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75 UNIVERSAL
DECLARATION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS
DIGNITY, FREEDOM & JUSTICE FOR ALL



Ensure Young People Know The Holocaust History And apply The Lessons – Schmale Urges Stakeholders



L-R: UN Information Centre (UNIC) Director, Ronald Kayanja; UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the UN system in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale; and Israeli Ambassador to Nigeria, His Excellency Ambassador Michael Freeman.

UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the UN system in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, has urged stakeholders in peace building to go beyond Holocaust remembrance, but ensure that younger generations know the history and apply the lessons to the world of today.

"The hope is that by remembering the past, we can safeguard the future, and help prevent further acts of genocide. We must listen to and learn from the ageing survivors." He said at the observance of the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the victims of the Holocaust held at the UN House Abuja, on 26 January 2023.

"We need to strengthen the resilience of our young people against the ideologies of hatred and educate them on the dangers of disinformation. I call on all stakeholders in Nigerian society to stand up and speak out against instances of hate speech and discrimination. Each of us can play a role in countering this scourge and ensuring that all people enjoy the protections and rights for which the United Nations stands." He added.

The theme for the commemoration in Nigeria was 'It started with words: How hate speech can cause real harm.' ...continue on page 2.

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...His Excellency Ambassador Michael Freeman, the Israeli Ambassador to Nigeria called for sincere commitment on tackling intolerance and advised on the importance of early education of people on the dangers of Holocaust to ensure prevention of such atrocity crimes.

"Hate speech do not happen by themselves, but in environment there are hate speeches, we need to stand up for others, protect minorities, do what is right, even when it is difficult", the Ambassador stressed. #HolocaustRemembranceDay

UN Takes Holocaust Remembrance Lessons to Command Schools



UNIC Digital Media Assistant, Bolanle Olumekor addresses the students of Command Secondary School, Lungi Barracks Maitama, during a Holocaust Remembrance outreach to the school.



Students of Army Day Secondary School Asokoro, display the posters titled, 'Keeping the Memory Alive'.



A student of Army Day Secondary School Asokoro, reads the placards displaying message of Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

In observance of the #HolocaustRemembranceDay, UN Information Centre (UNIC) Abuja, in collaboration with Seraphim Outreach, has organized an educational outreach with over 1000 students of both Army Day Secondary School Asokoro, and Command Secondary School, Lungi Barracks Maitama.

The briefing highlighted the events leading to the Holocaust, and the students were cautioned about actions & words that could promote violence. They were urged to shun hate speech, discrimination, racism & all forms of segregation but to promote love & respect the rights of everyone.

'Keeping the Memory Alive' posters were shown to the students to draw lessons from the past and create awareness of the danger of intolerance, hate speech and prejudice UN Information Centre Abuja today held an educational outreach at Command Secondary School Lungi Barracks Maitama to commemorate the Holocaust Remembrance Day 2023.

The students were advised to stand and speak up wherever they see racism and discrimination and the need to protect everyone's

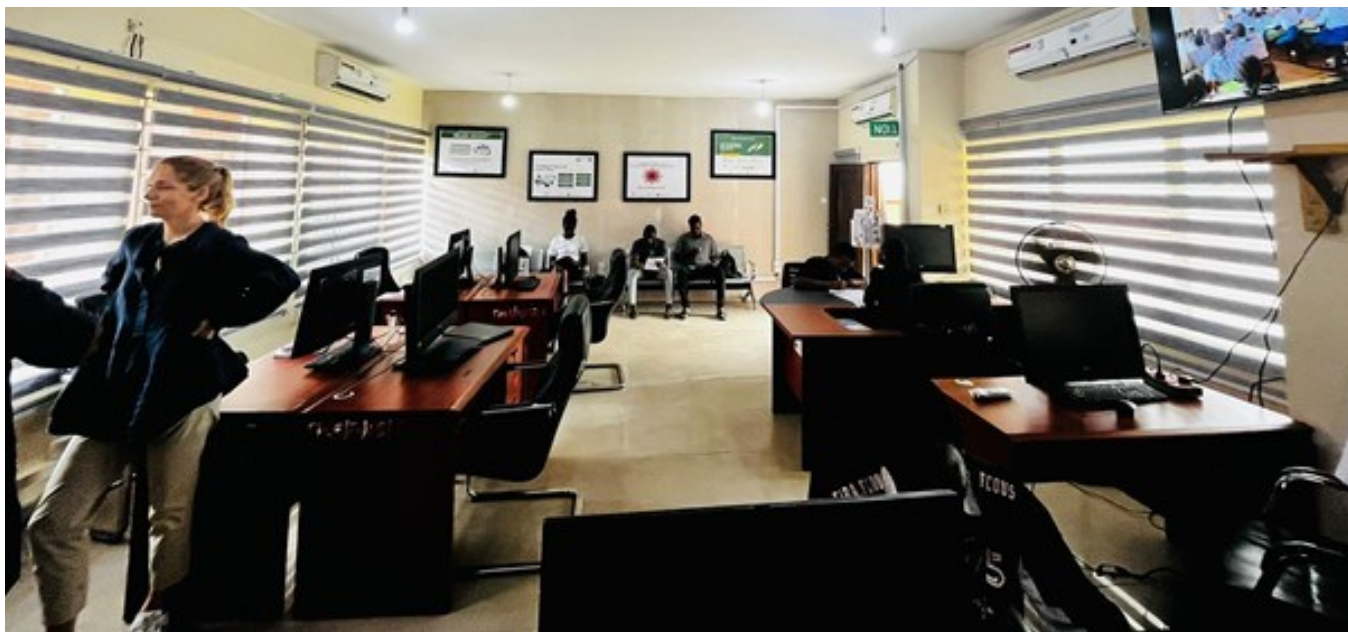


A cross-section of participants at the Holocaust Remembrance event at Command Secondary School, Lungi Barracks Maitama, Abuja.

rights, nurture peace and universal values to prevent such atrocity crimes in the future.

UN Refurbishes Migrant Resource Centre Offices

In its continued efforts aimed at enhancing the institutional frameworks for the provision of advisory and support services to returnees and the local population in Nigeria, the ILO Abuja Office through its Employment and Reintegration Project delivered with funding from the GIZ, refurbished the Migrant Resource Centre Offices in Edo State and the FCT.



Edo Migrant Resource Centre

As part of effort to empower officials of the Migrant Resource Centers of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment on enhancing institutional frameworks for the provision of advisory and support services to returnees and the local population in Nigeria, the ILO refurbished and provided basic ICT equipment for the offices of the Migrant Resource Centers in Edo State and the Federal Capital Territory. The programme also refurbished and equipped the Skills Acquisition Centre in Edo State.

The overall objective of the activity was the provision of a mix of ICT and other office equipment identified as having the potential for aiding the Migrant Resource and Skill Centres to enhance their service delivery to returnees and local population.

The Migrant Resource Centres in addition to the refurbishment of their offices, were provided basic ICT equipment such as all-in-one desktops, printers, workstations, partitioned cubicles, and power inverter systems. The equipment provided for the centres followed from the findings of an assessment exercise conducted in September.

The Skills Acquisition Centre in Edo State was also refurbished and furnished with work tools such as desks and chairs for use during training workshops, the skill acquisition centre also has offices its adjoining repainted and made more conducive for use during training workshops.

Prior to the activity delivery, the MRC offices have operated at limited capacity as basic ICT and office equipment required for work by the staff of the offices were lacking and where available, were not in the state required for work at the centres. The Skill Centre had been without basic equipment such as desks, chairs and the office environment had been overgrown by weeds and became near inhabitable.

The Permanent- Secretary, Federal Ministry of Labour, and Employment, while inspecting the refurbished offices, appreciated the Employment and Reintegration Programme for the refurbished offices and urged the staff of the MRCs



Abuja Migrant Resource Centre



Edo Skills Training Centre

UN Engages Nigeria Police On 75th Anniversary of UN Peacekeeping

In preparation for the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the UN Peacekeeping operations in Nigeria, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) has met with the Peacekeeping Directorate of the Nigeria Police Force.

Receiving the UNIC Director Ronald Kayanja, on Thursday 26 January 2023, at the Police Headquarters in Abuja, the Director of the Nigerian Police Peacekeeping Directorate, ACP Moses Jagaba, expressed his delight at the prospect of joining the global community to commemorate the contribution of the UN member states, including Nigeria, to global peace and security.

They traced the involvement of the Nigeria Police in UN Peacekeeping to the first large-scale UN mission in the Congo (ONUC), in 1960, with nearly 20,000 military personnel deployed at its peak.

“The UN shifted and expanded its field operations from ‘traditional’ missions to complex “multidimensional” missions designed to ensure the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements and assist in laying the foundations for sustainable peace.” Kayanja explained.

The meeting agreed to have series of year-long activities linking the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with the 75th anniversary of the UN Peacekeeping.

Proposed activities include the Blue Helmets parade; Photo exhibitions of Nigeria Police contributions to UN Peacekeeping operations around the world; Symposium, and public lectures.

The two organisations resolved to set up Planning Committee comprising of Police Officers in the Peacekeeping Directorate and some staff members of the UN.



Director, United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), Ronald Kayanja (Left) and the Director of the Nigerian Police Peacekeeping Directorate, ACP Moses Jagaba (Right), at the Nigeria Police headquarters in Abuja.

UN Intensifies Media Outreach, Courts BON To Strengthen Sensitisation And Public Knowledge Of SDGs



UNIC Director, Ronald Kayanja (Right) presents the UN Nigeria 2023 Calendar to the Executive Secretary of Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON), Dr Yemisi Bamgbose, at the BON headquarters in Abuja.

On 27 January 2023, UNIC Director Ronald Kayanja, visited the Executive Secretary of Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON), Dr Yemisi Bamgbose, at the national headquarters of BON in Abuja.

Kyanja introduced the SDG Media Compact which seeks to inspire news and entertainment organizations to leverage their resources and talent to amplify and accelerate progress towards achieving the Goals

“The Compact provides a gateway to the UN for industry leaders and innovators interested in deepening their commitment to supporting the achievement of the SDGs.” He explained and sought the enlistment of BON member organisations into the global SDG Media Compact.

Responding, Dr Bamgbose expressed the readiness of BON to facilitate the enlistment of its members in the global initiative for media organisations around the world.

“We are excited to partner with the United Nations to promote and strengthen sensitization and public knowledge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria,” said the Execu-

In its efforts to strengthen sensitization and advocacy for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Abuja, has intensified its media outreach activities.

tive Secretary.

Kyanja later presented copies of the UN Nigeria 2023 Calendar to Dr Bamgbose.

UN Conducts Workshop On Labour Market Information System (LMIS)



A group photograph of resource persons and participants

The Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE) in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) convened a national stakeholders' capacity-building workshop on Labour Market Information System (LMIS) in Nigeria from 11th to 14th October 2022. The workshop aimed at providing relevant national stakeholders involved in the generation, analyses, storage and dissemination of labour market information (LMI) with sound understanding of the main functions, components, and applications of LMIS.

The workshop provided a platform for social dialogue to follow-up on and advance the conversations initiated at the National Conference on Employment Promotion in order to discuss priorities around LMIS in Nigeria. It recognized that strengthening the capability of officers on the collection, processing and analysis of statistics would improve evidence-based policy-making and progress towards meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, the SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. It further provided a platform for technical consultations relating to labour migration data and statistics in Nigeria, including on the possibilities of a pilot survey on SDG 10.7.1 on recruitment costs.

While declaring the workshop open, Mr. John Nyamali, Director of the Employment and Wages Department at the FMLE reiterated the importance of having a comprehensive LMIS in place, as this would be instrumental towards addressing challenges experienced in Nigeria's labour market.

He commended ILO for providing the resources for convening the workshop, including through technical assistance, while adding that in a bid to demonstrate its commitment in this regard, the Government has engaged a national consultant to initiate processes and engagement towards developing a comprehensive LMIS for the country.

Additional remarks delivered by Mr. Dino Corell on behalf of Ms. Vanessa Phala, Director of the ILO Abuja Office, noted the opportunity presented by the workshop, as it would enable the facilitation of discussions and exchanges on a wide variety of national priorities around labour market information in Nigeria.

Mr. Edgardo Greising, Head of ILO's Microdata and Knowledge Management Unit and Mr. Yacouba Diallo, Senior Specialist on Labour Statistics in ILO's Decent Work Team in Dakar, Senegal served as resource persons during technical sessions structured to strengthen the capacity of national stakeholders in the area of LMIS and Labour Migration.

Technical sessions covered during the workshop included a focus on LMIS, particularly with reference to metadata and data exchange, data management, including collection, analysis, and interpretation for reporting purposes, with consideration for end users of the data. The sessions also centered on strengthening LMIS in Nigeria, with an emphasis on labour statistics and labour migration, as well as technical consultations on improving institutional coordination mechanisms and governance structures required to effectively manage LMIS.

The workshop was convened by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment with support from the ILO within the framework of the Promoting Employment in Nigeria (PEN) and Employment and Reintegration Project (ERN) funded by the German Development Cooperation (GIZ), as well as the FAIRWAY Global Programme funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Comprehensive LMI can be achieved through an effective system that provides labour market-related information. ILO recognizes the importance of an effective LMIS, especially as they provide an essential basis for the implementation and monitoring of employment and labour policies.

The ILO continues to provide support to the Government of Nigeria in improving the availability and accessibility of data and statistics in the area of labour migration, including through the validation of the national report on labour migration data, in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).



A cross-section of participants

Reaching Every Child With Vaccines In Communities At Risk Of Polio Disease



The traditional Head of Gagi community, Sokoto State, Northwest Nigeria, Alhaji Sani Umar Jabbi (Sarkin Yakin Gagi) | A child being vaccinated during the SIA campaign in Sokoto State.

As the traditional head of Gagi community, Sokoto State, Northwest Nigeria, Alhaji Sani Umar Jabbi (Sarkin Yakin Gagi), insists that every child in his district must be vaccinated with the life-saving polio vaccine.

Leveraging his position, he has taken it upon himself to sensitize residents of the community about the importance of participating in immunization activities.

Alhaji Sani says he is supporting the immunization campaign because people have seen first-hand how the vaccines prevent children from being maimed or killed by polio.

“As a district head, I have the responsibility of sensitizing and mobilizing my community for immunization activities,” he says.

“It is said that prevention is better than cure. Unlike other childhood diseases, that can be treated and cured, polio, either kills or disfigure (paralyse) a child. Parents and guardians must always take advantage of immunization campaigns to vaccinate their children against childhood-killer diseases.”

Alhaji Sani insists that every child under five must receive the vaccination against circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (cVPVD2) to safeguard them from being disabled and to stop the transmission of polio disease in Nigeria.

The Government of Nigeria, with the support of World Health Organization (WHO), and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) as well as partners, have finalized the second round of the polio vaccination campaign in Sokoto state.

According to WHO, immunization is the most important way to keep people safe from vaccine-preventable diseases like polio, measles and others.

The Supplementary Immunization Activity (SIA) is an outbreak response following the cVPVD2 cases detected in Sokoto and Zamfara states.

The mass campaign aims to interrupt the circulation of poliovirus by immunizing every child under five years of age with two doses of the oral polio vaccine.

The SIAs are one of the four pillars of eradicating the disease. However, supplementary immunization is intended to complement, not replace, routine immunizations (RI).

Furthermore, the campaign was extended to Kebbi state because it shares boundaries with Sokoto and Zamfara and forms part of the national borders of Benin Republic and Niger.

The SIA campaigns were conducted in the three states from 5 to 8 November 2022 and targeted to vaccinate about 5 million under-five children with the novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2).

In Sokoto State, more than 1.7 million children were intended to be covered with the life-saving vaccine.

Paying heed

Heeding the call, a young mother of two, Mrs Zalihatu Abubakar, residing in Gagi community, says she always takes action whenever there is a call for immunization campaigns.

“I know the importance of immunization, I present my children to the vaccinators whenever they come knocking on my door during the house-to-house vaccination campaigns. I also ensure I take them to the health facility for their routine immunization when due.

My children are now protected against polio and I am happy because I don't want them deformed. Vaccination has helped our children to remain healthy, the vaccine is very good as it has strengthened our children and given the children strong protection against sickness” she says.

On the importance of the SIA campaign, the Incident Manager, Sokoto State Emergency Operation Center (EOC), Dr Abdulrahman Ahmad, says, “We conducted the vaccination drive to strengthen the immunity of the children to stop transmission of cVPVD2 in the state and country at large. He noted that the state had detected 21 cVPVD2 cases.

“The SIA plays a vital role in interrupting the spread of cVPVD2 cases in the state and Nigeria. Sokoto state need to mount two quality outbreak responses within two months to stop the cVPVD2 transmission.” Dr Ahmad also commended WHO for the vital role the organization is playing to keep polio at bay in the country.

“WHO is a key player in ensuring that immunization activities are conducted. They have supported the immunization exercise through planning, training, micro plan development, house-to-house vaccination, data management and daily review meetings at wards, LGA and state levels,” he says.

Additionally, the WHO State coordinator, Mr Ibrahim Sani, said community participation has been a vital strategy employed by WHO and partners to ensure no child is being missed during the campaign.

He says deploying the “vaccinating every missed opportunity” tag as a driver for the campaign highlights the WHO innovative approach to engage mature, influential women from the community, and community leaders who will have the responsibility of tracking and ensuring vaccination of children missed either due to none compliance or child absenteeism.

In security-com promised settlements in the state, government is engaging the local vigilantes to ensure the safety of vaccinators in reaching eligible children, he said.

Although Nigeria has eradicated the Wild PolioVirus (WPV), the country is still saddled with the cVPVD2. To interrupt the transmission of the disease, WHO with funding from GPEI partners, has been supporting the government in carrying out SIA campaigns across the country.

Mustapha Ali – The Village Chief Happy To Be Back Home



Lawan Ali in front of his shelter, now considered the Tarmuwa palace. UNHCR/Francis Garriba.

Mustapha Ali is the village head (lawan) of Tarmuwa, a neighbourhood of Banki town in Borno State's Bama Local Government Area (LGA). He arrived in Banki with his 38-member family, who were among the 1,320 Nigerian refugees facilitated to return from Cameroon by the governments of Nigeria and Cameroon, in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Mustapha was beaming with joy when he was interviewed in front of one of the five shelters assigned to him and his family by UNHCR. With him were his four wives, 17 children, 11 grandchildren, a nephew, and five other relatives.

During his eight years of forced displacement from his home, Ali, 76, lived at the Minawao refugee camp in Cameroon's Far North Region. He and his family had fled Tarmuwa village in 2014 after it was attacked by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs). Four of his children and five grandchildren were born in Cameroon and had never set foot in Nigeria.

Chief Ali, or Lawan as he is fondly called, recounted how the villagers of Tarmuwa were forced to flee their homes in 2014, saying that NSAG members had invaded the village one night and opened fire indiscriminately.

"They killed many of my people, raped young girls and women, destroyed houses, and took away the villagers' animals and other property. Although none of my biological family members was killed or hurt, I am affected because the villagers are all my people," he says.

Chief Ali and his people decided to flee Tarmuwa village to Kangallari village in Cameroon, which is about half a kilometre from the Nigerian border. They survived for about two months of farming here before he continued the journey alone to Minawao camp in Cameroon's Far North Region, where his family later joined him.

"While in Minawao camp, we lived peacefully with the community members and Cameroonian authorities. They treated us like their own and helped us when we lacked food," he said.

He is overjoyed to be back home with his grandchildren, who now have a home and a sense of belonging.

"I can't explain how happy I am that my family and the other Nigerians who have finally gone back home have been given shelters," he said.

The septuagenarian says that his joy would be complete the day that he would go back to Tarmuwa village so that his family could once more sit close to their ancestral tombs and access their farmlands, as well as other activities that they frequently engaged in before they fled.

"I urge the State and Federal governments to help us rebuild Tarmuwa village and help the people with farm tools, seeds, fertilizer, and start-up kits, especially for dry season farming, which we are used to," says Ali.

Upon their arrival in Banki town, UNHCR and its partners allocated shelters, non-food items (NFIs), and dignity kits to families. WFP, through their partner INTERSOS registered the individuals for food assistance. The Borno State Government officials, National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced People (NCFRMI), and Bama LGA distributed food and cash to the returnees.



Mustapha Ali and his 38-member household members. © UNHCR/Francis Garriba.

UN Provides 218 Housing Units to Internally Displaced Persons in Malkohi New City - Adamawa State



Governor of Adamawa State, Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri, commissions the housing units.

Not less than 2.2 million people are faced with displacement following the escalation of violence in northeast Nigeria since 2014. The International Organization for Migration is helping to provide durable shelter solutions to conflict-affected populations and has assisted in the resettlement of 187 displaced families through the construction of 218 housing units in Malkohi New City, Adamawa State.

The facility, which occupies 4.5 hectares of land and is equipped with boreholes, eight access points, and solar-powered lighting, is part of IOM's drive to provide long-term solutions for IDPs who are unable to return to their places of origin by supporting their resettlement in host communities.

"Providing a safe place for people forced to flee their homes is part of our approach to durable solutions that focuses on addressing the needs of IDPs and host communities and working with them to build resilience and promote long-term stability," said IOM Nigeria Chief of Mission, Laurent De Boeck.

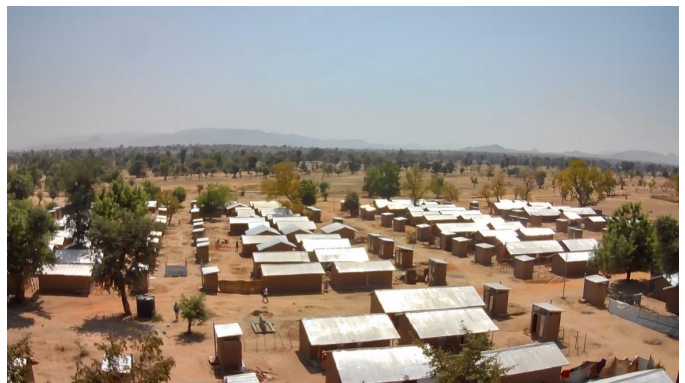
"We understand that the conflict in northeast Nigeria is complex and multifaceted, and our partnership with the Adamawa State Government, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (UN CERF), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has seen sustained effort in the resettlement of displaced populations, and we shall continue to involve multiple stakeholders, including international organizations and local communities, to ensure that the rights and dignity of IDPs are protected," he added.

In addition to supporting the safe and dignified resettlement of IDPs, IOM has also provided livelihood support to 2,568 displaced families and host communities in Adamawa State to help them become self-sufficient and reduce their dependence on humanitarian assistance.

"For us as a government, housing delivery remains one of the most time-tested policies for creating growth, economic development, galvanizing employment, and reducing crime. We shall continue to partner with international organizations and the pri-

vate sector to meet the housing needs of our people," said Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri, Executive Governor of Adamawa State.

Through coordinated efforts with other agencies, IOM has been working to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation between different ethnic and religious groups in the state to help build trust and understanding and reduce the risk of future violence as well as displacement.



An aerial view of the housing units



A unit of the IDPs housing projects

Joint UN Programme Uses Technology For Women's Social Protection

Technology for cash-based transfers is changing women's lives in Sokoto State, Nigeria.



Women received a VISA card to pay for their healthcare and essential needs. Photo: WFP/Abiola Akanni.

By the end of 2019, Sokoto State in northwest Nigeria ranked among the Nigerian states with the lowest human development indices – particularly in child nutrition and education – and the highest percentage of those in poverty at 91%.

In a country where the fertility rate is about five births per woman, pregnant women and mothers like Malama Rahila also suffer the brunt of covering 71% of related healthcare expenses out of their own pockets.

“I’m currently pregnant and I would like to go to the hospital. Sometimes I don’t have the money to pay for my transportation and medicines. I have a small tailoring business, but the income I generate is what I use to help my husband pay for our household,” said Malama.

Implementing a joint UN programme

While several Nigerian government projects such as Girls Education Project (GEP) had been successfully implemented to reduce gender gaps in public primary schools, the need for a UN joint programme to achieve the goal of #ZeroHunger through healthcare became more evident with the COVID-19 outbreak.

In 2020, WFP, UNICEF, ILO and UNDP joined forces in a project called the Institutionalization of social protection for accelerated achievement of SDGs, with the aim of strengthening social protection at the federal level in Nigeria. Under the UN Joint SDG Fund, this project has now provided support to over 6,000 vulnerable people in the area, including 2,500 pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers or caregivers of children under two years old who received prepaid cash-based transfers (CBT). Through these efforts and with support from TEC, WFP Nigeria helped improve cash delivery efficiency to empower beneficiaries, all while enhancing the government's own capacity and avoiding duplicate efforts.

Equipping Nigeria’s government with technology and knowledge

During the COVID-19 outbreak, unprecedented uncertainty and impacted humanitarian agencies’ ability to help people in need. WFP Nigeria was not the only team wondering: How could we reach beneficiaries in a contactless way while supporting the government’s long-term capacity?

WFP Nigeria began assessing and mapping Sokoto State’s existing capacities required to implement CBT, as well as how information

was managed. This helped identify key opportunity areas, followed by action: Transitioning to digital cash transfers: WFP provided the Sokoto government with adequate IT equipment and capacity building to develop the skills needed to implement digital CBTs.

Knowledge sharing and training: Training was provided to the government and sister agencies

to help ensure structured programme coordination, as well as effective and efficient CBT process digitalization and distribution of prepaid bank cards to beneficiaries.

Implementing a digital management system: Within two years, a new digital management information system (MIS) was developed locally that can securely enrol beneficiaries for CBT, create payment cycles and approve payment files.

Prioritizing women through digital solutions for CBT

While many healthcare services are free in Nigeria, transportation costs to facilities or the costs for prescriptions are often a barrier for the most vulnerable. Through this initiative, over 600 women received prepaid VISA bank cards to help with transport fees and other essential needs.

“The monthly cash I’m receiving has improved my life. A few days ago, I was sick and went to the hospital, where the doctor prescribed some medicine for me. I bought the medicines with my VISA card and now I am well. I didn’t spend my own money at the hospital, nor did I pay for the drugs or any of the hospital services,” said Malama.

Sokoto State is the first Nigerian state to use a fully digital process, and now serves as the model for Nigeria’s state governments to securely implement digital CBT through financial service providers to people in need, securely and transparently. An official handover of the CBT-enabled MIS solutions and IT equipment took place at the end of January 2023.



Malama Rahila holds her VISA card where she receives cash to pay for her essential needs.

Photo: WFP/Abiola Akanni

Mother's Support Groups fight child malnutrition in Bayelsa

Thanks to lessons learned from UNICEF-supported Mother's Support Groups in Nembe, Bayelsa State - mothers, fathers, and caregivers are now more knowledgeable and intentional about their infants' nutritional needs.



Nembe, Bayelsa State - It's always a bustle of activity at the weekly Mother's Support Group meetings in various primary health centres in Nembe LGA of Bayelsa State. Mothers, fathers and other caregivers of infants in the area regularly attend these meetings to learn, take notes and ask questions.



Caption : Josephine Wonipre Alabaraba, Nembe LGA's nutritional focal person, addresses parents and caregivers during a weekly meeting of the mothers' support group in Nembe Primary Healthcare Centre

Josephine Wonipre Alabaraba, the nutrition focal person for Nembe LGA in Bayelsa State, manages the Mother's Support Groups in several primary healthcare centres in the LGA, including the Otatubu Community Health Center and the Nembe Primary Health Centre.

She and several volunteers advise local families on healthy infant nutrition practices. She regularly gives presentations on complementary feeding and breastfeeding and follows up with the families to ensure that they are following the advice given during the meetings. Josephine is of the opinion that the support group has contributed significantly to the health and nutrition of the children in the area.

"Many of them can now say that their babies appear to be in better health. Occasionally, some of the children become ill.

A month-old infant will occasionally become ill when they first arrive. When we ask why the baby is sick, the mother will argue that the infant is too young to consume breast milk. Then we teach them that the child only requires about 80% of the water in their breasts, 20% of their food, and water alone."



Doris Rufus, a 47-year-old grandmother, has been caring for her 1-year-old granddaughter, Lilian, since her daughter died from post-natal complications. She frequently attends these meetings to learn what and how to feed her granddaughter, who is in the complementary feeding stage, in order to keep her strong and healthy. She is an active member of the motherhood support group at Nembe Primary Health Centre.

"I attend these meetings to know what and how to feed my granddaughter. I have learned a lot, and I am happy that she is healthy, she Doris."



Ebisegboruye George, 32, happily breastfeeds her 7-month-old son Testimony Alagwa at the Otatubu Community Health Centre. Ebisegboruye, who is an active member of the group, says that her older children were also exclusively breastfed, and she sees the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding. She plans to begin complementary feeding for her son, Testimony.

"I see the benefits of breastfeeding for my child," says Ebisegboruye. This group has been very supportive and there's a lot to learn and share. My older children were also exclusively breastfed, and if you see them, they are all healthy and doing well."

Through Mother's Support Groups in Bayelsa State, UNICEF works to empower fathers, mothers, and other caregivers to be key agents in promoting healthy nutrition for every child in their community.

UN Seeks To Increase Menstrual Health And Hygiene For Cameroonian Refugees, One Sanitary Pad At A Time



Cameroonian refugee, Erica Ayah, trains other refugees to produce reusable sanitary pads in the Ukende refugee settlement, Cross River State. Photo: UNHCR/Lucy Agiende

The stark reality for many girls in Nigeria, especially vulnerable groups like refugees, is that their lives are put on hold when they menstruate. For fear of ridicule, some girls avoid school and other social activities during menstruation, especially in cultures where menstruation is stigmatised.

"I could not go to school because I did not have enough sanitary pads. I prefer the reusable pad, especially now that there is no money to buy the disposable one," says Patience, a 19-year-old Cameroonian refugee student in a Secondary School in Benue State.

Like Patience, most refugee women and girls, cannot afford sanitary pads because they are often expensive and sometimes unavailable. Some girls manage their menstrual cycle in an unhealthy manner by using pieces of cloth, which are often unsanitary and uncomfortable, and may miss school during this period.

Not being able to afford sanitary pads and other necessities for personal hygiene and menstrual health, puts women and girls in refugee and internal displacement situations at further risk of exploitation. According to Grace Kironcho, UNHCR's Associate Gender-Based Violence Officer in Ogoja, Nigeria, "this situation increases the risks of sexual exploitation and abuse — if a man approaches a refugee woman or girl offering money in exchange for sexual favours, they are likely to accept."

Through a project funded by the European Union Humanitarian Aid, UNHCR and its partner, Save the Children International, are providing refugee women and girls with access to menstrual hygiene management and livelihood opportunities to reduce their risk of encountering gender-based violence. The project,

which began as a pilot in 2020, has equipped 100 women with tailoring skills and starter kits, allowing them to produce thousands reusable pads.

The women learned how to make and use reusable sanitary pads in the tailoring classes. They then went on to teach others the skill, while at the same time also selling the pads in the community to earn some extra cash to cater for other household needs.

These reusable pads are not just cost-effective and long-lasting compared to the disposable ones, but they also reduce pollution.

Erica Ayah, a Cameroonian refugee, and mother of five, is a tailor. Every month, she makes and sells or distributes over average of 30 sanitary pads to women and girls in the refugee community and the host community. In 2021, after completing her training through the UNHCR project, Erica received a tailoring starter kit to train other women and girls.

"From the leftover materials I sew for people, I make reusable sanitary pads and share them with young schoolgirls in my community, and they like it," says Erica with a smile.



Cameroonian refugees produce reusable sanitary pads at a production center in Ukende refugee settlement, Cross River State. © UNHCR/Lucy Agiende.

UN Discusses State Of 2023 General Elections Preparations With Civil Society Representatives



A group photograph of participants and the UN Country Team.

As part of its commitment to supporting peaceful, credible, free and fair general elections in Nigeria, the United Nations convened a meeting to listen to and discuss civil society perspectives on the ongoing general election process.

The meeting, attended by representatives of some twenty civil society organisations, discussed both positive developments and potential threats to peaceful and credible elections such as vote buying, insecurity across the country, mobile phone usage in polling booths, slow PVC collection and election materials distribution in some parts of the country, Naira redesign and swap, as well as violent attacks on women engaging in politics.

Schmale described that the United Nations system through the UNDP, was providing technical support to INEC. “At the technical level, we see INEC making progress in preparing and running elections,” he said and called on civil society organisations to acknowledge positive progress.

Civil Society representatives noted that some progress had been made around electoral reforms including the deployment of BVAS. They called for further needed improvements such as INEC clarifying to the voting public what 2/3 of 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory means before the elections, to eliminate possible controversies about whether it is 24 or 25 states.



R-L: UNODC Country Representative, Oliver Stolpe; WIPO Director, Oluwatobiloba Moody; UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale; UNFPA Country Representative, Ulla Mueller, and others.



A cross-section of Civil Society representatives at the meeting



A cross-section of Civil Society representatives at the meeting

UN, Partner Support Dumbulwa Community On Explosive Ordnance Risk Education



Field monitoring team for explosive ordnance risk education activities in Dumbulwa Community, Damaturu, Yobe State.

Following an explosive ordnance (EO) incident at Dumbulwa community in Damaturu, Yobe state, in November 2022, the United Nations Mine Action Services (UNMAS) in collaboration with Child Protection and Women Empowerment Initiative (CPWEI), and with funding from ECHO, has carried out a field monitoring visit for explosive ordnance risk education activities.

The incident in the community happened when one of the community members was injured by an EO picked up from a farm and brought to the community centre exploded while being tampered.

As there was no fighting around the community, the incident caught the community members by surprise and created a strong fear which has prevented from using the farmland. The community and CPWEI were advised of the ongoing UN-

MAS (with funding from ECHO) support to victim assistance activities in Maiduguri, and they will follow-up on possible referrals.



Facilitators during one of the explosive ordnance risk education activities



A cross-section of community members during one of the explosive ordnance risk education activities.

PHOTO NEWS



Captions, from left to right in a clockwise direction

1. Deputy Special Representative of Secretary General, UNOWAS, Ms Giovanie Biha (2nd from the right) and UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria Matthias Schmale (3rd from the right) at the High-level consultations with key stakeholders and the signing of first Kano Peace Accord ahead of the 2023 general elections.
2. UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria Matthias Schmale (Middle front row); UN Women Country Representative, Ms. Beatrice Eyong; and international partners at the UN Women Nigeria-High Level Meeting with Donors and International partners on new Strategic Note for Nigeria (SN 2023 – 2027) to promote gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) in Nigeria

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