



Newsletter



UN Nigeria marks 75 years of UN Peacekeeping Missions

"We salute the courage and selflessness of every Nigerian who has served in UN peacekeeping operations, uniformed or civilian, past or present. You have shown exceptional bravery, dedication, and professionalism, and we are grateful for your service and your sacrifice." UN Resident and Humanitarian coordinator in Nigeria Matthias Schmale said at the observance of the international day of peacekeepers marked with a parade by the Nigerian Military Blue Helmets and a photo exhibition of the contributions of Nigerian Military, Police and Civilians to UN Peacekeeping Operations around the world.

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Campaign promises must be delivered – UN Deputy Secretary-General charges State Governors



and more stories.

We salute Nigerian UN Peacekeepers, past and present- Matthias Schmale



Nigeria Peacekeeping troops on parade during the 75 years anniversary commemoration at the UN House. Photo: © Chimaobi Ochemba/ WHO

United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, has acknowledged the courage and selflessness of Nigerians who have served or are serving in UN peacekeeping missions around the world.

“We salute the courage and selflessness of every Nigerian who has served in UN peacekeeping operations, uniformed or civilian, past or present. You have shown exceptional bravery, dedication, and professionalism, and we are grateful for your service and your sacrifice.” he said at the observance marked with a parade by the Nigerian Military Blue Helmets and a photo exhibition of the contributions of Nigerian Military, Police and Civilians to UN Peacekeeping Operations around the world.

He noted that Nigeria had played a major part in the success of UN peacekeeping operations. “Just weeks after gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria deployed its first contingent of peacekeepers to the Congo. Since then, hundreds of thousands of Nigerian military, police, and civilian personnel have served under the UN flag across 41 operations worldwide.”

In view of Switzerland being the President of the UN Security Council for the month of May, the Ambassador of Switzerland to Nigeria, H.E. Ambassador Nicolas Lang, noted that the United Nations was the answer of the community of States to the horrors of the World War II. “It was first and foremost conceived as an instrument of collective security. Peacekeeping is evidently at the core of this mandate.” He said, “On behalf of Switzerland, let me thank all nations which contribute to peacekeeping efforts. Let’s recommit ourselves to the importance and to the necessity of UN Peacekeeping.”

Nigeria’s Chief of Defence Staff, General L.E.O. Irabor, acknowledged that the theme for this year’s event, ‘Peace begins with me’, was apt

for Nigeria as a country whose active participation in UN peacekeeping missions, had helped save countless lives and restored peace and stability to many countries over the decades.

Despite the security challenges facing Nigeria, General Irabor assured, “The Armed Forces of Nigeria and the Police will continued to contribute troops to sustain our commitment to the UN. Our troops have also displayed uncommon resilience and courage in the face of danger while surmounting the various threats.”

The dignitaries which included the representative of the Inspector General of Police; members of the diplomatic community; senior government officials; and UN staff members, later went to the exhibition ground featuring photographic exhibits of Nigeria’s involvement in UN peacekeeping missions over the decades.



Nigeria’s Chief of Defence Staff, General L.E.O. Irabor

UN calls on government, CSOs and citizens to promote and protect press freedom



United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale addresses the audience at the world press freedom day event. Photo: © UNIC/ Akinyemi Omolayo

At the observance of the 30th Anniversary of the World Press Freedom Day in Abuja on Friday 5 May 2023, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale, called on the government, the Civil Society Organisations and all citizens to promote and protect press freedom.

“Together, we can shape a future of rights where journalists can tell the stories that need to be told. A future where freedom of expression helps realize all other human rights.” Schmale said in his opening remarks at the observance organised by the United Nations Scientific, Educational, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the UN Information Centre (UNIC) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and held at the UN House Abuja.

He noted that we all have a responsibility to support and protect those who risk their lives speaking truth to power the UN House. “We stand in solidarity with all media workers here in Nigeria. And we pay tribute to those journalists who have lost their lives in the line of duty around the world.”

He added. Officer-in-Charge of UNESCO Regional Office Abuja, Philippe Delange, emphasised that democracy would be a shadow of itself without press freedom.

“Freedom of the press is the cornerstone of democratic society. Without a debate of ideas, without verified facts, without diversity of perspectives, democracy is a shadow of itself and World Press Freedom Day was established to remind us of this.” He said.

Executive Secretary, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Chief Anthony Ojukwu, represented by the Commission’s Director, Corporate Affairs and External Linkages, Mrs Agharese Arese, said NHRC would continue to work with other stakeholders to ensure that the right to freedom of expression and the press was exercised within the ambit of the law.

He said: “Whereas, the social and digital media has been criticised for encroaching on privacy rights and fuelled hate statements. We believe in the sufficiency of our laws for individuals affected to seek civil legal remedies.

The keynote speaker, Deputy Dean, School of Post Graduate Studies, Baze University Abuja, Prof. Abiodun Adeniyi, said freedom was priceless while it could be denied in diverse ways: through regulations, intimidation, harassment, denial of rights which can be politically motivated or otherwise.

Adeniyi added that freedom of expression was an integral part of human rights and a viable democracy.

Campaign promises must be delivered – UN Deputy Secretary-General charges State Governors



United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed

In her overview of the task of nation building, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed has charged State Governors in Nigeria to deliver on their campaign promises before leaving the office.

“The first term goes very fast, and the second term even faster. Campaign promises made must be delivered, and that’s hard. It requires an effective team, one that can deliver on those promises that have been made,” she said at the 2023 Nigeria Governors’ Forum induction for new and returning State Governors held 14 - 17 May 2023, in Abuja.

The UN Deputy Secretary-General emphasised that “The only way to build a more cohesive nation and a more harmonious world is to deliver better for people: Better services, better opportunities, better safety, better government, and a healthier environment.”

She acknowledged that resource constraints were very real and that prioritising, phasing and leveraging other partnerships would be key; while communicating and consulting would create fewer distractions and manage expectations.

Mohammed said further that under the constitution of Nigeria, State Governors have the authority and the responsibility to deliver on critical foundations of infrastructure and basic services and rights of people that can deliver on social and economic development.

She emphasised, “But to do so, you must lead, whether it is from the front, the side or from the back. The word that runs across all is leadership. You must inspire and shape a better future that includes everyone.”

Noting that every state has a different starting point, different assets, challenges and different circumstances, the UN Deputy Secretary-General highlighted four common areas where action and attention are urgently needed everywhere: “First, you will need institutional capacity; Second, you will need trusted partnerships; third, financing, the means of implementation; and fourth and finally, the area that is most

in your hands: leadership.”

She further urged the State Governors to bring the population on the journey with them, and balance the political economy for the benefit of all and not just a few. “You must inspire and shape a better future that includes everyone. You must also open up to your political adversaries and govern with vision, courage, tolerance and humility.” She added, “You must take every opportunity to have women and youth not just at the table but empowered to make a meaningful contribution to the discourse.”

Ms Mohammed assured that “Our Resident Coordinators and our UN Country Teams are here in Nigeria at your service but also across borders in the continent. And the new Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework between the United Nations and the Government of Nigeria, which is the bedrock of our collaboration and shared pursuit of the SDGs but also of the African Union’s 2063 Agenda.”

She noted that beyond the formal support for programming and policy work, the UN is also in Nigeria to convene and to broker partnerships that are necessary to carry the nation’s priorities forward.

The Chairman of the Forum, and Governor of Sokoto State, H.E. Aminu Tambuwal, said the induction seminar was organised to support the new governors in developing the essential skills for democratic governance.

“To kickstart this post-election democratic process, we have invited governance experts, bureaucrats, and entrepreneurs, within and outside the shores of this country, to share their expertise on democratic governance in a diverse political economy with unique peculiarities in the modern governance framework.” He said.

He acknowledged the presence of democratic leaders from Africa, United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States of America, who have obliged to share their vast experience with the participants.

STEM careers are not exclusive to boys – UN urges schoolgirls to aspire



UNIC National Information Officer, Oluseyi Soremekun; Country Director of Tek Experts, Mr Gbolahan Olusanya; and Ms Hanior Ngusurun of Tek Experts. Photo: © UNIC/ Akinyemi Omolayo

The Director of United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Abuja, Ronald Kayanja, has urged girls and young women to aspire and acquire skills for careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) as these are not exclusive professions for boys only.

“You must change the gender-based stereotypes that society has ascribed to certain professions and careers, especially those in STEM. You can only do this if you aspire and work hard in your studies and develop passion for ICT.” He explained while addressing schoolgirls at the 2023 International Girls in ICT Day, organised by UNIC in collaboration with Women’s Technology Empowerment Centre (W.Tec) and Tek Experts, on Tuesday 9 May 2023 at the UN House, Abuja.

Kayanja, represented by UNIC National Information Officer, Oluseyi Soremekun, recalled that the United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU) had estimated a skills shortfall of over two million jobs in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector within the next five years, and he therefore charged all schoolgirls and young women to acquire ICT skills to be well-placed for a successful career in the sector.

He further explained that UNIC and partners were working together to inspire and encourage girls to pursue a future in ICTs and to empower them by ensuring they have the necessary skills, confidence and support to achieve their goals.

Country Director of Tek Experts, Mr Gbolahan Olusanya, allayed the fears of the schoolgirls about STEM and ICT, disclosing that his organisation had trained 500 girls who are all doing well in the sector.

“There is nothing to be afraid of in acquiring ICT skills. You can do it. It is not as complicated as you think it is.” He assured.

Keynote Speaker and Founder/ CEO of NextWear Tech Hub, Mrs Kemi-sola Bolarinwa charged the school girls to always remember that they are the future of ICT. “We have the power to shape the future, to create new possibilities, and to transform the world through technology.” She acknowledged.

She identified four important digital skills that she noted students should learn. These were Digital Literacy; Cybersecurity; Coding and Programming; and Digital Communication. “By acquiring these skills, we can become more successful in our academic, personal, and professional lives.” Mrs Bolarinwa emphasized and urged the participants to embrace the digital age and take advantage of the opportunities it offered.

Assistant Director of Bilateral and International Relations at the FCT Secondary Education Board (SEB), Mary Ajibola, disclosed that the management of SEB was unrelenting in promoting and encouraging girls to pursue their studies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

She thanked the UN Information Centre and their partners for organising the event and extending invitation to three of the schools in FCT to participate.

Ninety girls from four Secondary Schools and the W.Tec ‘Make Her Space Girls’ attended the event. The schools were Model Secondary School, Maitama; Government Secondary School, Garki; Government Secondary School, Wuse and Premiere Academy Lugbe.

The International Girls in ICT Day is celebrated every 4th Thursday of April and the theme for this year’s observance is “Digital Skills for Life”.

Assessing violence against women in the 2023 general elections



Jennifer Bina Ifedi, victim and survivor of electoral gender-based violence during the 2023 presidential elections. Photo: UN Women/Aisha Zannah Tubo

UN Women with support from the Government of Canada and the European Union hosted a post-election conference to assess politically-motivated gender based violence during the 2023 General Elections on Monday, 15 May 2023. The conference brought together agencies and civil society organisations that participated in the observation of the 2023 General Elections. This included WILPF Nigeria, FIDA, ElectHER, Women in Politics Forum, Zamani Foundation, Nigerian Women Trust Fund (NWTf), KIMPACT Development Initiative, FOMWAN, National Democratic Institute, the Westminster Foundation, and the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs.

Discussions and presentations at the conference aimed at reviewing the challenges in reporting violence against women in elections, the arising factors that will influence data collection, actions to take after violence and intimidation reports, prospective interventions, as well as a joint summary report for advocacy and follow-up, and practical recommendation to make the issue of gender-based violence more visible.

Electoral gender-based violence includes physical, emotional, sexual, and intellectual violence, that impedes the full participation of women in every aspect of elections – as voters, party members, aspirants, candidates, party officials, electoral officials, security agents, observers, monitors, and as Press.

UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Beatrice Eyong, in her remarks, reiterated that in Nigeria and other parts of Africa, women have been killed during elections, as voters and candidates, with some quitting their political aspirations after receiving death threats.

“Women candidates have faced various forms of targeted, gender-based violence and that the lack of data on violence against women in politics, negatively affects evidence-based advocacy for influencing change in laws and policies and for establishing protection systems

for women in politics”, said Ms. Beatrice.

Facilitator of the conference, Prof. Joy Ezeilo, Founder of Women Aid Collective (WACOL), highlighted the discrimination, exclusion and dismissal of women’s participation in the 2023 elections despite the high amount of actual representation and participation by women in the 2023 electoral process.

HE. Mrs Samuela Isopi, Head of the European Union delegation to Nigeria and the ECOWAS represented by Esme Stuart, spoke on the marginalisation and underrepresentation of women in Nigeria’s governance systems, stating that “the full and equitable participation of women in public life is essential to building and sustaining strong, vibrant democracies. There is strong evidence that as more women are elected to office, there is an increase in policymaking that emphasizes quality of life, and reflects the priorities of families, women, and marginalised groups.”

Jennifer Bina Ifedi, victim and survivor of electoral gender-based violence from the 2023 presidential elections, was present at the conference and gave her testimonial of the incident. She highlighted the absence of security agents at the polling unit as a precursor for the assault. Jennifer’s resolve to return to vote after she was attacked and injured has become an inspirational story around Nigeria.

Recommendations from includes the need for gender-responsive security measures to curb violence against women in elections; swift prosecution of perpetrators of violence against women in elections regardless of status; deploying of unified data tool for gender-responsive assessment of elections; advocacy and sensitization to reduce party-influenced electoral violence.

Nigeria's Food Future: A call to action for sustainable and inclusive food system transformation



Tomato traders in Nigerian market

With a population estimated to hit 400 million by 2050, large food deficits remain a cardinal challenge to the food system, yet Nigeria has the potential to feed its growing population into the coming decades. This food self sufficiency can be attained, not only through production technologies but also by entrenching sustainable and inclusive food systems in the structure, governance and administration.

This is highlighted in the recently released Nigeria food system assessment profile conducted in 2022 where gaps such as low yields, post-harvest losses, food safety concerns and climate change impacts, compounded with weak implementation of relevant policies and legislation, all combine to stagnate the predominantly rain-fed agriculture production.

The report further reveals that Nigeria's food system is complex, faces multiple challenges, and is vulnerable to internal and external shocks, making it unsustainable. Weak implementation of relevant policies and legislation is evident due to lack of sufficient funding and human resources, weak institutional and intersectoral coordination, among others. Consequently, the food system is broken and does not generate fair economic returns for all actors. As a result, there is a high levels of food insecurity and poverty especially among the rural poor, high malnutrition burden as well as obesity, and increasing environmental degradation due to sustained pressure on land and other natural resources.

The assessment was part of a joint initiative launched by the European Union (EU), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the French Research Centre for Agricultural Development, CIRAD, in collaboration with the Government of Nigeria. Its purpose was to identify key constraints and entry points for understanding the bottlenecks to sustainable food systems, and to propose innovative policy and investment solutions to make food systems more sustainable and inclusive.

Commenting on the report, the FAO Country Representative in Nigeria and to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Fred Kafeero emphasized the importance of four key challenges hindering the country from transitioning towards a desirable sustainable food system are highlighted therein.

“These includes food system vulnerability to internal and global shocks; underdeveloped agrifood value chains; food system vulnerability to climate change and natural resource degradation; and poor diet quality and high prevalence of food and nutrition insecurity”.

The Contemporary burden

The current food systems are unable to fulfil their purpose of providing nutritious and healthy food for all and contributing to enhanced livelihood opportunities in an environmentally sustainable way. They are being challenged by several factors, including changing diets, technology, urbanization and climate change.

There may be enough food to feed everyone - preventing the dual health burdens of malnutrition and obesity. However, the economic and territorial imbalances are such that food systems do not generate fair economic returns for all actors, particularly for small-scale producers, triggering an endless cycle of precariousness and poverty. Current food systems need to be transformed if we are to achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

Using a holistic approach, the assessment gathered a wide range of food system actors in Nigeria through a consultation process. They shared views on key issues and challenges and analyzed potential solutions. The results of this consultation process are presented in the country profile just published. It will serve as a basis for prioritizing interventions in key areas of the food system.

UN partners Lagos State government for coconut value chain development



Dignitaries at the presentation of the coconut value-chain analysis and design report.

In a bid to ensure the sustainable development of the coconut value chain the Lagos state government has appealed to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to assist the state seek sustainable financing and strengthen relevant institutional capacities.

The call was made in Lagos at the presentation of the coconut value-chain analysis and design report, conducted under the FAO-UNIDO Agrifood Systems Transformation Accelerator (ASTA), a global development programme which aims at helping countries to build sustainable and inclusive value chains and market systems that successfully link producers to processing, value addition and end markets.

The Lagos state Commissioner of Agriculture, Abisola Olusanya, commended the valuable report developed by FAO and UNIDO saying it is highly informative and presents a clear strategy to upgrade the coconut value-chain.

Reiterating the importance of this, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture Tokunbo Emokpae said, FAO and UNIDO should look out for external funding from international and domestic sources “to support/augment the State Governments provisions, and I hope that well-meaning international organizations will join in this developmental programme by providing either their technical expertise or financial assistance through the Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF) hence ensuring the sustainable development of the value chain and food security in Lagos State”.

It would be recalled that in 2021, the state government sought FAO’s technical support to develop the Lagos coconut value chain. To begin the development process, a situation analysis was initiated. It is the result of this analysis and the proposal for the upgrading strategy for the

coconut value chain's development in Lagos state that was presented to the 36 representatives from the Lagos state government and the Lagos State Coconut Development Authority (LASCODA).

In his good will message, the FAO Representative to Nigeria Fred Kafeero said, the presentation of the Coconut Value Chain Analysis report marks the beginning of a second phase of the partnership where the state commits to ensure sustainable food security, improved livelihood, economic development.

“This is in terms of revenue generation, improving the standard of living and local economy of Lagos people through employment and wealth creation opportunities as well as the overall environmental impact in mitigating against climate change.” Kafeero said.

On his part the UNIDO Regional Director Jean B. Bakole, in a goodwill message, said, “there is the need to develop and upgrade the coconut value chain to meet the local and global demand for its products.”

Highlights of the Lagos state coconut value-chain analysis report and the upgrading strategy

From the analysis, the report noted that the core function in the Lagos state coconut value chain includes production, wholesaling/aggregation, processing and retailing. The Lagos coconut market size is about 16% of the overall Nigerian market, with Lagos consuming about 67,000 MT of imported nuts, 34,000 MT of domestic nuts, and equally few imported coconut products. In addition, Nuts make up a large proportion of the consumption of coconut, but their value in the overall market size is less than that of the significant processed products.

The results from this report prompted the proposal of an upgrading strategy for the Lagos State coconut sector, which ensures that by

2037, the coconut VC in Lagos State will transform from one characterized by traditional practices and little value-addition to one that is driven by improved technologies that allow for increased productivity and output, and marketing of innovative and differentiated products, to substitute imports and increase exports, bring about enhanced income and employment for both women and men, and reduce environmental footprints.

The expected outcomes of implementing the proposed upgrading strategy are stated as follows; the value-chain actors will adopt new organizational, financial & risk management services; farmers will adopt improved production techniques to increase productivity and output sustainably; processors will adopt improved techniques to increase value addition and quality; there will be enhanced market access by improving linkages among stakeholders; and an improved enabling environment to support the sustainable development of the value chain.

Feedback on the presentation of the value-chain analysis report

“We need to create more awareness on the coconut value chain to the youth to ensure even more productivity and profitability of the sector”, said the Lagos State Permanent Secretary of Economic, Planning and Budget, Ibrahim Amodu Obajomo, while giving feedback on the value chain report.

At the event, participants from different civil society organizations commended the depth of the report. They recommended empowering, promoting and expanding LASCODA, linking LASCODA with Lagos State University, and finding means to export Nigeria’s coconut products to other countries.

UN celebrates Children’s Day in Abuja



A cross section of children, teachers and WIPO Staff at the Children’s Day celebration.

To celebrate Children’s Day, May 27, the WIPO Nigeria Office (WNO) organized, in collaboration with the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), a special intellectual property learning session for 40 children alongside their teachers, from primary and secondary schools in Abuja. The participating schools were KAPLEN International Community School and the Yuv Academy. The session took place at the United Nations House, Abuja.

Through fun and engaging methods, the children learned about intellectual property, the work of the WIPO Nigeria Office, the Sustainable Development Goals, Human Rights, and the work of the United Nations in promoting innovation and creativity amongst children.

The Director of the WIPO Nigeria Office, Mr. Moody provided the welcome remarks, while the keynote address was delivered by UNICEF Nigeria’s Chief of Communication Advocacy and Partnerships, Mr. Rajat

Madhok. Ms. Victoria Onyeagbako, WIPO Nigeria Office, introduced the students to the basic concepts of intellectual property. The students also benefited from sessions on the role of the United Nations and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as an introduction to Human Rights facilitated by Ms. Bolanle Olumekor and Ms. Rita Mabaghandu respectively. Ms. Juliana Owajimam Oboh-Joseph, WIPO Nigeria Office, anchored the program.

The children and teachers were presented further learning resources from the WNO, and customized schools bags (courtesy UNIC). The WNO continues to engage with young learners, and instructors of primary and secondary schools in Nigeria on the importance of IP.

World IP Day 2023 – UN hosts first IP and Women Business Summit



A cross section of audience



(L-R) Dr. John Asein - Director General at Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC) and Ms. Aisha Augie-Kuta, Special Adviser (Digital Communications Strategy) to the Federal Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning

To commemorate the World IP Day, the WIPO Nigeria Office organized the 2023 IP and Women Business Summit themed “Women as Catalysts of Innovation and Creativity in Nigeria: Opportunities and Challenges”. This event had two key objectives. First, to serve as a source of inspiration to women engaged in innovation and creativity, through sharing of experiences with leading female entrepreneurs, creatives and innovators. Second, to explore policy and regulatory pathways to closing the gender gap within the IP field in Nigeria.

The session opened with introductory remarks from Mr. Oluwatobiloba Moody, Director, WIPO Nigeria Office, Mr. Matthias Schmale, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, and Dr. Shafiu Yauri mni, Registrar, Trademarks Registry, who was ably represented by Barrister Sadiq Mohammed Yusufu, Asst. Chief Registrar, Trademarks Registry. Dr. Jumoke Oduwole, the Special Adviser to the President of Nigeria on Ease of Doing Business, delivered the keynote address on Women as Catalysts of Innovation and Creativity in Nigeria: Business Opportunities and Challenges.

There were two panels comprising of leading female entrepreneurs, creatives and innovators.

The first panel, which was moderated by Ms. Adeyinka John, Deputy Head of Research, Strategy, Innovation and Results Measurement at NIRSAL PLC, explored the topic “accelerating female innovative and creative enterprises in Nigeria.” This engaging panel featured female trail blazers who had made significant marks in the innovation and creative sectors in Nigeria: Ms. Uzoma Ezeoke, Executive Director, Emzor Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., Ms. Kemisola Bolarinwa, Founder/CEO, Nextwear Technology, Ms. Aisha Augie-Kuta, Special Adviser (Digital Communications Strategy) to the Federal Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning and Dr. Funmi Adewara, Founder/CEO Mobihealth International.

The second panel focused on the policy and regulatory support structures required for addressing gender disparities in the creative and innovation fields. Moderated by Ms. Solape Peters, Partner at Olajide Oyewole LLP, the panel featured Dr. Olusola Momoh, Co-founder Channels Media Group, Ms. Beatrice Eyong, Country Representative, UN Women (represented by Mr. Lansanah Wonneh, Deputy Country

Representative, UN Women), Ms. Stella Ezenduka, Chief Registrar, Patents and Designs Registry and Dr. Osasuyi Dirisu, Executive Director, Policy Innovation Centre (PIC).

The event also featured an unveiling by the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC) of the logo of the Women Empowering Women in Intellectual Property (We Win IP) Campaign aimed at upscaling the IP knowledge of women in IP in Nigeria. As part of the unveiling, five awards were handed out by the NCC to recognize contributions and commitment of women and to inspire more women to join the campaign. The recipients were Dr. Jumoke Oduwole, Special Adviser to the President of Nigeria on Ease of Doing Business, Ms. Uzoma Ezeoke, Executive Director, Emzor Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd, Ms. Aisha Augie-Kuta, Special Adviser (Digital Communications Strategy) to the Federal Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, and Dr. Olusola Momoh, Co-founder Channels Media Group.

Performances at the event included the rendition of the national anthem by Ms. Amarachi Baldwin, as well as a spoken word poetry rendition by Ms. Loveth Liberty. A second edition of the Summit will take place in March 2024.



Ms. Uzoma Ezeoke, Executive Director, Emzor Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd

UN, Elizade University seek to improve labour migration reporting in Nigeria



Dignitaries at a workshop that addresses knowledge gaps in the academia on reporting labour migration.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Elizade University commenced a collaboration aimed at improving labour migration reporting in Nigeria. The collaboration was designed to include a training needs assessment (TNA), and a capacity building component through a workshop that addresses knowledge gaps in the academia, particularly in Southwest Nigeria on reporting labour migration.

Hinged on feedback in the TNA report, a training workshop was convened by Elizade University on Tuesday, 25th April 2023. The workshop provided participants with skills and most recent information on reporting labour migration from the global perspective, including through training participants on the use and application of ILO's Media Toolkit for reporting forced labour and fair recruitment.

This engagement is being piloted in South-West Nigeria, targeting representatives from 21 Nigerian Universities, including Professors and Lecturers of Journalism, Media, and Communication.

The TNA tested the hypothesis of migration being a significant area of interest in the academia, including Mass Communication departments of select tertiary institutions in the region, and gauged respondents' willingness to participate in a curriculum review and development focusing on labour migration.

Results from the TNA presents an 84% interest by instructors in Mass Communication departments in the region towards developing a curriculum on labour migration, and leverages tools and guidance developed by the ILO as useful resource that can be incorporated into the curriculum of higher education institutions in Nigeria.

Welcome remarks by the Vice Chancellor, Elizade University, Prof. Olukayode Amund, emphasised how migration permeated all academic disciplines concentrated within the University. Prof. Amund mentioned that Universities are positioned to create knowledge and disseminate this to their students, cardinal to improving reporting labour migration. The Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social, and Management Sciences, Prof. Joseph Fabayo, underscored the importance of this collaboration with the ILO, in which Elizade University, served as an interface with universities across the region to reach a wide range of beneficiaries.

In her goodwill message, Ms, Vanessa Phala, Director of the ILO Abuja Country Office appreciated the Vice Chancellor, management, and staff of the university for the collaboration between both institutions, noting that the academia remains an important stakeholder that supports generating evidence for policy and behavioural change. Represented by Austin Erameh who is the National Programme Co-ordinator of the FAIRWAY Programme in Nigeria, Ms. Phala further encouraged the university to take into consideration the need for ensuring sustainability of ILO's work in the area of reporting labour migration, particularly through integrating provisions of nationally and internationally recognized relevant labour and human rights standards.

Participants discussed the best approach to introduce media reporting on labour migration to participating universities' curricula. A few teaching initiatives proposed included the use of studio practice time (Obafemi Awolowo University and Afe Babalola University) and student independent reporting practices (Bowen University) among many useful contributions.

A significant outcome of the collaboration includes the formation of an Academic Community of Practice (ACoP), made up of Professors, Heads of Departments and Units, and Lecturers interested in knowledge creation, exchange, and dissemination on improving reporting labour migration in Nigeria.

The ILO Global Media Toolkit for reporting on Forced Labour and Fair Recruitment was launched in 2020. This toolkit is a useful resource for journalists and media practitioners that serves as a guide to report accurately and effectively on forced labour and fair recruitment matters. Within the framework of the FAIRWAY Programme, the toolkit has been successfully contextualised and adapted for use in Nigeria in 2021.

Going forward, it is envisaged that the established Academic Community of Practice will contribute to sustaining ILO's work relating to reporting labour migration, as well as use of the media toolkit in Nigeria. The collaboration revealed that extending the ACoP engagement to other academic communities in Africa and beyond will be useful to sustaining reporting migration related news and stories across the continent.

UN Nigeria hosts Poetry Slam for secondary schools in Abuja.



Photo Credit: Adaeze Obi-Obasi/WIPO)

To promote intellectual property awareness among students of secondary schools in Abuja, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Nigeria Office (WNO) held a spoken word poetry competition for secondary schools at the United Nations House, Abuja on May 13, 2023. Organized in collaboration with Nasara Creatives, the program created a platform for students to develop their creative and oratory skills while yet engaging in fun introductory and collaborative conceptual learnings on intellectual property.

The Poetry Slam commenced after an interactive exposition to various intellectual property rights facilitated by the WNO. Parents and teachers of students were also able to participate in the activities.

Subsequently, the shortlisted students competed across four stages under the overriding theme of 'Intellectual Abundance' to determine the winner. The students presented original poems, while yet demonstrating excitement and a good understanding of the importance of intellectual property through their engagement and spoken presentations prepared for the competition.

A total of 16 shortlisted students representing 11 schools participated in the poetry slam. At the end of the competition, the accomplished panel of judges, which included, Ms. Nadine Hakizimana (Youth Engagement Facilitator, WIPO), Mr. Bash Amuneni (Partner, Nasara Creative), Dr. Richard Ali (Lawyer and Co-founder, Parresia Publishers), Ms. Oreva Olujimi (Writer and Poet), and Dr. Kaltume Akubo (Writer and Poet), returned an overall winner – Ms. Bella Ogwuche (Jewel Model Secondary School, Abuja). In second and third places were Ms. Chenille Awele Agulu (Starville Secondary School, Jahi) and Ms. Joy Olanrewaju (Hearts Heartis Creative Centre, Abuja), respectively.

To support their growth in the field of IP, each of the participants received a scholarship to undertake a WIPO Academy DL Learning Course of their choice, while the teachers of the represented schools will benefit from WIPO's IP4Youth and Teachers training program.

Mr. Tonton Raymond was the Slam Master, while Mr. Bentex Torlafia anchored the event.

Traditional leaders and clergies renew commitment to curb violence against women and girls in Nigeria



(L-R) HRM Alhaji Muhammad Idrissa, Emir of Fika, Yobe State; HRH Dr Haliru Yahaya, Emir of Shongo, Kwara State; and HRM Oba Adedapo Aderemi, Oba of Ido, Osun State, at the Roundtable. Photo: UN Women Nigeria.

UN Women, with support from Ford Foundation, organised a Roundtable with distinguished cultural and faith leaders in Nigeria alongside women's rights organisations (WROs) to escalate collective action to curb violence against women and girls in Nigeria. The roundtable also marked the launch of a Ford Foundation-funded three-year project titled Traditional and Cultural Leaders for Ending GBV by Advancing Advocacy, Policy and Social Norms Change in Nigeria and West Africa (LEAP).

The LEAP project recognises the importance of cultural and faith leaders in preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV). It will leverage the esteemed leaders' extensive knowledge and experiences in their respective jurisdictions to promote an understanding of customs and doctrine denouncing GBV.

Studies reveal that traditional and religious leaders play a central role in addressing harmful gendered norms and practices and could act as gatekeepers to enact meaningful social shifts in addressing sexual and gender-based violence and eliminating harmful practices. In Nigeria, for instance, traditional and religious leaders have been at the forefront of the abolishment of harmful practices, including the Money Wife practice in Ebonyi, East Nigeria; abolition of female genital mutilation in Osun, Southwest Nigeria, and a pronouncement on deposing of leaders found to harbour perpetrators and hide cases of SGBV and in Sokoto, Northwest. Some of these landmark actions have been taken by members of the Council of Traditional Leaders of Africa (COTLA), established in 2018. The COTLA membership in Nigeria, through the support of UN Women, has developed a work plan to support engagement in ending GBV.

The objectives of the Roundtable included deliberating on the role of cultural and faith leaders in collectively shifting norms that perpetuate gender-based violence and identifying avenues for effective pre-

vention and response and sustained investment. Traditional leaders are in a strong position to work with their communities to address the harmful cultural practices that perpetuate negative gender norms and harm women's and girls' health and safety. Working with, rather than against, traditional leaders in Nigeria is crucial to ending violence against women and girls and promoting women's empowerment.

Ford Foundation Executive Vice President, Ms Hilary Pennington, reiterated the crucial role traditional and faith leaders play in changing social norms and abolishing harmful cultural practices. She urged participants to take responsibility for imploring measures to prevent violence against women in their constituencies.

'In our recent interventions, 1,329 women and men regularly attended community programs that promote progressive gender-equitable norms. Through these actions, positive behaviours that stop GBV are more likely to be practised. Working with, rather than against, traditional leaders in West Africa is crucial to ending violence against women and girls and promoting women's empowerment, said Beatrice Eyang, UN Women's Country Representative to Nigeria and the ECOWAS.

The traditional leaders who went into closed-door discussions resolved the need to escalate actions against gender-based violence and formulation of policies and laws that would curb the prevalence of violence against women and girls. The esteemed leaders also reiterated the importance of improved sensitisation and community awareness activities.

UN urges strengthening of early warning systems

Early warning systems can make all the difference in protecting lives and livelihoods ahead of hazardous weather events. Yet less than half of all countries have sufficient multi-hazard early warning systems that let people know that dangerous weather is headed their way.

To address this challenge, the United Nations is spearheading the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative to ensure everyone on the planet is protected by early warning systems by the end of 2027. The UN Early Warning for All (EW4All) initiative was introduced by the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. The global EW4All plan will be supported by UN agencies such as WMO, UNDRR, UNDP, ITU, humanitarian agencies such as the IFRC, the private sector, financing and insurance institutions, and civil society organizations.

The WMO Congress which held 22 May to 2 June has resolved to make the implementation of the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative a top priority. The Congress is the highest decision-making body of the organization attended by delegates from all member countries including Nigeria. National meteorological and hydrological services are the official providers of early warnings for hydrometeorological hazards and key to the success of EW4All initiative in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders.

The flood season in Nigeria begins around June each year. In preparation for the flood season, the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) released the Seasonal Climate Prediction (SCP) with the theme "Strengthening climate risk early warning services for improved food security and disaster risk reduction in Nigeria" on 24 January 2023. The Nigeria Hydrological Services Agency (NIHSA) released the 2023 Annual Flood Outlook (AFO) with the theme "Flood Prediction and its Impact on Socio-Economic Livelihood of Nigerians" on 17 February 2023. In April, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) released the 2023 Climate-related Disaster Preparedness and mitigation strategies document to highlight the predictions of the year

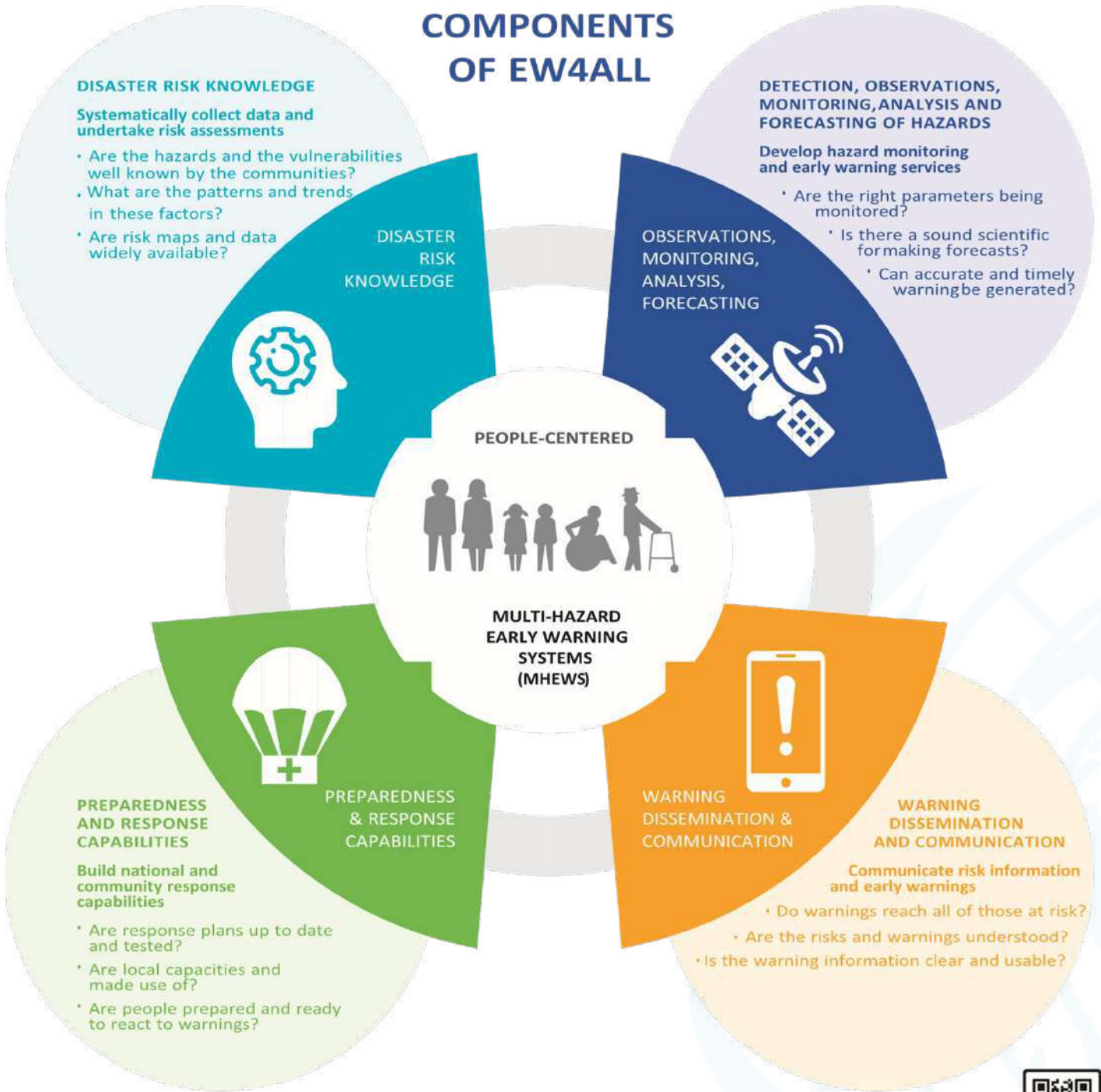
as contained in the predictions by NiMet and NIHSA as well as early warning messages for public sensitisation. All documents are available on the websites.

The categories of flood risk areas predicted for Nigeria according to the 2023 AFO include a total of 178 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in 32 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) which fall within the Highly Probable Flood Risks Areas. These States include Adamawa, Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Cross-River, Delta, Ebonyi, Ekiti, Edo. Others are Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Lagos, Nasarawa, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe, as well as Zamfara and the FCT. Coastal flooding due to rise in sea level and tidal surge with potential impact on fishing, wildlife habitation and river navigation may be experienced in the coastal States of the south. Some major cities have been classified as at risk of flash and urban flooding including Lagos, Kaduna, Suleja, Gombe, Yola, Makurdi, Abuja, Lafia, Asaba, Port-Harcourt, Yenagoa, Ibadan, Benin-City, Birnin-Kebbi, Lokoja, Kano, Nsukka, Sokoto, Ado-Ekiti, Owerri, Calabar, Maiduguri, Osogbo, Abakaliki and Awka.

The Director General of NIHSA and Nigeria Hydrological Adviser to the WMO Engr Clement Nze during the release of the AFO 2023 in February had encouraged stakeholders to utilize the information provided for effective flood early warning, sensitization awareness campaigns, and to support disaster risk reduction efforts at all levels to avert and minimize adverse effect of flooding in Nigeria in 2023.

Earlier in the year, the Secretary General of the WMO Prof Petteri Taalas had commended Nigeria for the consistent and timely release of seasonal early warning predictions at high-level events presided over by Honourable Ministers. The WMO S-G via recorded video called on relevant stakeholders to utilize weather and climate predictions effectively.

THE FOUR COMPONENTS OF EW4ALL



Open Door Forum: UN hosts persons with disabilities



A cross section of participants

In providing a foundation for driving sustainable and transformative change towards disability inclusion in UN's work, the UN Disability Technical Working Group, held its first open-door forum with the Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) on 17 May 2023. The forum is for sharing personal stories, emerging issues, and policy recommendations. It is a forum for surfacing solutions to the problems faced by the 30 million Nigerians living with a disability and also a forum for active participation in the collective journey towards achieving the SDGs in Nigeria. In his welcome address, UN Resident Coordinator Mathias Schmale, appreciated the Disability Inclusion TWG for organizing the event, and expressed his interest in listening to the inputs and discussions to enrich the implementation of the UN inclusion Strategy launched in 2018. The Strategy, which provided the roadmap to operationalizing the Convention on Persons with Disabilities, is the guiding framework for the UN to practice the "Nothing for Us Without Us" mantra of the persons with the disability community. He further stated that the Open-house event sought to encourage

community members to tell their stories and discuss emerging issues and how the UN could support in tackling them. He stressed "As the UN, we are determined to lead by example, and this makes it expedient for us to start by increasing accessibility. We ensured that the Development Corporation that guides our collective work for the next 5 years, featured Disability Inclusion (DI) prominently". Executive Secretary, National Commission for Persons with Disability, represented by Adebola Adebayo, talked about the effort of the Nigerian government in ensuring that the rights of persons with disability are protected which culminated in the passage of the Disability Act in 2019 and the establishment of the commission in 2022. Ms. Lois Auta, Network of Women with Disabilities, emphasized that "Women with Disability are doubly jeopardized." She asked about how those barriers facing women with disabilities could be removed."



UN builds capacity of prosecutors on promotion of Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists



A participant makes an intervention during the workshop

In collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General Nigeria, UNESCO has concluded a national training course for prosecutors to strengthen knowledge and capacities on international and regional standards of freedom of expression, access to information and safety of journalists.

Held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 17 to 19 May, the three-day workshop brought together 28 prosecutors from different regions of the country, civil society representatives, members of judicial training institutes and journalists to enhance knowledge and provide for exchange of good practices and experiences on investigation and prosecution of crimes against journalists.

According to the UNESCO observatory of killed journalists, between 2006 and 2022, over 1,300 journalists have been killed around the world, with close to 9 out of 10 cases of these killings remaining judicially unresolved.

“When threats of violence and attacks against journalists are not properly investigated, this leads to more severe aggressions and murders, which is an extreme form of media censorship. This cycle of violence against journalists is often an indicator of the weakening of the rule of law and of the judicial system globally. Independent public prosecutors have therefore a crucial role to play in reinforcing the “three Ps” (Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution), to guarantee journalists’ safety and end impunity for crimes and attacks against them, thus protecting freedom of expression and upholding the rule of law”.

- Ms. Magdalene Anene-Maidoh, Representative in charge of UNESCO office in Nigeria

Her words were echoed by Mr. Mohammed Abubakar Babadoko, Director of Public Prosecution of the Federal Ministry of Justice, on behalf of the Attorney General of the Federation:

“Prosecutors and media play a critical role in ensuring transparency, accountability and good governance. This workshop represents a step towards promoting freedom of expression and safety of journalists in Nigeria, with the ultimate goal to fight impunity for crimes committed against them”.

Besides providing the participants with operational tools for investigating and prosecuting crimes against journalists and media workers through a combination of theoretical and practical session, high-level trainers and national experts also addressed key thematic areas, such as specific threats against women journalists, and explored mechanisms for the protection of journalists and their sources, and the protection of witnesses.

“This workshop was an eye-opener to me on what freedom of expression entails with respect to journalists and to what extent this human right is curtailed with regards to journalists in Nigeria. As a prosecutor, I will make sure that whenever I receive a file on a crime committed against a journalist, I will not let his/her right to freedom of expression be violated under my watch”.

- Mrs. Ofoma Nneka, Assistant Director, and Prosecutor of the Anambra State Ministry of Justice

“The workshop was most enlightening and insightful. Most interesting was the exposition on the extensive scope of the freedom of expression and its many dimensions and implications. For me, I would

say one of the major highlights of the engagement was the emphasis placed on the need for greater synergies among stakeholders within the justice sector in advancing the exercise of the freedom of expression and the press as well as their respective roles in this regard.”

- Adebimpe Elizabeth Olorunfemi, Research Fellow, National Judicial Institute, Abuja

“One of the concepts that I take away from this workshop is the international definition of journalism. Before, I thought that only professional journalists were entitled to cover public events and report the information to the public. From now on, whenever I receive a report on a violation of freedom of expression, I will make sure to consider and verify that information regardless of the source”.

- Ms. Mariam A. Kadiri from the National Human Rights Commission

Lead trainer of the workshop was Professor Sabin Ouellet, former chief prosecutor Chief Prosecutor at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions of Québec, and main author of the Guidelines for Prosecutors on Cases of Crimes Against Journalists, which informed the entire training. Developed in partnership with the International Association of Prosecutors, the guidelines are now available in 18 languages.

The training also counted among its experts Ms. Hajara Haruna Yusuf, Prosecutor and Chief State Counsel at the Department of International Cooperation of the Federal Ministry of Justice, who provided the na-

tional legal perspective on the issues addressed, and Ms. Oluwatosin Nguher, Senior Research and Legal Affairs Officer at the ECOWAS Court to present the landmark jurisprudence of the ECOWAS Court on freedom of expression and related cases.

On the last day, 9 journalists were also invited to have an open dialogue with prosecutors on national experiences and perspective on freedom of expression, including challenges and constraints faced daily by journalists while doing their job, including attacks by security forces.

The training was organized within the framework of UNESCO Judges’ Initiative which, since 2013, has raised the capacities of over 24,000 judicial actors (judges, prosecutors and lawyers) on international and regional standards on freedom of expression, access to information and the safety of journalists in more than 150 countries, notably through a series of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), on-the-ground trainings and workshops, and the publications of a number of toolkits and guidelines.

The organization of this training was notably supported by the Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, thanks to the special support of the governments of Sweden, Norway and Japan.



A cross section of participant during group work



Communication/information program officer (R) with representative of Nigerian Police and a resource person



Group photo with the resource persons

UN Chief of Staff applauds Nigeria on impressive integrated health delivery services



The Officer in charge of Family Health Clinic, Mrs Horsefall briefing Mr Earle Courtenay Rattray, (UN Secretary-General Chief of Staff) on health services rendered in the facility.

The Chief of Staff to the United Nations Secretary-General (COS), Mr Earle Courtenay Rattray, has applauded Nigeria on impressive integrated health delivery services adopted by the country in delivering essential healthcare services to its citizens.

Mr Rattray also appreciated the commitment of UN staff in serving the course of sustainable development and health security in Nigeria. The COS made the remark after the expedition on the sideline of his mission to attend the inauguration ceremony of Nigeria's new President, His Excellency, Bola Ahmed Tinubu on 29 May 2023 in Abuja. The COS conducted field visits within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and engaged with government officials, stakeholders, and front-line health workers to witness first-hand, some interventions by WHO, UNICEF, and other UN agencies to support the Nigerian Government and how these investments are strengthening global health security and pandemic preparedness.

During the tour, he visited the Wupa sewage treatment plant and the Family Health Clinic, where he got valuable insights related to WHO's funding and technical assistance to capacity building, integrated disease surveillance, outbreak response, delivery of integrated health services and how clients receive a continuum of preventive and curative care according to their needs over time.

While at the WUPA site, Dr Nwachukwu Theresa, the FCT Epidemiologist, informed the COS that, "WHO tremendously contributes to disease surveillance in Nigeria by providing transport logistics, technical and normative guidance, capacity building and training of sample collectors, mentorship, and supportive supervision".

Environmental surveillance monitors poliovirus transmission in human populations by examining wastewater/sewage supposedly contaminated by human faeces.

The WUPA sewage treatment plant located at the Idu settlement of Abuja Municipal Area Council, is one of three environmental sample sites in FCT.

Demonstrating sewage collection for testing, the plant Manager, Mr Abubakar Lapai, described the operations and functionality of the mimic panel, the process of environmental sample collection, laboratory testing, and chambers (inlet to outlet) for water pre-treatment based on the WHO standards.

Similarly, at the Family Health Clinic, Mr Rattray was given a tour of the various health service delivery units of the facility, which include registry, triage, non-communicable disease screening maternal, newborn, child health, and community management of malnutrition, cold chain, COVID-19 vaccination, routine immunization, health facility surveillance, community audio-visual acute flaccid paralysis detection and reporting (AVADAR).

After the tour, Mr. Rattray says, "I am impressed by the level of disease surveillance. The goal is zero tolerance against polio and ensuring no child is affected by the disease.

The UN is assisting the Government of Nigeria with funding and providing expertise across the UN family. The officials and people I have interacted with at the facilities appreciate the expertise shared by WHO through capacity building and on-the-job training," he says.

Expanding on the aim of the excursion, the WHO Representative and Head of Mission in Nigeria, Dr Walter Kazadi Mulombo, says the field visits by the COS were to give him first-hand experience of activities on the field which will generate high-level advocacy towards accelerating health using digital technology innovation and lessons learned during COVID-19 and polio eradication efforts to build on expertise towards the last mile, seen in the soon-to-be-endorsed pandemic treaty.

The FCT won the second runner-up among the North Central States in the Leadership Challenge award for improving primary healthcare services. It was a joint project of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Dangote Foundation, UNICEF, and the National Primary Health Care Development Agency.



The surveillance team at the Wupa sewage treatment centre demonstrating to Mr Rattery the process of sewage sample collection for poliovirus testing.



The WHO Country Representative Dr Mulombo briefing Mr Rattray (UN Secretary-General Chief of Staff) on polio surveillance activities at Wupa sewage treatment centre

FG – FAO commit to a new Country Programming Framework 2023 – 2027



The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Dr. Mohammad M Abubakar (right) and the FAO Representative Fred Kafeero (left) as they sign the document into operation.

The federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have formally signed a 5-year Country Programming Framework (CPF), to enhance the existing cooperation and contribute to agri-food system transformation in the country.

The ceremony was held at the conference room of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) Abuja on the 3rd May 2023, with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr Mohammad Mahmood Abubakar signing on behalf of the FGN while the FAO Representative in Nigeria and to the Economic Community of West African States Fred Kafeero signed on behalf of FAO.

The occasion officially signifies the beginning of the implementation of deliberate and prioritized support to the government of Nigeria for the development of agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources, enhanced food security and nutrition, and climate change mitigation and adaptation in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and Nigeria's Nations Development Plan. The priorities are anchored on the FAO global strategy to achieve its mandate encapsulated by the four (4) betters – Better production, Better Nutrition, Better environment and Better life, so as to leave no one behind.

Dr Abubakar, before signing the document, commended the commitment of FAO in rendering support to the government of Nigeria over the years, called on stakeholders to urgently invest in agriculture and develop strong action plans to address climate change, food losses and institutional weaknesses if the sector must be transformed.

The CPF, is in harmony with national strategies and policies to provide the enabling environment for sustainable investment in agriculture towards making agriculture the main stay of the national economy. "This will aggressively drive the economic diversification programmes and transform food systems to ensure sufficient food in the country as well as export for foreign earnings", Dr. Abubakar stated.

Earlier, Mr. Kafeero said that the purpose of the CPF is to respond to the country's priorities and address commitments to be collectively articulated through programmes and projects that speak to the country's needs and tackle related challenges. These are achieved through the adoption of policies and technologies that come with the implementation of such programmes.

"The CPF also takes full advantage of FAO corporate initiatives which Nigeria has signed into, including the Hand in Hand, Digital Villages and Green Cities Initiatives to mobilize additional resources for effective and timely implementation of the CPF. To this end, a results framework is set to ensure focused programming and an estimate of resource requirements is also provided to guide mobilization of funds for the implementation of programmes", Kafeero said.

In recognition of the efforts of the government to create an enabling environment for enhanced agriculture productivity for national food security and nutrition, the new CPF has set four priority areas to leverage its knowledge, resources, and expertise.

They are: "Sustainable and inclusive agri-food systems for improved productivity", which seeks to Strengthen inclusive, climate-smart agri-food value chains and diversified production systems as well as inclusive economic development through decent jobs; the second pillar is "Increasing resilience of food and agriculture – based livelihood systems", which seeks to strengthen capacities at national, subnational, local government and community levels for anticipatory action, disaster risk management, , and resilience building in agricultural based livelihoods.

Also, the third is healthy and nutritious diets which seeks to support enhanced food security and improved nutrition, including promoting nutritious food and increasing access to healthy diets, while the fourth pillar focuses on sustainable natural resource and climate management which seeks to support improved Sustainable natural resource management and climate action.

The long road to quitting tobacco



Useni Musa

Before 2021, the cautionary advice on cigarette packs in Nigeria was “The Federal Ministry of Health warns that smokers are liable to die young.”

Yet, this did not deter Useni Musa, a resident of the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja), in Northcentral Nigeria, from trying out his first cigarette stick at 13.

By the age of 19, he had become addicted, smoking an average of two packs a day. Useni is a butcher who sells meat kebabs in Dakwo, an informal settlement in Abuja. He says that the charcoal he uses to grill the meat made it easy for him to always light a cigarette.

“I smoked for about two decades,” he says.

“I lived my entire life in a slum where I saw different people smoke cigarettes and other substances and I admired their lifestyle. I started smoking by picking up cigarette butts or sharing sticks with others. By the time, I started making money, I began buying my packs”, he continues.

Now 35 years old with wives and children, Useni explains that he quit smoking to live a healthy life and serve as a good example in society. He realized that smoking offended people because of its strong smell and he quit in 2021.

“In our society, smoking is seen as bad and smokers are sometimes considered to be drug addicts,” he says.

But he warns that “Stopping was not easy. You have to make the decision by yourself and stick to it.”

Abubakar Umar, a scrap dealer and tea seller from Kastina State, got hooked on smoking at the age of 15.

Abubakar knew about the health implications of smoking and disliked the smell yet started anyway in 2008. He started the habit because his

friends smoked, and he wanted to be “cool” like them.

“I am not educated, but you can tell it is not healthy to smoke from the warnings and pictures on the packs of cigarettes.

I got influenced by watching and admiring people who smoke. I did not enjoy it at first, but I continued and started smoking about 7 to 10 cigarettes a day. Initially, I thought it helped by soothing me when I got angry or depressed but it was not the case,” he explains.

Abubakar decided to quit after 15 years of smoking. “I realized there was no gain in smoking and decided it was time to stop.”

“No one advised me to quit. I think people can choose what's best for themselves. One day, I tried smoking and after three puffs, I put it out and stopped,” he recounts. He encourages anyone who wants to quit to be determined even if they relapse.

Putting a stop to tobacco

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that tobacco consumption is one of the major public health threats the world is facing.

In Africa, every year, 146 000 people die from tobacco-related diseases including cancer, heart disease, stroke, lung diseases, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, among others.

Unlike Musa and Abubakar, many people are addicted to tobacco but cannot quit.

“Tobacco use is a damaging habit that must be avoided because it can introduce a wide range of diseases to the body and has similar damaging effects on those exposed to the smoke,” says Dr Francis Fagbuile, a public health expert with the University College Teaching Hospital in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Dr Fagbuile explains that “All forms of tobacco are harmful, and there is no safe level of exposure.

“Tobacco has about 7000 chemicals in it and 40 of them cause cancer. When smokers use tobacco, it causes danger to all parts of the body – oral cancer, lung cancer oral gum diseases, and also affects the brain. It is also associated with hypertension and diabetes,” he says.

Every year, on 31 May, WHO and public health champions around the world come together to mark World No Tobacco Day. The day is used to raise awareness of the negative health, social, economic, and environmental impacts of tobacco production and use

The theme for this year’s commemoration is “We need food, not tobacco.” Emphasizing the importance of the theme, Dr Fagbuile explains that the cultivation of tobacco is harmful to the environment, hazardous to the farmers, and increases the risk of food insecurity. “To stop the cultivation of tobacco, the government should encourage farmers to plant alternative farm produce that would be beneficial by providing them with incentives,” he says.

Furthermore, WHO Representative in Nigeria, Dr Walter Kazadi Mulombo, calls on the governments and policymakers to provide an enabling environment for tobacco farmers to shift to growing alternative food crops.

He explains that compared with other agricultural activities such as maize growing and grazing livestock, tobacco farming has a far more destructive impact on ecosystems as tobacco farmlands are more

prone to desertification.

“Across the world, an estimated 3.5 million hectares of land are used for tobacco growing each year.

Nine of the 10 largest tobacco cultivators are low- and middle-income countries and four of these are defined as low-income food-deficit countries,” he says.

Tobacco regulation efforts

To curb the harmful use of tobacco, WHO is supporting the Government of Nigeria to formulate and implement policies that would regulate the use of the deadly product.

These include strengthening the National Tobacco Control Committee and conducting several sensitization and capacity-building activities for different stakeholders, including new and emerging tobacco products.

In addition, WHO, Centre for Disease Control (CDC), CDC Foundation, Research Triangle Institute (RTI), and other stakeholders are supporting the country to conduct the Global Adult Tobacco Survey.

The survey will provide recent data on tobacco.

WHO supported the Federal Ministry of Health to develop and produce Graphic Health Warnings (GHWs) as stipulated by the 2015 National Tobacco Control Act and its regulation. Since 2021, a combination of GHWs and text health warnings covering at least 50% on the package is being implemented. This will increase to 60% by 2024.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

When the floods came



Omowunmi Oyedokun and her children

Photo: UNICEF/2023/YutopiaBay

Fear, worry, and anxiety—these are some of the emotions felt by residents of several communities in Kaduna, especially during the rainy season.

Many Kaduna communities are prone to flooding, and residents have also dealt with its devastating consequences in recent years.

The Oyedokuns' home in Gbadamosi Street, Dorino in Kabala West, Kaduna South LGA, had been badly affected by the floods that occurred in 2021. 48-year-old Omowunmi Oyedokun, who had lived in the area with her husband and eight children for several years, was deeply concerned about what would happen to their homes when the rainy season arrived in 2022.

"In October 2021, the year before the intervention, in the middle of the night, my neighbour ran to my door, knocking and shouting, Mama Bobo, Mama Bobo, where are you? Come out ooh!! Water don enter the house."

This jolted the Oyedokuns from sleep, and they soon realized that water had begun seeping into their tiny apartment and had started soaking up the mattress, chairs, and other valuable belongings. Omowunmi quickly backed her youngest child and, together with the rest of the family, started rescuing the items they could. It was a stressful and trying time for them. Omowunmi recalled the impact the situation had on her oldest daughter's, Anike's, mental health as she refused to eat anything for two full days. The floods of 2021 caused a lot of stress for the family.

"My oldest daughter, Anike, sobbed for two days straight! She could not eat anything as a result of the stress and the thought of us losing our valuables. I did not know what to do. My younger sister came and took my two youngest children to go and stay with her, as her neighborhood was not affected by the floods, while the rest of us tried to sort ourselves out. She called me later that evening and said that the

children had suddenly fallen ill, and she suspected it was as a result of the floods. You know, the floods bring with it dirt, and these little ones are prone to sickness as a result"

After the terrible floods of 2021, the Oyedokuns were worried about what would happen when the rainy season came in 2022. They did not have the resources to relocate or prepare adequately, despite the devastating effects the floods had on their family in 2021.

Thankfully, the Oyedokuns and their next-door neighbour, 53-year-old Abubakar Abdullahi, were among the families selected as beneficiaries of the European Commission (ECHO) cash transfer programme for flood-prone people. When they received the money, the two families pooled their resources to erect a stone wall around their apartment. This stone wall helped the two households mitigate the consequences of the floods in 2022.

"We don't have money to move from this area to higher ground yet, but this stone hedge has really been helpful. Do you know that water did not enter our homes last year? It was this stone that blocked it."

A community leader in Dorino, Kabala West, Kaduna South, Abdulwaheed Tijani, confirmed that several residents in the area who had received cash grants from ECHO used the money to build stone barriers to help mitigate the side effects of the flood.

According to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Nigeria experienced the worst flooding in the past ten years in 2022, displacing 1.4 million people and resulting in 600 fatalities. In 2020, the flooding also had devastating impacts (more than 129,000 people were displaced; 68 were killed), and 320 local government areas in 35 states—including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)—were affected.

But the floods of 2022 claimed no lives in Kaduna. Part of the reason attributed to this is that many residents were adequately prepared,

thanks to funds received from the cash transfer programme.

40-year-old Helen James, a small time trader and mother of three, resides with her family in a lowland area close to the Romi River in Koro Street, Romi, Chikun LGA, Kaduna State.

After the devastating effects the floods of 2021 had on their homes, farmlands and their farm animals, Helen was concerned about how her family would get by if such an event ever occurred again. The floods of 2021 had made them squat with neighbours who were not affected, and it destroyed many of their valuables.

Every aspect of her family's life had been impacted by the floods of 2021, including their home, their means of livelihood, and the schooling of their children.



Flood ruins in Kabala West



Flood ruins in Kabala West



Abdulwaheed Tijani, community leader in Kaballah West



Helen James and two of her children, Song and Sophie



Helen at her small business

Photo: UNICEF/2023/YutopiaBay



Helen at her small business

Photo News



Photo news captions,

1. Mr. Courtenay Rattray, UN Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet; and Mr. Mohamed Yahya, Resident Representative of UNDP in Nigeria (Representing UN Resident Coordinator), waiting to receive wreaths to be laid in honour of fallen UN staff and partners during the attack on the UN House in 2011.
2. UN Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet, Mr. Courtenay Rattray, lays a wreath at the Cenotaph of fallen UN staff and partners during the attack on the UN House Abuja in 2011.
3. L-R: EU Ambassador to Nigeria, Ms Samuela Isopi; Outgoing Minister of **Women Affairs**, Dame Pauline Tallen; and UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Matthias Schmale.

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