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We Are Committed To Collaborating With UN – NLC



President of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Ayuba Wabba (3rd from the left); UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Matthias Schmale (4th from the left); ILO Country Director for Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Liaison Office for ECOWAS, Vanessa Phala (2nd from the right) and other Labour Officials.

The President of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Ayuba Wabba (mni) has restated the commitment of the Union to working with the United Nations system to mainstream workers' concerns and interests into the processes of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

"Beyond our work with our line UN Agency, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), we are committed to ensuring that the results of both the preparation and implementation of the UNSDCF processes are fully grounded in the vision and priorities of organised labour and the entire Nigerian working population," said Mr Wabba at a high-level UN Resident-Coordinator and Trade Union leadership engagement for achieving the Agenda 2030 in Nigeria, held on 3 August 2022 in Abuja.

The NLC President disclosed that the Union engaged in policy dialogue on developmental issues especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). "We have five strategic focus areas: Inclusive and productive employment; Social dialogue; Gender equality; Improving working conditions of workers; and Promoting social security cover."

In his remarks, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, noted that Nigeria could not afford to do business as usual in the implementation of the SDGs in the next five years.

According to him, all stakeholders must engage to save the planet; ensure peace; empower people; and drive prosperity.

HIGHLIGHTS

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Spotlight Initiative



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

See Something, Say Something: Community Surveillance Committees Foster Courage In Nigeria



Community Surveillance Committee members are the community watchdogs Photo: UNICEF Nigeria

In Nigeria, a Spotlight Initiative-supported partnership with the Government has led to the establishment of more than 252 community surveillance committees (CSCs) to act as watchdogs against gender-based violence. As a result, there has been an increase in arrests and prosecution of perpetrators, fostering greater confidence in survivors seeking help.

Nine-year-old Yar Auta* was sitting by herself on a bus headed to a location that is 10 hours away from home. Her father had given her in marriage to a 74-year-old man and she was to make her own way to her so-called husband. A passenger at the bus park, having recently seen campaigns against child marriage and violence against women and girls (VAWG), became suspicious and telephoned a member of the area's Community Surveillance Committee (CSC).

"CSC members are our eyes on the ground," says Pius Uwamanua, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF Nigeria. "They have helped UNICEF to build trust with local communities. They have been instrumental in convincing traditional leaders to gradually leave behind harmful practices and to follow due process when adjudicating on VAWG cases that are reported to them. Because of the collaborative approach, traditional leaders have become more open to changing social and gender norms." The committees typically consist of 25 local activists and leaders, including members of existing community social groups. The programme has trained them to be change agents who champion gender equality and act as watchdogs in their com-

munities. The CSC is linked to service providers at the local government level and members work to ensure every case of VAWG receives the support and services it needs.

Nigeria's 22 million child brides comprise almost 40 per cent of all child brides in the region. VAWG in Nigeria has been described as a pandemic-sized problem. Millions live in fear of being abused, assaulted, or raped. Front-line workers like doctors, lawyers, social workers and counsellors who deal with the daily casualties of this crisis describe the heartbreak of handling cases of women and girls who have been abused or raped.

"There are strong linkages between the CSCs that we established and the model we developed to deal with female genital mutilation (FGM). The FGM model worked very well and we replicated it to tackle VAWG in general," says Amandine Bollinger, Child Protection Manager, UNICEF Nigeria.

Survivors of VAWG often do not come forward due to lack of faith in the system and what is perceived to be a low prospect of getting justice. Many women and girls suffer in silence and shame because they fear being ostracized by their families and local communities. With CSCs in action, there has been a marked increase in arrests and prosecutions in VAWG cases, empowering more and more previously silent survivors to come forward. CSCs are able to organize pro bono lawyers and secure the assistance of social services; they even show up as friendly faces when a case is heard in a court of law.



Spotlight Initiative



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

Spotlight Initiative Holds Extended Steering Committee Meeting, Moves To Consolidate Gains Of The Project



Centre L-R: UN Resident Coordinator Mr. Matthias Schmale; Minister of State, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba ; and the EU Head of Delegation, Ambassador Samuela Isopi at the Steering Committee meeting hosted by the European Union.

The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative held its steering committee meeting on 5 July 2022 in Abuja. The meeting was hosted by the EU Head of Delegation, Ambassador Samuela Isopi and co-chaired by the Minister of State, Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba and the UN Resident Coordinator Mr. Matthias Schmale.

The meeting also brought together other stakeholders including representatives from the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Federal Ministry of Finance, Federal Ministry of Justice, National Bureau of Statistics, National Education Research and Documentation Centre, Nigeria Police Force, National Human Right Commission, NAPTIP, SGBV Response Team (FCT) the Civil Society Reference Group, Country Representatives of UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, UNDP and UNESCO.

As the Spotlight Initiative winds down to its closing phase, the focus of the routine steering committee meeting was to support efforts towards consolidating the gains recorded on the project and to ensure that commitments made, are translated into action to ensure sustainability after the project's end.

On achieving sustainability, the Minister of Budget and National Planning stated "sustainability can only be achieved through ownership and leadership by the Government"

Similarly, the UN Resident Coordinator called on all partners to continue to build on the results and progress made by the Spotlight Initiative, he said "we must focus on sustaining the



A cross-section of participants at the Spotlight Initiative Steering Committee meeting.

GBV effort in budgeting for sustainability of results and shift towards government ownership of the project."

The EU called for sustained teamwork and the need to translate plans into action, calling on key stakeholders to deliver on their commitments.

Collectively, they called for sustained effort, leadership in Government and teamwork as a country to shift the needle on the issue of violence against women and girls in Nigeria.

Young People Must Have A Say in Their Future - Schmale



UN Resident and Humanitarian coordinator in Nigeria, Mr Matthias Schmale speaking at the BIMUN conference.

“We cannot talk about the future and Agenda 2030 without young people at the table. Any development initiative that excludes young people is bound to fail. Young people must have a say in their future,” said the UN Resident and Humanitarian coordinator in Nigeria, Mr Matthias Schmale at the opening of plenary of the 6th session of Babcock International Model United Nations (BIMUN) General Assembly held on July 17- 22, 2022, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo Ogun State.

Emphasising the need for young people’s voices to be heard on issues that affect them, the Resident Coordinator noted, “I am told that a South-West Nigerian proverb says, ‘You cannot shave someone’s head in his absence.’ At a recent meeting with People Living With Disability, they – including young people among them underlined the importance of ‘nothing about us without us’.

According to him, any development initiative that excludes young people is bound to fail. Young people must have a say in their future. The theme of this Babcock International Model UN 2022, “Fostering global resilience through environmental sustainability, public health management and respect for human rights”, therefore is an opportunity to hear the views on the important topics captured by this theme.

The President and Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof Ademola Tayo thanked the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) for consistently supporting BIMUN and urged the delegates to be the change agents in Africa and on the global stage.

He reiterated the importance of BIMUN as an international initiative of young leaders to engage and energize youth support around the work of the United Nations and to empower youths to be change makers in the Decade of Action, which call for accelerated solutions to some of world’s biggest challenges – poverty, inequality and climate change.

The Secretary General of BIMUN 2022, Mr Ifeoluwa Ariyo - Agbaje called on the delegates to provide solutions to is-



A cross-section of delegates at the BIMUN conference



President and Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof Ademola Tayo (Left) and UN Resident and Humanitarian coordinator in Nigeria, Mr Matthias Schmale in a group photograph with BIMUN conference officials.

sues through valuable discussions and exchange of ideas while promoting diplomacy and the importance of Model United Nations.

Other speakers include the Director -General Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Prof Osaghae represented by Dr Joshua Bolarinwa. The Minister of the Environment was represented by Dr Yakubu Bala, the Registrar/ CEO Environmental Health Officers Registration Council of Nigeria.

UN Agencies Launch €40m Resilience And Essential Services Support In North-East Nigeria



From Left: Mr. Bernard Owadi, Head of the Area Office, World Food Programme, Nigeria; Dr. Clement Adams, Chief of Field Office, UNICEF Nigeria; and a representative of the Borno State Government at the Inception Workshop of the project in Maiduguri. Photo: WFP/Kelechi Onyemaobi

The World Food Programme and UNICEF have launched a project to support and deliver essential services to vulnerable people in Borno and Yobe states in north east Nigeria. Over 500,000 conflict-affected people will benefit from the new humanitarian and development package aimed at enhancing peace, increasing livelihood opportunities and providing education, health, nutrition, child protection, and sanitation support to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations in the two states.

The Resilience and Social Cohesion project is funded by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development through the German Development Bank, KfW. Children 0-23 months, pregnant women, school-age children, adolescent girls, female-headed households, and people with disability will receive assistance under the project to be implemented for three years by WFP and UNICEF.

The multi-year project will leverage ongoing humanitarian support in Bade Local Government Area of Yobe State and Shani LGA of Borno State, while also providing multisectoral interventions to address drivers of conflict and fragility. The project will support the strengthening of local governance structures to promote social cohesion through community-based processes and the capacity building of Government partners.

Now in its thirteenth year, armed conflict in north-east Nigeria has levelled communities, destroyed livelihoods, and disrupted essential services for children and adults. Protracted insecurity, high food prices and COVID-19 lockdowns have put more than 4 million people in need of food assistance. The situation is further exacerbated by a severe impact of violence and unrest on family income, mental health, nutrition, education and other child protection con-

cerns. Across the region, 1.14 million children are acutely malnourished at a scale not seen since 2018.

“This is a pathway to peace and sustainable development,” said Peter Hawkins, UNICEF Representative in Nigeria. “Children and other vulnerable groups will have a lifeline, and an opportunity to survive and thrive in communities where livelihood and peace building activities are present. Conflict in any region is potential instability in the rest of the world. UNICEF is grateful to the German Government for supporting pathways to child survival and peace in north-east Nigeria”.

The Resilience and Social Cohesion programme will contribute to seven Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of poverty eradication, zero hunger, access to quality education, gender equality, good health and wellbeing, climate action, peace, justice and strong institutions as well as partnership for goals.

The new programme will focus on peace building, governance capacity strengthening, sustainable livelihood creation, restoration of infrastructures, and provision of life-saving services to 156,888 direct beneficiaries and 362,307 indirect beneficiaries in both LGAs.

“WFP welcomes this timely and generous support from the Government and people of Germany. This project will support people and communities facing the peril of conflict and hunger in northeast Nigeria, especially in Borno and Yobe states,” said Ms. Simone Parchment, Deputy Country Director and Officer in Charge, the World Food Programme Country Office, Nigeria.

“In these affected states, persistent conflict, climate shocks, high food prices and reduced household purchasing power undermine people’s ability to feed themselves and sustain their livelihoods. This contribution from the Government of Germany will go a long way in building resilience, social cohesion and peace in the affected communities”.



Position Women And Girls At The Centre Of Economies - UN



L-R: UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale; Vice President, Government Affairs, Communications & Sustainability, the Coca-Cola Company, Patricia Obozuwa; Managing Director, Sterling Bank, Abubakar Suleiman; CEO, Sterling One Foundation, Olapeju Ibekwe; and Vice President, Corporate and Government Relations, OLAM International, Ade Adefeko.

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, has called on stakeholders to position women and girls at the centre of economies to achieve the 2030 agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals.

He made the call at the Africa Social Impact Summit themed, “Rethink, Rebuild, Recover: Accelerating Growth for the SDGs” and organised by the Sterling One Foundation, in Abuja.

Schmale noted that the theme was apt, timely, relevant, and required given the economic regression across Africa occasioned by the pandemic, the volatilities caused by the Ukraine war and the fact there was just 8 years to go before 2030.

“If we position women and girls at the centre of economies, we will fundamentally drive better and more sustainable outcomes for all, support a more rapid recovery, and put Africa back on a footing to achieve the 2030 agenda and its accompanying SDGs.” Matthias said.

The UN Resident Coordinator noted that like the youth, women and girls face many challenges in reaching their potential. “Our late Secretary, Kofi Anan was right when he said that gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development, and building good governance.” He emphasised.

He commended the leadership of the Sterling One Foundation stressing that there was a need for intensive collaborations and partnerships among African leaders across the public and private sectors including the civil society groups to aid

the achievement of not just the 2030 goals but also, the African Union’s 2063 goals.

Sanda Ojiambo, Assistant Secretary-General & CEO of the UN Global Compact, in her goodwill message, emphasised the significance of business commitment in advancing the 2030 Agenda for SDGs.

Chief Executive of Sterling Bank Plc, Mr. Abubakar Suleiman, remarked that the Summit was able to appreciate the concept of using investment to drive social impact to the fore. He said, “The same way we have all kinds of summits trying to promote business development; we are glad to work with partners to bring people together who are trying to work for the SDGs, to build a better society as the outcome.”

Mrs. Olapeju Ibekwe, CEO, Sterling One Foundation, noted that the summit had in-depth and insightful panel sessions on climate action, education access and funding, primary healthcare, youth and gender empowerment, impact investment and governance which all give a good appreciation of the 17 interlinked global goals.

Also, in his goodwill message, the British Deputy High Commissioner, Mr. Ben Llewellyn Jones commended the Sterling One Foundation for its leadership on the summit and noted that sustainability and climate change action remained priorities of the UK government and execution will be followed through on them.



**DECADE
OF
ACTION**

We Can End Child Labour In Africa. Here's How...



A child labour scene at Ibalá, a Cocoa and artisanal gold mining Community in Obokun LGA, Osun State.

“We shouldn’t wait for development to end child labour. On the contrary, ending child labour is key to sustainable development.” says ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, Cynthia Samuel Olonjuwon.

With 92 million girls and boys in child labour — one in five children — Africa is the most-affected region in the world. Eliminating child labour worldwide will not be achieved without a breakthrough here.

This is not justifiable. Children have the right not to work. Children trapped in child labour today are the unskilled labour force of tomorrow. Ending child labour is key to sustainable development. Urgent measures to end child labour should be viewed as an investment for the future.

Is there hope to end this situation? Absolutely Yes! As the ILO Director-General Guy Ryder said “Optimism relies on political will. You don’t have to be a dreamer to be optimistic. You need to have good reasons to be optimistic”. In Africa, we have 92 million reasons to be optimistic about ending child labour.

So, what should be done? The recently concluded 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour that took place in South Africa reiterated the need to focus on prevention. This is particularly true for Africa – a young continent with a fast-growing population. If we don’t act now, we should expect 105 million children will be in child labour in Africa in 2025, which will worsen in the following years.

It is critical to tackle the root causes of child labour in our continent. These include: the lack of access to free quality education; high levels of poverty and vulnerability of households; limited decent work opportunities for parents and young people as well as very high levels of informality and inequalities. In Africa, four out of five children in child labour live in rural areas and work in agriculture, a sector where workers are often functionally dependent on the unpaid work of children. In addition, Africa is one of the regions most affected by crisis linked to conflict and disasters as well as climate change. The Durban Call to Action demands for scaled-up action in six key areas to address these root causes, among which are: the need to ensure free quality education, to promote decent jobs for young people and

adults and to the need to invest in social protection as a means to reduce poverty and vulnerability. This year on the World Day on the Elimination of Child Labour, I would like to focus on the critical importance of social protection to end child labour in Africa.

Exposure to shocks (sudden job loss or illness or injury to family members) increases the chances that a child will work. Social protection reduces vulnerabilities and empowers communities by ensuring that children attend and remain in school, and that parents have the income to sustain their development and education. A newly published ILO-UNICEF report shows that social protection reduces child labour and facilitates schooling.

There are regions in the World where child labour has been reduced over time. Some countries have been more successful in lowering child poverty and in raising levels of social protection for children and their families. However, Africa faces a double challenge in comparison to other continents. It is the continent with the highest prevalence and the largest numbers of children in child labour and the lowest social protection coverage. In Africa, 83% of the population has no social protection at all. Similarly, within Africa: Western, Central and Eastern Africa are the three sub-regions with the largest proportion of children in child labour and also have the lowest social protection coverage.

Universal social protection and the elimination of child labour are both priorities in the regional agenda of the African Union, governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations, the ILO and other development partners. In Africa, anchored in the 2019 Abidjan Declaration, the ILO aims to accelerate social protection coverage to reach 40% by 2025, especially for informal and rural populations.

We see emerging models of interventions designed to simultaneously contribute to improving social protection coverage and ending child labour. In Côte d’Ivoire, for instance, the ILO supports the National Health Insurance Fund to extend universal health coverage to smallholder farmers working in cocoa. Through a supply chain approach, the existing sourcing and operational structure of the value chain is used as an alternative distribution channel, thereby increasing access to services and improving client experience. *Written by Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, ILO Assistant Director-General, Regional Director for Africa*

UN, NAPTIP, Others Partner With States To Combat Human Trafficking In Nigeria



UNODC Country Representative, Oliver Stolpe, DG NAPTIP, Dr. Fatima Waziri flanked by other development partners and stakeholders at the opening of the bootcamp

As part of activities organized to mark the World Day against Human Trafficking celebrated every 30th of July, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Organisation on Migration (IOM), Expertise France, International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIAPP), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with the Nigerian government hosted a “boot camp” for state task forces on human trafficking and the Network of Civil Society Organisations against Child Trafficking, Abuse and Labour (NACTAL).

The theme for this year’s day against human trafficking is the use and abuse of technology. It focuses on the role of technology as a tool that can both enable and impede human trafficking. The 2020 UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, reported that the use of internet has been integrated into the business model of traffickers. The expanded global usage of technology triggered by the COVID – 19 pandemic has further increased these risks, with traffickers using the internet to identify, recruit and control their victims, advertise services and launder the proceeds of their crimes.

The peer review bootcamp is organized for the 21 states which have inaugurated task force against human trafficking, namely Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Benue, Borno, Cross-river, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Jigawa, Lagos, Kaduna, Katsina, Nasarawa, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Plateau and Rivers.

The key objective of the bootcamp is to bring together the members of the state task forces on human trafficking with the leadership of NAPTIP, relevant NGOs active in the

fight against trafficking and international development partners to engage in a peer-to-peer exchange of experiences.

In his good will message, the Country Representative of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Dr Oliver Stolpe underscored the critical role of the State Task Forces. In his words, “Most of these victims, their families and communities can only be reached through communication channels at the grassroots. Mobilizing the states, local governments and eventually communities is key. You, members of the State Task Forces are the first and most essential link in the chain needed to effectively translate the Federal Government’s policies, and most notably the recently adopted National Action Plan on Human Trafficking 2022-2026 into practical outcomes on the ground.”

Declaring the event open, the Director General of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), Dr Fatima Waziri-Azi, noted that human trafficking is a national crisis, as all states in Nigeria are affected by human trafficking. “According to NAPTIP statistics from 2019-2022, analysis shows that 61% of human trafficking in Nigeria happens internally, that is, within the states and across state lines, 39% across our borders,” she said.

Funded by the governments of the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States as well as the European Union, the boot camp is organized under various projects being implemented by international development partners in cooperation with NAPTIP.



Nigeria Seeks To Eliminate Severe And Often Lethal Mouth Disease



As Chief Medical Director at the Sokoto Noma Children's Hospital in the northwest corner of Nigeria, Dr Shafiu Isah dedicates his days to treating children suffering from a neglected disease that few people have even heard of.

Noma is a gangrenous disease that attacks facial tissue and bone. Without treatment, it kills around 90% of its victims, most of whom live in hard-to-reach rural areas, within just a few weeks. "Due to extreme poverty and lack of awareness, unfortunately, a lot of these children die at home without even making it to the hospital," Dr Isah says, which in turn exacerbates the substantial knowledge gaps regarding this preventable and treatable disease.

In the absence of reliable epidemiological data, a 1998 World Health Organization (WHO) global estimation of 140,000 new cases yearly remains the most widely cited source on noma. The majority of these cases are found in sub-Saharan Africa in children between the ages of two and six.

Even for those who ultimately survive the disease, if not treated immediately, it takes mere days for them to be left with severe facial disfigurements that make it hard to eat, speak, see or breathe. In turn, this often leads to severe stigmatization within their communities and a range of accompanying human rights violations.

"We've had cases where when the patient presents to the hospital, the whole of the lower jaw is already gone, or the whole of their nostril pathway is gone," says Dr Abubakar Abdullahi Bello, Chairman of the Medical Advisory Committee at Sokoto Noma Children's Hospital.

"But if the cases present to the hospital early, then they don't have such issues. That's what we are advocating for. With early admission, we can also reduce the duration of the stay in the hospital and these patients will not require surgical intervention."

Noma can be prevented by basic public health interventions such as improving nutrition and oral hygiene; controlling comorbidities such as measles, malaria and HIV infection; and improving access to routine vaccinations.

In recent years, Nigeria has sought to increase awareness of noma and scale up its response activities as part of a commitment to eliminate the debilitating disease. Since 2016, it has been among 10 priority countries to form part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) African Regional Noma Control Programme.

Nigeria has developed and implemented the programme's national action plan for noma prevention and control in

collaboration with WHO and other partners.

The Nigerian Ministry of Health has integrated noma into its existing surveillance system and incorporated it into the curricula of all national and district health professional schools, while the country now commemorates an annual National Noma Day in November each year.

Funding from WHO, as well as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), has also helped the Ministry to scale up training of primary care workers, with 741 having received training on noma in 2021 and the first half of 2022. On 28 July 2022, WHO will launch a new free and interactive online noma course through OpenWHO, the first WHO platform to host unlimited users during health emergencies.

"This course will be a useful self-learning tool for health workers to increase their capacity to prevent, identify, treat and refer noma considering both public health and human-rights aspects. Officers in charge of noma at the national and district level can also utilize the course material to train primary care workers," says Yuka Makino, a technical officer for oral health at the WHO Regional Office for Africa.

Back at Sokoto Noma Children's Hospital, Dr Isah is encouraged by his country's increased focus on noma after so many years of neglect. "This disease is still not very well known in our communities, including among health care workers, who often mistake it for cancer or other illnesses. But I am optimistic that this is beginning to change," he says. "With the help of other stakeholders, I think we are getting there."

Isah's optimism is not ill-founded. Since the hospital opened its doors in 1999, it has been the only specialized noma facility anywhere in Nigeria. But in May this year, Nigeria Aids Noma Initiative (NANI) began construction of a new 100-bed national noma treatment centre, funded by German non-profit Hilfsaktion Noma e.V, within the National Hospital grounds in the country's capital, Abuja.

For now, noma patients continue to come to Sokoto from all over the country in search of treatment, often after having been identified by the hospital's outreach teams. Mulikat Okanlawan was one of the first such patients. More than 20 years ago, and after many years of referrals and failed operations at other facilities, she travelled all the way to Sokoto from Lagos, some 1000kms away, to seek specialized care and finally find hope.

"I used to cry every day. I didn't associate with anyone due to the stigma. I was alone. But after I was treated here, everything changed. I began to admire myself. I began to relate to other people. I continued my schooling. I began to do everything that I couldn't do before," she says.

Having subsequently completed her tertiary education at the local Gwada-bawa School of Health Technology, Mulikat now works as a hygiene officer at Sokoto Noma Children's Hospital, where she also provides psychosocial support to noma patients.

"These patients that come to the hospital, they can see that I was like them but now I am better and I am working," she says. "It helps to give them courage."

Humanitarian Affairs Ministry Hosts Communications Consultative Forum



Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Hajia Sadiya Umar Farouq, addresses the participants at the forum

The Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, has on 26-27 July 2022, organised a Communications Consultative Forum as a step towards developing an effective Communications Strategy and Work Plan to improve communications and ensure better understanding of the Ministry and its mandate.

"The theme, 'Building Effective Communication Strategies and Competencies through Partnerships in the Humanitarian Space' has been carefully chosen and it reflects the commitment of the Ministry to ensure that it works with relevant partners and stakeholders to build the capacity and competence for effective and excellent communication." Said the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Hajia Sadiya Umar Farouq at the event.

According to her, the goal was to strengthen the relationship between the Ministry and Stakeholders, improve inter agency communication, public communications and Public Relations, build a culture of teamwork and trust among key stakeholders while fostering greater understanding of roles and functions, and the deployment of such in leveraging or supporting collective or individual communication solutions.

Facilitating the session on "Drafting Communications Strategy and Work Plan - The Process", the National Information Officer of the UN Information Centre (UNIC), Oluseyi Soremekun, emphasised the importance of a participatory approach that includes wide consultations and involvement of stakeholders.

He noted, "The process of developing a communication strategy has implications on the effectiveness of the strategy and the overall success of the organization."

In attendance were representatives of OCHA, WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, and development partners. Communication Officers from the Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government were also in attendance.



National Information Officer, UN Information Centre (UNIC), Oluseyi Soremekun, facilitates a session on the process of drafting a Communication Strategy and Work-plan



A cross-section of participants at the forum

12 Nigerian Journalists Awarded For Quality Reporting On Migration Issues



Award recipients at the event in Abuja Photo: IOM/20222

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Nigeria awarded 12 journalists for their quality reporting on 28 July in Abuja, during a ceremony that concluded the Nigerian edition of the Reporting Migration Competition, launched in several West and Central African countries. The event was organised during the week leading up to the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, marking the importance of quality journalism in reporting migration issues.

The award ceremony was the outcome of a process that began on 7 April, with the launch of the call for applications. Nigerian journalists working in local and international media had a month to submit entries on irregular migration, return and reintegration and migrant protection.

56 submissions were received and assessed based on rigorous evaluation criteria by a jury comprising academia, experienced journalists, the European Union Delegation in Nigeria and media experts from IOM. 12 journalists were awarded for stories and reports published on in four categories, including radio, television, online and print.

In the online category, Yusuf Akinpelu (BBC Africa) won the first prize, followed by Alexander Okere (Punch) and Tunde Omolehin (AsheNews).

In the print category, the first prize was awarded to Gbenga Salau (The Guardian), the second prize went to Alfred Olufemi (Punch), and Innocent Duru (The Nation) received the third prize.

In the radio category, Zainab Oyiza Sanni (Agidigbo FM) received the first prize, followed by Martha Okere (92.3 Nigeria Info FM) and Chinedu Ekeja (KU FM).

In the television category, Mojisola Matanmi (TV360 Nigeria), Sam Olukoya (Inter Press Service) and Funmi Unuajefe (Plus TV Africa) won the three prizes.

Media have an influential role in shaping public opinion about migration as Nigeria continues to be a country of origin, transit, and destination of migrants. Nonetheless, fake news, misinformation and stigmatisation have been witnessed be-

fore and during the pandemic, making the role of evidence-based journalism even more essential.

“The relevance of media in all aspects of human endeavour cannot be overemphasised. More so in the area of better migration management. Media engagement is imperative given the pressing need to promote safe and regular migration as well as discourage irregular migration,” noted Prestage Murima, IOM Nigeria Chief of Mission a.i.

The award ceremony allowed the media to draw attention to the importance of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), particularly when reporting stories of vulnerable migrants with mental health needs. Migrants can be exposed to various stress factors which affect their mental health and well-being before and during their migratory journey, settlement and reintegration. “The mental health needs of migrants should be addressed by organising inclusive and accessible promotion and prevention programmes, and reporting positive stories of strength and resilience”, said Narulita Ayu, Project Officer, MHPSS.

The Reporting Migration Competition was organised under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration to foster quality reporting on the reintegration and protection of migrants. This initiative is based on a “solutions journalism” approach, which identifies and responds to key social issues.

In addition to the certificates, 12 cash prizes amounting to USD 6,000 were awarded to the winners.



UN, FG Establish Advance Passenger Information And Passenger Name Record System



A cross – section of participants at the consultative meeting in Abuja. IOM/2022

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in coordination with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Countering Terrorist Travel Programme, (CT Travel) facilitated a two-day consultation with the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGoN) as part of activities towards the establishment of a national Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) system that will support the identification, detection, and interception of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and criminals.

The CT Travel Programme follows an “All-of-UN” approach to provide a comprehensive, and tailored assistance to beneficiary Member States, with the support of its five implementing partners, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations Office of Information and Communication Technology (UNOICT), and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and in close cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

On July 19, IOM, its partners, stakeholders, and government officials converged in Abuja for a consultation meeting to provide project updates within the “Enhancing Air Data Systems in Nigeria Project” funded by the Government of Denmark and other Immigration & Border Management (IBM) projects for enhancing Federal Government of Nigeria capacity in managing migration and controlling its borders. The meeting complements efforts aimed at providing legislative and technical support to the national authorities in Nigeria to implement an API and PNR system. Participants reviewed four pillars of implementation - legal, technical, operational and transport engagement.

An API system is an electronic system through which biographic data from a traveller’s passport and flight details are

collected by airlines and transmitted to the relevant national authorities at the border before the departure or arrival of a specific flight. By checking the data against law enforcement watch lists, such as those of INTERPOL, border officials can know in advance whether FTFs or other suspicious individuals are attempting to enter their country.

“IOM’s interventions contribute to the Federal Government of Nigeria’s efforts in effectively managing cross-border flows and promote safe, orderly and regular Migration, said Maysa Khalil IBM Programme Manager. IOM will continue its effort, in coordination with other UN agencies, to support in enhancing border security and travel facilitation through a centralized data architecture with the MIDAS platform and inter-agency cooperation”. she added.

In 2020, the API steering committee was established with participation of seven agencies. In addition to the technical operational and legal working groups that were created to support the activities of the Project, a draft API law was endorsed by the Steering Committee members, and presented to Federal Ministry of Justice.

“The full deployment of API and PNR tools in our national Border security efforts will not only improve passenger facilitation but will also help in checking irregular and suspicious movement across our frontiers” noted the Comptroller General of Nigeria Immigration Services Mr. Isah Jere.

“Organizing this meeting at this time when the issues of terrorism and facilitation is topical in the industry is quite commendable as participants would deliberate and come up with practical recommendations that will complement ongoing efforts by government”, said Captain Musa Nuhu Director General of the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA).

Representatives from all agencies involved in passenger processing in Nigeria took part in the event, as well as implementing partners of different UN agencies, together with human rights agencies.

UN Supports Nigeria In Formulating Its Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2023 - 2027

With the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Government of Nigeria through Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment convened a 5-day capacity building workshop to empower government officials and ILO Social Partners in the formulation of the third generation DWCP, also known as DWCP III.



A group photograph of dignitaries and participants

The workshop which took place at Keffi, Nasarawa State from the 18th to 22nd July 2022 enjoyed the robust participation and contribution of ILO tripartite partners comprising of Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC) of Nigeria. Other participants included officials from Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning, Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, Federal Ministry of Youth & Sports, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, SMEDA, NSITF and NAPTIP amongst others. T

he objective of the workshop included validation of the diagnostic Report on the assessment of decent work deficits in Nigeria and building capacity of partners on RBM for the development of DWCP III. The workshop was facilitated by the ILO team supported by experts from the Regional Office.

The Honourable Minister of Labour and Employment, Sen Chris Ngige, speaking through Ms Gloria Oghifo, commended the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the formulation of the DWCP. On the benefit of the workshop, the Honourable Minister stated that the workshop would no doubt sharpen the skills and competencies of the participants in identifying the priority areas as well as key performance indicators which would eventually be integrated into the DWCP III.

The Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) have been established as the main vehicle for delivery of ILO support to its member countries. DWCPs have two basic objectives. They promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies. At the same time, they organise ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy, and cooperation at the service of tripartite constituents in a results-based framework to advance the Decent Work Agenda within the fields of comparative advantage of the Organization.

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Matthias Schmale, in his goodwill message delivered through Mr Nonso Obikili expressed the need for the UN to work together to effectively support Nigeria in meeting the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. He stated that the cooperation framework (now the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework) expected to

run from 2023 to 2027 has set the strategy for UN support in Nigeria and it was the responsibility of agencies to work together to jointly deliver. He informed the participants that Nigeria required significant acceleration if the SDGs were to be met. He concluded by alluding to the fact that as the largest country in Africa in terms of economy and population, support to Nigeria must be strategic to catalyse all actors and generate enough momentum for real impact.

The ILO Country Director for Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Liaison Office for ECOWAS, Ms Vanessa Phala, speaking through Ms Inviolata Chinyangarara informed the participants that DCWP documents are formulated within the framework of the Decent Work Agenda (DWA) and putting the Decent Work Agenda into practice was achieved through the implementation of the ILO's four strategic objectives, with gender equality as a crosscutting objective. She stated that the four ILO Strategic objectives were hinged on promoting jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection, and promoting social dialogue as aptly captured in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Goal 8 which aims to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all". She highlighted the importance of formulating the DWCP within the context of National priorities of Nigeria, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), and other development frameworks.

The Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA), represented by Ms Adenike Adebayo-Ajala, commended the ILO for consistently providing financial and technical supports to Nigeria all these years, especially since the inception of the first DWCP (2005 – 2009), 2nd (2015 to 2018) and the third DWCP. She pledged the commitment of NECA to work with other partners to ensure decent jobs for Nigerians.

Comrade Chris Uyot who represented Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) expressed the commitment of workers to continue to do the best they could for the benefit of Nigeria. He regretted the negative effect of COVID-19 outbreak on Nations' economy and urged the participants to commit to formulating outcomes that would reposition Nigeria for the benefits of all. The Trade Union Congress representative at the workshop, Mr Izundu Achifusi, commended the ILO for the opportunity for all partners to work together to address decent work deficits as identified in the diagnostic study. He urged all participants to work together to identify priorities that reduce income disparities and ensure decent employment for all workers.

By the end of the workshop, the participants validated the DWCP diagnostic report, identified the result framework for the DWCP and three priorities for the DWCP III, namely, Expansion of social protection, Job creation and Rights at Work.

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2022: Prevent, Protect And Prosecute

July 30th marks the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (WDATIP). A day set aside to raise awareness of the plight of human trafficking victims and to promote and protect their rights. Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is a crime and grave human rights violation of enormous scale, which is prevalent in situations of vulnerability.

This year, IOM will be marking this day under the theme Prevent, Protect and Prosecute to highlight the need for action and the importance of having an integrated approach in addressing trafficking. IOM takes a comprehensive approach to addressing Trafficking in Persons. Advocating for rights, and protecting the physical, mental, and social well-being of individuals and their communities; and promoting sustainability through institutional capacity development and partnerships, are at the centre of the Organization's counter-trafficking efforts.

This theme is at the centre of the institutional approach in combating trafficking and protecting the rights of migrants (through the Theory of Change.)

"Nigeria is an important locus as a source, transit, and destination country in the trafficking process. Several push and pull factors have been identified as catalysts for TIP. The country's current macro-economic environment, rapid population growth and limited investment in social services have had devastating effects and increased the vulnerability of most of its citizens", said Prestage Murima IOM Nigeria Chief of Mission a.i.

IOM operates from the outset that trafficking in persons needs to be approached within the overall context of managing migration for the benefit of all with interventions centered on the needs of the victims.

Since 2017, IOM Nigeria has coordinated the return of over 27,000 Nigerian migrants from 82 countries. Out of this number, 3,599 are victims of trafficking. 1,726 VoTs have received in-kind support to start businesses of their choice.

The Organization also joins the United Nations System and the Federal to raise awareness under the global theme "Use and abuse of technology", since technology is a tool that can both enable and impede human trafficking. IOM interprets this theme in terms of how



**WORLD DAY AGAINST
TRAFFICKING
IN PERSONS
30 JULY**

technology can be harnessed as a preventive tool and for facilitating protection.

The increasing use of technology post the COVID-19 pandemic has enabled human trafficking with numerous tricks deployed and with greater speed, accuracy, and anonymity; to recruit, exploit, and control victims; organize their transport and accommodation; advertise victims and reach out to potential clients; communicate among perpetrators; and hide criminal proceeds. Traffickers use social media to identify, groom and recruit victims, including children; e-mails and messaging services are used for the moral coercion of the victims; and online platforms allow traffickers to widely advertise services provided by victims.

Persons seeking better economic opportunities, asylum seekers and refugees fleeing crisis are vulnerable to the risk of trafficking with traffickers profiting from the desperation, and separation of people – particularly women and children - from support systems and family members.

However, in the use of technology also lies great opportunity. Future success in eradicating human trafficking will depend on how law enforcement, the criminal justice systems and protection actors can leverage technology in their responses, by aiding investigations to shed light on the modus operandi of trafficking networks; enhancing prosecutions through digital evidence to alleviate the situation of victims in criminal proceedings; and providing support services to survivors.

Only with a concerted effort by governments, the international community, and above all the local communities, can we fight back human trafficking.

On this World Day against Trafficking in Persons, have a heart for the victims of human trafficking and join the campaign, we all have a role to play in ending human trafficking.

World Hepatitis Day: Get Tested At A Health Facility Near You

28 July is observed as World Hepatitis Day to raise awareness of viral hepatitis, which causes inflammation of the liver that leads to severe disease and liver cancer. This year's theme is 'Bringing hepatitis care closer to you'.

Over

90%

of people infected with hepatitis B & C are unaware that they have it.



With hepatitis services, closer to communities, more people can access timely testing and treatment

World Hepatitis Day

**Every 30 seconds
someone loses
their life to
hepatitis B or C.**

**Don't Wait!
Get tested
at a health
facility
near you.**



Nigeria Commemorates 6th African Union Day Of Anti-Corruption



UNODC Country Representative, Oliver Stolpe addressing other panellists on Africa International Anti-Corruption Day.

On July 11, 2003, the African Union (AU) adopted the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption (AUCPCC). Subsequently, the AU designated July 11 as African Anti-Corruption Day, an opportunity to pause and reflect on the role of corruption in the lives of ordinary Africans, and to share good lessons and practices in the fight against corruption. Today, Nigeria marked the 6th African Union Day of Anti-Corruption by organizing a national dialogue on this year's theme: "Strategies and Mechanisms for the Transparent Management of Covid-19 funds".

Under the auspices of the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC) and members of the Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT), the dialogue focused on transparency and accountability in the management of funds earmarked for recovery from Covid-19, as well as critical issues regarding the transparent and accountable management of recovered proceeds of crime and enhancing the use of Beneficial Ownership Information to facilitate the identification, recovery and return of proceeds of crime.

Following opening remarks by members of the IATT, including the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), as well as goodwill messages by UNODC, amongst others, participants heard a keynote speech by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Mr. Boss Mustapha. Mr. Mustapha remarked on the government's efforts, through the Presidential Task Force on

Covid-19, to provide policy direction and guidance to control the crisis at federal and state levels, including the mobilization, deployment and monitoring of monetary and technical support from national and international sources.

A highlight of the event was an address by the Special Guest of Honour, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR. In his speech, the President spoke of the vigorous fight that Nigeria has fought against corruption since 2015 and praised the country's anti-corruption laws and agencies. He emphasized the need to imbibe the young with ethics and a respect for the Rule of Law, curtail illicit financial flows and work collectively to recover stolen assets if the African continent is to get rid of corruption and achieve its full potential.

UNODC led a panel discussion on "Strategies and Mechanisms for the Transparent, Accountable Management of Recovered Proceeds of Crime". Speaking on best practices in this area, the UNODC Country Representative, Dr. Oliver Stolpe, proposed some specific measures to facilitate the effective implementation of the Proceeds of Crime (Recovery and Management) Act (POCA), including the promulgation of unified Standard Operating Procedures for the management of seized and confiscated assets by the various law enforcement agencies, creation of a shared registry and certification process for court appointed asset managers, establishment of a jointly managed storage facility and broadening the interpretation of sections of POCA to allow relevant CSOs to receive allocations from the Confiscated and Forfeited Properties Account.

As a State Party to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), Nigeria has benefited from UNODC support to the Government, civil society and the private sector to prevent corruption, strengthen integrity, accountability and transparency, enhance the legal framework against corruption, improve the capacity of and coordination amongst various anti-corruption bodies, enhance the recovery and return of the proceeds of corruption, as well as international cooperation. This is a key priority area for UNODC, as laid out in the Strategic Vision for Nigeria, which seeks to 'safeguard people, institutions and the economy from corruption and illicit financial flows'.

World Hepatitis Day: UN Urges Nigeria To Prioritize Interventions For Drug Users

World Hepatitis Day (WHD) is commemorated globally every year to renew the attention of policy makers and the general population on the importance of viral hepatitis as a disease of public health importance. The global theme for the 2022 commemoration is "Bringing hepatitis care closer to you." As part of the renewed commitment to hepatitis care, the Honourable Minister of Health organized a press briefing where a national advocacy and awareness campaign to generate momentum for demand creation was flagged off. He also formally presented Nigeria's new National Strategic Framework for Viral Hepatitis (2022-2026).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) emphasised the need for well-coordinated target and context-specific interventions, to address Nigeria's high viral hepatitis contribution of 18 million persons to the global burden.

The Country Representative, Oliver Stolpe noted that the expansion of the key population (KP) classification to include people in correctional centers and those in closed settings in addition to the people who inject drugs (PWIDs) among others is an indication of the Government's commitment to using data to inform policy and effective programming.

Represented by the National HIV/AIDS Consultant, Uduak Daniel, the Country Representative noted that recent data has shown high prevalence of 8.1% and 1.1% for hepatitis B and C

virus (HBV and HCV) respectively, a strong geographical disparity in the prevalence of HBV as high as 17% and 19%, high HCV seropositive rates and low awareness among the general population.

To effectively raise awareness about hepatitis care to communities and individuals, focus on vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations such as people who inject drugs (PWIDs), as well as people in custodial centers and other closed settings is imperative. This is because the prevalence of HCV is higher in prisons compared to the general population, and although there is no known published national HCV prevalence study in prisons an independent study conducted in 2020 among 142 people aged 18-50 years in a custodial center in Nigeria showed a HCV prevalence of 29.6%. The prevalence was twice higher among men (31.0%) compared to women (15.4%).

UNODC continues to support Nigeria's achievement of universal access to comprehensive cascade of relevant health services for PWIDs and for people in custodial centers. More recently, efforts have been particularly focused on improving evidence-based policy review and development, harm reduction among PWIDs and gender-sensitive issues in Nigerian correctional centres. The first ever "Drug Use Survey in Nigeria" and "National Situation and Needs Assessment of HIV and AIDS, Drug Use and Related Health Services in Nigerian Prisons" both conducted in 2018 have informed other researches among sub-typologies like women in custodial centres.

Over 6,000 Reached With Digital Cash Transfers, Health Insurance, As UN Joint Programme on Social Protection Closed Out

The United Nations Joint SDG Fund Program on ‘Institutionalizing Social Protection for Accelerated SDG Implementation in Nigeria’ has reached over 6,000 people with digital cash transfers and health insurance in Sokoto State.

“We were able to reach over 6,000 people with digital cash transfers, health insurance and have also seen improvements in communities as project beneficiaries have been able to venture into agriculture as well as start their own small-scale businesses in Sokoto State”, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, disclosed at the ‘close-out’ ceremony held on 15 July in Abuja.

Working with the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Sokoto State Government, the Joint Programme on Social Protection in Nigeria supported institutional arrangements through the establishment of cross-sectoral coordination platforms as well as capacity building for relevant government ministries, departments and agencies.

The Resident Coordinator added, “We have seen the impact of the social protection interventions in Sokoto State and believe firmly that if we scale up in other states of Nigeria, then we will be reducing poverty and reaching people left behind, improving their livelihoods, reducing hunger and racing towards achieving the 2030 targets of the SDGs”.

The Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Price Clem Agba, noted that the ‘Close-out’ event would reignite ‘our commitment to ensure the sustainability of the achievements thus far and improve the fiscal space to enable all Nigerians to benefit from the reviewed National Social Protection Policy and the SDGs.’

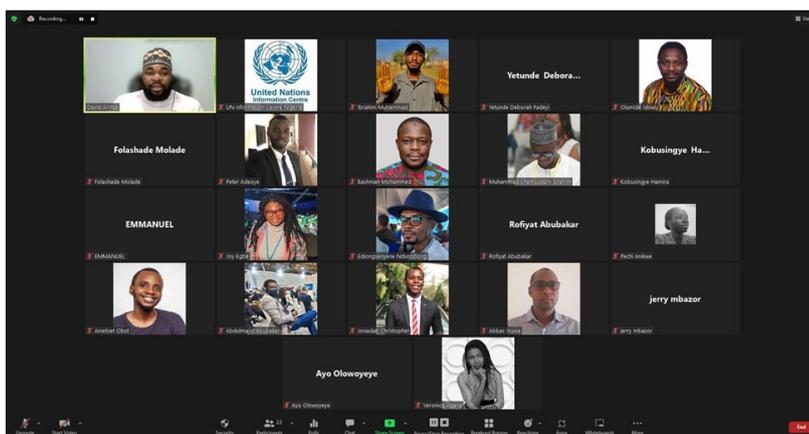


L-R: Acting Chief, Social Policy, UNICEF Nigeria, Ms Temi Esteri Fet’era; Minister of State for Budget and National Planning, Prince Clem Agba; UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Matthias Schmale; Resident Representative of IMF in Nigeria, Ari Aisen; and UNDP Senior Economist, Amarakoon Bandara.

“I am aware that the Sustainable Development Goals have remained cardinal to the attainment of robust economic cooperation among governments globally. Nigeria has also made giant strides in putting in place policies and programmes that will lead to the achievement of these SDGs.” He explained.

The UN Joint Program on Social Protection has supported the Government of Nigeria to revise the National Social Protection Policy and its accountability framework; and developed a holistic social protection bill. The program has worked with 13 Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government in Sokoto State to introduce digital cash transfer processes with integrated data and information systems to support the cash transfer processes and deployed innovation for access to health care.

COP 27: UN Mobilises Young People, Starts Monthly Conversation



Ahead of the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 27) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) taking place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt in November this year, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Lagos has mobilised young climate change activists and climate action enthusiasts to have a say in the conversation around the conference.

UNIC and International Climate Change Development Initiative, a youth led and climate-focused NGO, in June started a monthly dialogue on COP 27.

Explaining the rationale behind mobilising young people for COP 27 dialogue, UNIC Director Ronald Kayanja explained that young people were valuable contributors to climate action as

they were agents of change, climate change entrepreneurs and innovators.

“Whether through education, science or technology, young people are scaling up their efforts and using their skills to accelerate climate action.” He added.

On 28 July, the second edition themed, ‘The Role of the Youths in Nigeria’s Clean Energy Transition’, was held with two panelists: David Arinze, Programme Officer, Off-grid Energy Diamond Development Initiative; and Yetunde Deborah Fadeyi, Founder REES Africa, discussing the theme.

The panelists stated that the critical role of youths in energy transition would be achieved through policy advocacy, project implementation and capacity building, as the energy landscape give opportunity for other sectors to thrive.

They highlighted the need for government to ensure the availability of modern energy services, especially the renewable energy technology to enable youths reskill for the green energy sector. There should be more incubator programs and access to finance to address energy poverty and drive economic growth, especially in the rural areas.

The dialogue enjoined youths to be the change agent through entrepreneurship in the renewable energy technology as this can spur employment and provide jobs in the green economy.

They also mentioned the importance of the right policy initiative, advocacy, and education around the potential of the use of renewable energy for the energy transition required and desired in Nigeria

UN Convenes Female CEOs And Board Chairpersons As Key Allies In Women's Economic Empowerment In Nigeria

Overall, UN Women's purpose of convening female CEOs was to strengthen cooperation with the private sector.



A cross-section of women CEOs and Board Chairpersons at the meeting

As part of its commitment to expanding partnerships with the private sector, UN Women Nigeria Country Office hosted a high-level round table dialogue with top female CEOs and board chairpersons. This convening aimed to explore the strategic alignment of UN Women's and private sectors priorities towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria.

In 2010, UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact developed the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), which offer guidance on women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community. These Principles emphasize the business case for corporate action to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and are informed by real-life business practices and input from across the globe.

UN Women envisages the private sector's strengths and comparative advantages in Nigeria as essential to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals and the targets in its 5-year Strategic Plan (2022-2025). In addition, UN Women's global work with the private sector provides a blueprint for strengthening collaboration with the private sector in Nigeria.

Many companies are investing in SDG 5 by supporting women's economic empowerment. To date, multi-national companies have collectively invested more than \$300 million and launched programmes on employment and empowerment globally.

'The private sector produces goods and services crucial for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), providing employment opportunities, and contributing to a country's overall development. UN Women needs female heads of companies and businesses as allies to create a movement for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment within the private sector. We also encourage companies to sign up to the Women Economic Principles (WEPs) and create a network of companies to lead the economic revival, especially post COVID-19 pandemic' remarked UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Ms. Beatrice Eyong.

The United Nations Secretary General's policy brief highlights the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on women across four areas – financial, health, unpaid care, and gender-based violence. Other factor like fragility, conflict, emergencies where social cohesion is undermined, and limited institutional capacity and services, further amplify the impacts of the pandemic.

These negative economic impacts are most felt by women and girls who generally earn and save less and hold insecure jobs or live close to the poverty line.

Women are the majority of those employed in sectors that were worst hit by business closures, including the service sector and tourism. These sectors have limited protection against dismissal and limited access to social protection. The situation is worse in developing economies, where 70 per cent of women's employment is in the informal economy.

The crisis will likely roll back fragile gains made on women's participation in the formal labour market and have knock-on impacts on personal and family income, and gender equality. During the deliberations, a linkage between the private sector and other previously left behind groups of women including women living with disabilities and women living in rural areas emerged. There is a growing need to scale up financial and technical support to local women's cooperatives, especially those in rural areas. Participating in economic activities allows women to make positive changes in their own lives and their communities, with positive ripple effects for the whole nation. Markets provide great opportunities for increasing women's economic empowerment as they are central to livelihoods in Nigeria.

Overall, UN Women's purpose of convening female CEOs was to strengthen cooperation with the private sector and, more specifically: Seek alignment between UN Women's strategic interventions and private sector activities across priority areas; Raise awareness and advocate for adopting the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), emphasizing the private sector's role in achieving SDG 5; and Incentivize behavioural change for women in the corporate world by recognizing private organizations as allies for women's empowerment champions.

The event held in Lagos from 5-6 July 2022 drew participants across various sectors, including banking, finance, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), construction, oil and gas, media, and ICT. Notable attendees included Ibukun Awosika; Co-founder WIMBIZ & Founder/CEO The Chair Centre, Dr. Chinyere Almona, Director-General & Chief Executive, Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Ifeyinwa Ighodalo; Co-Founder WIMBIZ & Founder, DO.II Designs Ltd, among others.

PHOTO NEWS



Captions, from left to right in a clockwise direction

1. Vice President of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo (2nd from the right); UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Matthias Schmale (2nd from the left) after a meeting on how international community including the United Nations Nigeria can best support impactful implementation of Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan.
2. UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, signs the condolence book at the Embassy of Japan, Abuja. He expresses deeply felt condolences to the nation of Japan on the tragic loss of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.
3. UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Matthias Schmale (3rd from the right) and some UN staff members, at the National Workshop on the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes in Abuja.

Editor: Oluseyi Soremekun (UNIC)

Editorial Team: UNCG members— Ronald Kayanja (Chairman) - UNIC; Charity Warigon (WHO); Geoffrey Njoku & Anike Alli-Hakeem (UNICEF); Rupa Bhadra (UNAIDS); Ngele Ali & Rejoice Emmanuel (UNDP); Faith Bwibo & Anthony Abu (UN Women); Kori Habib & Adewole Ajao (UNFPA); Pius Udo & Wura Ladipo-Ajayi (ILO); Gabriel Adeyemo (UNHCR); Styliá Kampani & Mariam Owoeye (IOM); Emmanuel Kihale & David Tsokar (FAO); Yachat Nuhu (UNESCO); Olivia Okorundu (UNODC); Chukwuemeka Ezekiel (UNIDO); Christine Cool & Adedeji Ademigbuji (UNOCHA); Chi Lael & Kelechi Onyemaobi (WFP); Katrien Nollen (UNMAS); Vera Onyeaka-Onyilo (IFAD); Roland Abah (WMO); Oluwatobiloba Moody (WIPO).

Advisory: United Nations Country Team (UNCT)

All correspondence should be directed to **The Editor, UN Nigeria Newsletter. United Nations Communication Group (UNCG) c/o United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Lagos. E-mail: lagos@unic.org**