women to join the queue and be vaccinated, highlighting the vaccine's importance in helping to protect everyone from the COVID-19 disease. "When the adults are protected, children are safe," she said, likening the COVID-19 vaccine to other life-saving routine immunization vaccines that adults and children receive.

As the paramount market leader, her opinion carries weight with people in the Mile 12 market. Her influential voice is now helping spread the message that vaccines are safe and people should get vaccinated – thereby putting Lagos more firmly on the path to increasing uptake and defeating the global pandemic.

## For The First Time My Family Enjoyed Fresh Vegetables Throughout Ramadhan - Falmata

*A decade of conflict has affected food production systems in northeastern Nigeria, with the worst affected states being Adamawa, Borno and Yobe (BAY), consequently, the region has experienced severe levels of food insecurity and malnutrition. Ideal for households with limited parcel of land for farming, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s micro-gardening initiative is designed to enable poor households including IDPs in camps, especially women to cultivate their food to boost households' nutrition and income from selling the surplus. Since 2017, with the financial support of the governments of Canada, France, Kuwait, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America (USA), a total of 25 250 households have benefitted from the FAO's micro gardening kits which include training, improved seeds, fertilizer and gardening tools.*



Falmata

“This is the first Ramadhan that my family enjoyed vegetables as part of our meal throughout. Normally this is a dry season with less or even no vegetables in the market,” this is how Falmata Bukar, a mother and wife begins explaining about the benefits she and her family are enjoying from a small vegetable garden they own adjacent to their house. According to her, during the fasting by Muslims it is a dry season whereby vegetables are hard to get. “At that time, vegetables are expensive and sometimes even if you have money, you may not find them in the market,” she says.

Falmata, a mother from Farm Centre in Maiduguri, Borno state with a total of sixteen (16) people in her household including children and grandchildren, explains that during such seasons they rely on dried vegetables which are relatively expensive and also hard to get.

In February this year, she was included in the FAO's micro-gardening intervention for the northeast Nigeriaregion and was trained and provided with improved seeds, fertilizer and tools to start her own garden to ensure the family with nutritious vegetables.

Since then, she has been taking good care of her garden which has started bearing fruits.

“Vegetables have now become part of our diet every day. As for the surplus, we share with neighbours who do not have a garden like us,” she points out.

The remaining, she adds, we take it to the market for sale. “I normally ask my children to take them there over

weekends and public holidays when they are not going to school. I also want to teach them entrepreneurship.”

She says that each time they go to sell they get between NGN 800 and 1 500 and that they normally harvest the vegetables at least twice a week.

Falmata uses the money to support her children with fare to and from school and also buying some scholarly materials.

“However, I do not focus more on getting money but to improve my family health. We just enjoy them ourselves first!” she insists and discloses that even her married children are benefitting from the garden too. “One of my daughters' in-law has just given birth and I support her with vegetables from this garden.”

Above all, she goes on to explain, the money enables her to buy spaghetti for her children that they take with tea every morning.

“Previously, I used to give them some food leftovers from what remained after dinner the night before. It was largely plain rice,” she recalls.

They like spaghetti and each time they see me harvesting the vegetables they smile as they know there would be spaghetti the following morning instead of the leftovers, she added.

“Infact, they now wake up early in the morning and excited to go to school after their 'special' breakfast!” she narrates before bursting into a loud laughter.

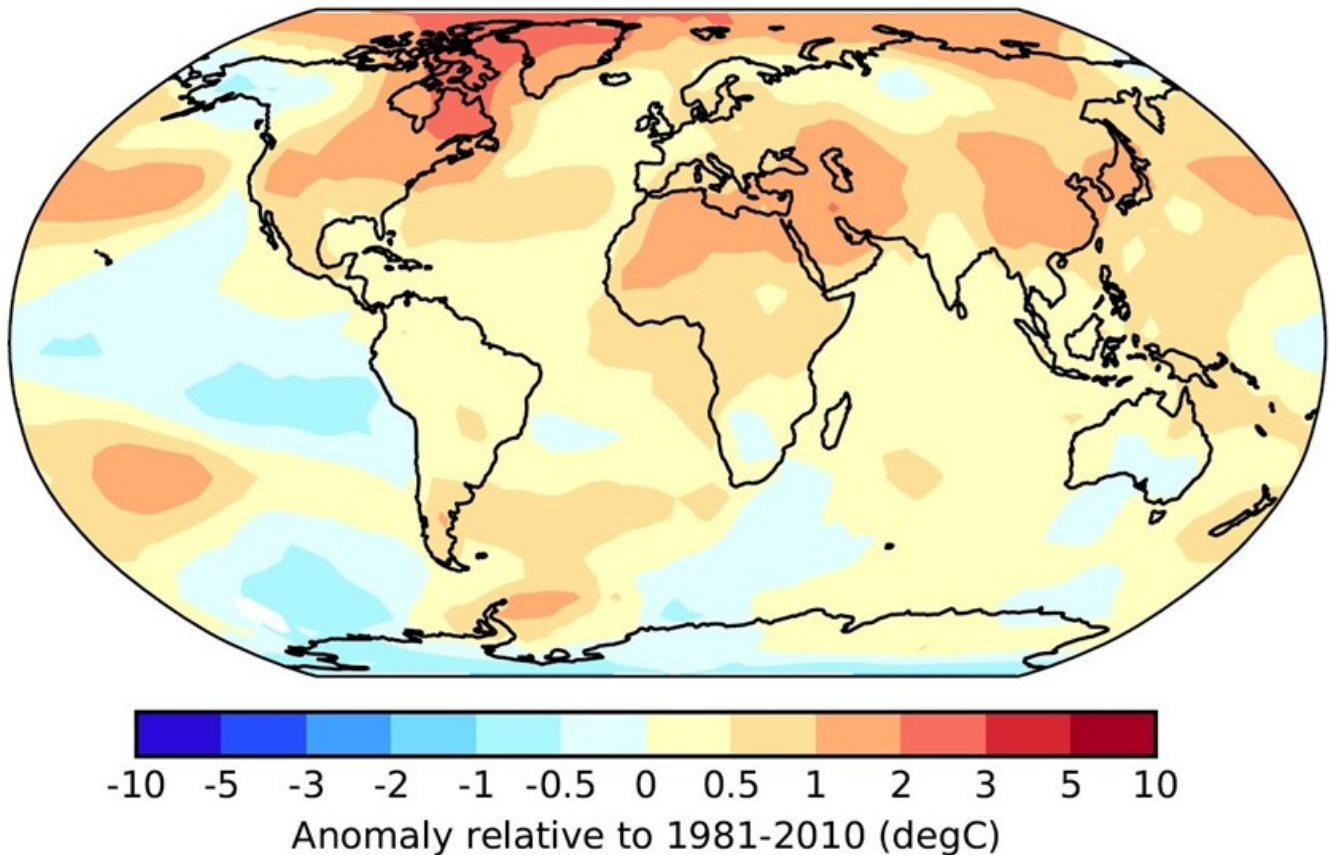
The proceeds from the vegetables sales have also enabled her to add groundnut source in their diet. She buys dried groundnuts and process them ready for making a special source that is mixed with vegetables.

“My children like it the most!” she notes.

Falmata also keeps a few ducks and chicken but she says that they take time to be ready for slaughtering or sell as compared to vegetables.

## UN To Develop A Global Plan For Early Warning Systems And Establish A Greenhouse Gas Monitoring System

Annual mean temperature anomaly, 2021



Based on HadCRUT5, ERA5, GISTEMP, NOAA GlobalTemp, Berkeley Earth

The United Nations (UN) Global Early Warning/Adaptation resolution has supported the request by the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) should spearhead new action to ensure that every person on Earth is protected by Early Warning Systems in the next five years and to establish a Greenhouse Gas Monitoring System.

The two major strategic proposals were series of actions agreed upon by the Seventy-Fifth Session of the Executive Council meeting (EC-75) of the WMO to strengthen weather, climate, water and environmental services to meet the growing needs of the global society.

The WMO Secretary-General Prof. Petteri Taalas says the flagship initiatives will strengthen WMO's commitment to the international agenda on climate action and disaster risk reduction and will play a pivotal role in informing climate change mitigation and adaptation to increasingly extreme weather.

"Record greenhouse gas concentrations are driving the increase in temperatures and more extreme weather. Early warning services are a vital, cost-effective and proven way of protecting lives and livelihoods. They are thus the "low-hanging fruit" of climate change adaptation," said Prof. Taalas.

"There is a real and proven need for a coordinated global greenhouse gas monitoring infrastructure which will provide a solid, authoritative basis for governments to monitor the effectiveness of their action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement. Mitigation action – curbing emissions due to human activities – is ur-

gently needed, but these decisions will need to be supported by solid data," He added.

The proposed Global Greenhouse Gas/Carbon Budget Monitoring System would establish an internationally coordinated approach to design a network of operations and use of observations. It would expand and consolidate WMO's long-standing activities in greenhouse gas monitoring under the auspices of the Global Atmosphere Watch and the Integrated Global Greenhouse Gas Information System.

The Executive Council Members identifies the UN Global Early Warning Initiative as essential to the mission of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs), with a clear role for WMO to coordinate and strengthen collective action in three focus areas: Earth system observations and monitoring; Predictive and warning capabilities; and Coordinated communication for anticipatory action.

The early warning initiative seeks to leverage and increase financing of the WMO community's priorities such as the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF), Climate Risk Early Warning System (CREWS), Water and Climate Coalition, and the Global Multi-Hazard Alert System (GMAS) framework. A US\$ 1.5 billion package to scale up these key early warning investments from multilateral funds is envisaged.

Only 40 percent of WMO's 193 Member States and Territories have Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems in place, including only 30 percent of African Members and 23 percent in Least Developed Countries. The WMO will submit an action plan to achieve these set goals at the UN Climate Change Conference in Egypt in November.



## UN Hands Over Scaled-Up Oxygen Production And Supply, And Vaccine Storage Capacity In Borno State



Borno State Deputy Governor, Hon. Umar Usman Kadafur, representing Governor Babagana Zulum, cuts the tape declaring the facility open.

Towards "Strengthening the health system of conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas of Borno State, Nigeria", the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), with the funding by the Government of Japan, and in close partnership with the Embassy of Japan in Nigeria; Borno State Government; Borno State Ministry of Health and Human Services; and the North East Development Commission (NEDC); on Thursday 16 June 2022, handed over two oxygen plants, 23Nos. Solar Direct Drive Refrigerators and the Sustainability Option Paper to the Borno State Government.

A total of \$2.3M worth of funds was committed by The Government of Japan for the project targeted towards strengthening health systems in Borno State, Nigeria with implementation carried out by UNOPS and close support from the North East Development Commission.

At a ceremony held in Maiduguri, H.E. Professor Babagana Umara Zulum, Governor of Borno State represented by Hon. Umar Usman Kadafur, the Deputy Governor of Borno State stated, "The provision of this equipment will greatly improve the storage capacity of our hospital and primary health care, thereby increasing their COVID19 response and improving child health and management of pandemic prone diseases affecting children under 5years old, solar direct refrigerator can also be a good option for vaccine storage especially as we are experiencing shortage of power supply in the state for over a year as a result of vandalization of electricity tower along Damaturu –Maiduguri road."

His Excellency Mr. Kazuyoshi Matsunaga - the Ambassador of Japan in Nigeria Stated, "In addition to polio eradication, Japan will continue to provide a variety of support to ensure that all people have access to medical services when

and where they need them, without financial hardship by strengthening the health system of conflict-affected & hard-to-reach areas of Borno State."

Mrs. Ifeoma Charles-Monwuba, Director and Representative of UNOPS Ghana Multi-Country

Office (GMCO) represented by Mr. Tetteh Ogum, UNOPS GMCO Partnerships Specialist Stated "this project was designed to strengthen healthcare provision, build resilience of health systems in conflict-affected communities, and enable primary healthcare facilities to provide acceptable standards of medical care.





# SCREAM Clubs Established Around Nigeria To Improve Child Participation in the Elimination of Child Labour

*Around Nigeria, a children's movement is on the rise, lending support to the global coordinated campaign to eliminate all forms of child labour and forced labour by Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts, and the Media, in line with the National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour.*



St. Patrick's RCM and St. Peters School, Aponmu community Ondo State .



Government Day Secondary School, Maje, Kuchiko community, Niger State.

Following the certification of 62 teachers, community influencers and other stakeholders from Abuja, Niger, Ondo, Ekiti, Osun, Ogun, Oyo, and Lagos states on the application of the Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts, and the Media (SCREAM) Modules to promote understanding and awareness of child labour among young people in Nigeria, 'SCREAM Clubs' have begun springing up in schools and communities around the country.

The certification, facilitated by the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Dutch Government funded ACCEL Africa Project in Nigeria in partnership with the University of Ibadan (UI) in April 2022, has provided a practical response to identified gaps on child participation contained in Nigeria's National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour (2021) by mainstreaming Anti-Child Labour activities into Child Rights Clubs in schools.

As members of the 'SCREAM Club', children are now consistently sensitized with relevant information on their rights regarding child labour and decent work during assembly, break time, flexible extra periods, and Parent -Teacher Association (P.T.A) meetings to help them spread awareness among their peers and influence behaviour change.

So far, the following schools have established SCREAM Clubs: Aponmu Community High School, Ondo State; Community Primary School, Wasimi Odunwo, Ondo State; L.A Primary School, Oke Agunla, Ondo State; Community Comprehensive High School, Fagbo, Ondo State; St. Williams R.C.M Primary School, Omifunfun, Fagbo 2, Ondo State; St. Patrick's RCM and St. Peters School, Aponmu community Ondo State; St. John Mega Primary School, Fagbo-Oja, Ondo State; Fountain Heights Secondary School, Surulere, Lagos State; Government Day Secondary School, Maje, Kuchiko community, Niger State; UNICEF Pilot Primary School, Kuchiko, Suleja, Niger State; Junior Secondary School, Galadima Kogo Niger State; Day Secondary School Shiroro (NEPA), Niger State; Muslim Primary School, Bamikemo, Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo, Ondo State; and Government Day Junior Secondary School, Kuchiko, Niger State, with more scheduled to follow.

Clad in a new school kit, ex-miner and Junior Secondary School Three (J.S.S.3) student at Junior Secondary School, Kuchiko, Abdulbasir Mohammed is excited about participating in quiz, debates, and news presentations on child labour during SCREAM Club sessions. 13-year-old Abdulbasir, a benefi-

ciary of the ACCEL Africa re-enrollment and school kit distribution in Niger State last October completely abandoned the mining after the empowerment and now finds learning interesting.

"On my way to school, when I see my friends going to the mine sites, I show them my books to convince them that education is better than mining". - Abdulbasir Mohammed 9-year-old Kamsi Obaze, a SCREAM Club member in Fountain Heights Secondary School, Surulere, Lagos State, defines child labour as "when a child works too hard and is kept away from their rights". Kamsi hopes for a world where children go to school instead of working too hard, getting injured in the process.

Amina Nuhu, a teacher in UNICEF Private Primary school Kuchiko, explains that the establishment of the SCREAM Club has increased awareness on the dangers of child labour in the mining community, increased attendance to school and improved participation in extracurricular activities.

On the sustainability of the program, Amina further explains: "Other teachers have been trained and replacements shouldn't be a challenge when necessary because I use the local language to teach them". In addition to coordinating meetings and activities for the SCREAM Club members, the certified trainers are carrying out step-down trainings for other teachers, caregivers, and stakeholders in education, as highlighted by Olagbami Comfort Anike, a certified SCREAM Trainer and Teacher at Aponmu Grammar School, Ondo State.

According to Comfort, P.T.A meetings will be a regular touchpoint to connect parents with presentations on child labour by the SCREAM Club.

"We are teaching children their rights so they can reach their peers with information as they discover what is good for them and what is not"

In the coming weeks, many more SCREAM Clubs are expected to be inaugurated to support the advocacy for acceptable forms of work for children and child protection within the labour context.

To further increase knowledge and advocacy on the negative impacts of child labour in Nigeria, the ACCEL Africa Project is partnering with with the University of Ibadan on the development of a curriculum on the elimination of child labour.



## DrugHelpNet: A Lifeline For Female Drug Users In The Midst Of A Pandemic



Yemisi, a student at a university in Nigeria, had two problems in early 2020.

She was a drug user. And she was pregnant – without the knowledge of her conservative Nigerian family, who were also unaware of her drug habit.

When Nigeria imposed a lockdown following the outbreak of COVID-19, Yemisi’s university closed, and she had to return to her family. Already five months pregnant at the time, Yemisi had yet to enroll in prenatal treatment and was using a cocktail of drugs – cannabis, codeine, diazepam – all harmful to her and her unborn child. Yemisi worried most about how her father, who was severely ill, would react.

“I use drugs to cope with feelings of anxiety, failure, and disappointment,” Yemisi confessed. “I’m pregnant and worried that my sick father will find out and it will lead to his death. I can’t bear that thought.”

Stories like Yemisi’s have become more and more common in Nigeria due to a humanitarian crisis in its northeastern region. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, an estimated 8.4 million women, men, and children are in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022. Attacks by non-state armed groups, together with conflicts over land rights, have displaced millions and decimated livelihoods and the provision of essential services.

According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), drug use and drug use disorders are increasingly recognized as major causes of morbidity and mortality in many conflict or disaster-affected situations. Displaced populations may be vulnerable to such disorders for numerous reasons, including pre- or post-displacement stress and trauma, loss of homes and livelihoods, violence, torture, and family separation. COVID-19 exacerbated such challenges, as the health crisis disrupted the traditional delivery of services and treatment to people using drugs.

Nigeria’s COVID-19 lockdown meant that the estimated three million Nigerians living with some form of drug use disorder were at risk of losing access to treatment options. Help arrived for Yemisi via a friend who shared the telephone number for DrugHelpNet, a network of drug treatment service professionals providing over-the-phone assistance to drug users during the lockdown.

Yemisi called DrugHelpNet’s counsellors. “I’m worried that I might not have access to drugs and won’t cope with my current situation without using drugs,” she told them.

“I’m still traumatized from the brutal loss of my mother during the farmer-herder crisis in our community,” she continued, referring to the often-deadly disputes over the shrinking amount of land available for farming and grazing.

“My life is ruined and I feel useless.”

But thanks to DrugHelpNet, Yemisi was given a place to live and received both prenatal care and psychosocial support, placing her on the path to recovery. DrugHelpNet also connected her with a suicide prevention group to manage her suicidal thoughts.

“Before now, I felt like this pandemic had strangled the last ray of hope I had to make things right,” Yemisi shared. But after receiving the first three weeks of support, Yemisi said she had learned “how to cope with my cravings,” adding that “my sleep has improved...I’m also not using as much as before.”

Yemisi is one of over 1,000 drug users who have benefitted from DrugHelpNet since its launch in April 2020. DrugHelpNet is composed of over 80 frontline health workers, including medical doctors, drug counsellors, and allied professionals across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. It includes seven drug treatment drop-in centres, supported by the European Union-funded “Response to Drugs and Related Organised Crime Project”, implemented by UNODC.

As COVID-19 restrictions ease in Nigeria and worldwide, the Nigerian Society of Addiction Medicine – the current manager of DrugHelpNet – hopes to make the network a more permanent structure. Initiatives underway include efforts to create toll-free lines for DrugHelpNet to increase accessibility to its services.



**DECADE  
OF >>>  
ACTION**

## NHRC, UN Mark First Ever Int'l Day For Countering Hate Speech, Establish Hate Speech Observatory For Nigeria



Human Rights Advisor, UN Nigeria, Ms Adwoa Kufuor-Owusu (Middle), addresses the audience while the Executive Secretary of NHRC, Chief Tony Ojukwu (SAN) (Right) and another dignitary looks on.

Following the UN General Assembly resolution of July 2021, proclaiming 18 June as the International Day for Countering Hate

Speech, to be observed annually, the Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the United Nations system in Nigeria, today commemorated the first ever International Day for Countering Hate Speech; and established a Hate Speech Observatory for Nigeria.

At a symposium held at the NHRC headquarters Abuja, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Matthias Schmale, represented by the Human Rights Advisor, UN Nigeria, Ms Adwoa Kufuor-Owusu, emphasised that if left unchecked, hate speech could harm peace and development, lay the ground for conflicts and tensions, undermine social cohesion, and contribute to wide scale human rights violations and atrocity crimes.

He warned that the world must not trample on freedom of speech and expression, "but when speech is weaponized to violate the rights of others, it must not be met with deafening silence. Silence implies apathy and even acceptance. We must be vigilant when we notice a rise in hate speech around us."

On what the UN is doing about hate speech in Nigeria, Schmale disclosed that "We are working with multiple stakeholders to promote tolerance. UNESCO is leading the way through its efforts to promote Media and Information Literacy (MIL). We are also currently developing a UN wide Hate Speech Strategy. We count on your support in ensuring the strategy will be translated into effective action."

Welcoming the audience, the Executive Secretary of NHRC, Chief Tony Ojukwu (SAN) observed that the run up to

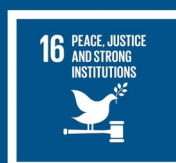
general elections in Nigeria was usually characterised by the blatant use of provocative, strong, and derogatory hate speeches by political actors and persons who are inclined to their political interests.

"These speeches have raised strong feelings of resentments typified by religious and ethnic/tribal negative labelling among the people." He noted, "The frequent use of hate speech in Nigeria has devastating effect on sustainable peace, national cohesion, dignity of human person, peace and development in our country."

Other speakers included Executive Director of CLEEN Foundation, Ms Ruth Olofin; Special Assistant to the NHRC Executive Secretary, Barrister Benedict Agu; Representative of YIAGA, Ibrahim Faruk.

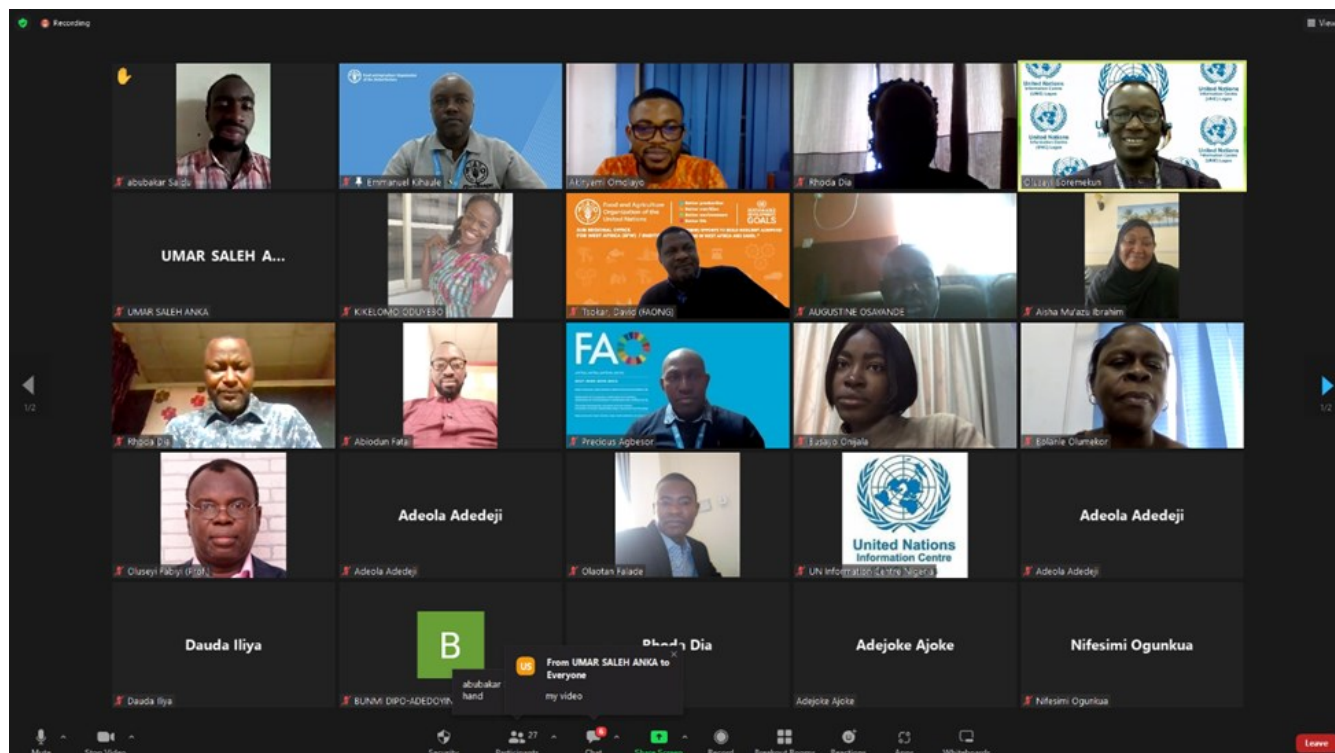
The International Day of Countering Hate Speech is an initiative that builds on the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech launched on 18 June 2019. This first UN system-wide initiative designed to tackle hate speech provides an essential framework for how the Organization can support and complement States' efforts.

The strategy emphasizes the need to counter hate holistically and with full respect for freedom of opinion and expression, while working in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, media outlets, tech companies and social media platforms.



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

## Forge A New Contract With Nature - Schmale Charges Nigerians



A cross-section of virtual audience at the observance of World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 2022.

With the danger of desertification and drought, and its growing threat to lives and livelihoods across Nigeria and the rest of Africa, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Mr Matthias Schmale, has called on all Nigerians to forge a new contract with nature.

“Together we can build a more inclusive and sustainable world that leaves no one behind. On this day, let’s begin to see ourselves as caretakers of the precious resource that is land.” Mr Schmale said at the virtual observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 2022, under the theme, “Rising up from drought together”, and organised by the UN Information Centre (UNIC), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

WMO Representative, Mr Benard Gomez, who was represented by the National Professional Officer, Mr Roland Abah, emphasized that the State of the Global Climate 2021 report released in May 2022 by the UN Community through WMO, indicated that the past seven years had been the warmest seven years on record, and drought affected many parts of the world, including parts of Africa.

FAO Representative, Mr Fred Kafeero, represented by FAO Assistant Representative (Programme), Mr Abubakar Suleiman, disclosed that “FAO’s large-scale landscape restoration activities were carried out in 15 communities with a total of 2,240 Ha of drylands put under restoration through the planting of native woody and herbaceous fodder species including 2,757 Ha farmland areas that were naturally regenerated for biodiversity conservation and protection.”

Project Manager, UNDP-GEF-IAP- FS Project Nigeria, Ms. Rhoda Dia, explained how UNDP have worked with small holder farmers to build resilience to climate risks (Desertification and Drought inclusive) and other shocks that drives food insecurities.

Explaining the remedy for drought management, the CEO, Natural Eco Capital / Regional Coordinator, W/Africa

Capitals Coalition Hub, Dr Eugene Itua, who was represented by the Co-ordinator, Northern Zone, Natural Eco Capital, Mr Umar Saleh Anka, said that “Reliance on ground water and surface water are viable option for reducing the impact of drought.”



UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale addresses the participants at the virtual event on World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought .

## Renewable Energy Opportunities For Women's Empowerment In Nigeria



UN Women Representative, Beatrice Eyong, speaks with the Japanese Ambassador, H.E. Kazuyoshi Matsunaga, during the courtesy call.  
Photo: UN Women / Anthony Abu

In the effort to cook, care and provide for their family, women often bear the brunt of the effect of cooking wood fires and kerosene emissions; they also have to travel long distances to collect firewood and other forms of fuel for their families' domestic needs.

In a society where women are disenfranchised, access to renewable energy gives them leverage for economic and social empowerment and accelerates socio-economic and health benefits for women and girls. Investment in sustainable and affordable renewable energy for women would save the cost of time spent on domestic activities, enhance income-generating activities, and improve the standard of living for women and girls. This formed the core of the discussion between UN Women Representative, Beatrice Eyong, and Japanese Ambassador, H.E. Kazuyoshi Matsunaga, when the former made a courtesy call to the latter on 30 June 2022.

The Japanese Government has been one of the major donors to UN Women's work in Nigeria, particularly for the promotion of Women's Peace and Security in the northeast of Nigeria and investment in humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction in conflict-affected areas of Nigeria's North.

Ms Eyong thanked the Ambassador for the funds the people of Japan have provided over the years to make life better for women and girls in conflict-torn communities in Nigeria. She also reiterated the need for this support to be sustained to ensure interventions in the North reach more women and girls who need relief. The UN Women Country Representative also mentioned that in looking forward, UN Women would like to explore technology opportunities for women's empowerment and partnership with the private sector in gender-responsive interventions.

In responding, H.E. Kazuyoshi Matsunaga expressed the fulfilment of the Japanese people in providing succour for women and girls in Nigeria and ensuring they participate in

conflict resolution and peacebuilding in their communities. He added the Japanese Government is interested in setting up solar power stations in rural areas to enhance women's empowerment. He also added that the embassy will work with UN Women to explore business opportunities with Japanese-owned private companies operating in Nigeria, especially in solar energy installations. His Excellency noted that 47 Japanese companies are operating in Nigeria.

The Ambassador alluded to an ongoing partnership between LIXIL (a Japanese manufacturer of water and housing products) and UNICEF. This project has provided affordable toilets at schools in Nigeria. This partnership succeeded in Bangladesh and Tanzania. The action point was to work with UN Women to develop similar partnerships with LIXIL. This initiative would encourage girls in menstruation to go to school and create non-traditional job opportunities for women. He noted that JICA and Sasakawa Africa are interested in agricultural projects such as rice production, biofuel, and e-commerce.

His Excellency also mentioned that the introduction of 5G technology would be beneficial in bridging the gap in access to the internet among communities in remote areas, including Northeast Nigeria. He believes that it will improve women-owned small scale businesses and opportunities for subsistent farming, especially, women farmers.



**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

# PHOTO NEWS



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

1. Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), and Head of United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Mr. Annadif Khatir Mahamat Saleh (3rd from the right); and some members of the UN Country Team led by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schamle (2nd from the right)
2. UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schamle (Middle) briefed Member States in Geneva on situation in NE Nigeria, calling on international community to get urgent resources to aid most vulnerable, including 1.7m food insecure kids. 8.4m people need humanitarian assistance in 2022 and 4.1m face perilous food insecurity this lean season.
3. UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schamle (2nd from the left), addresses the audience at the National Steering Committee meeting of Spotlight Initiative project co-chaired by the Minister of State, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba (2nd from the right), and hosted by the EU Ambassador to Nigeria, H.E. Samuela Isopi (First from the right).

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