



January 2025

# Newsletter



## UN Deputy Secretary-General Concludes Official Visit in Nigeria

UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed concluded a two-day visit to Nigeria, engaging in high-level meetings with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, key ministers, ECOWAS leadership, and the UN Country Team.

Accompanied by UNOWAS head Leonardo Simão, she discussed regional integration, climate action, food security, and economic development, emphasizing Nigeria's role in delivering ambitious climate commitments. She reaffirmed the UN's support for Nigeria's development under the UN and Nigeria Cooperation Framework (2023-2027), ensuring no one is left behind.







- P 03 UN Deputy Secretary-General Official Visit
- P 05 Humanitarian Appeal for North-East Nigeria
- P 07 Scaling up Tom Brown Production in Borno state
- P 09 Commit \$183.1m to Northern Nigeria's Agric Value Chain

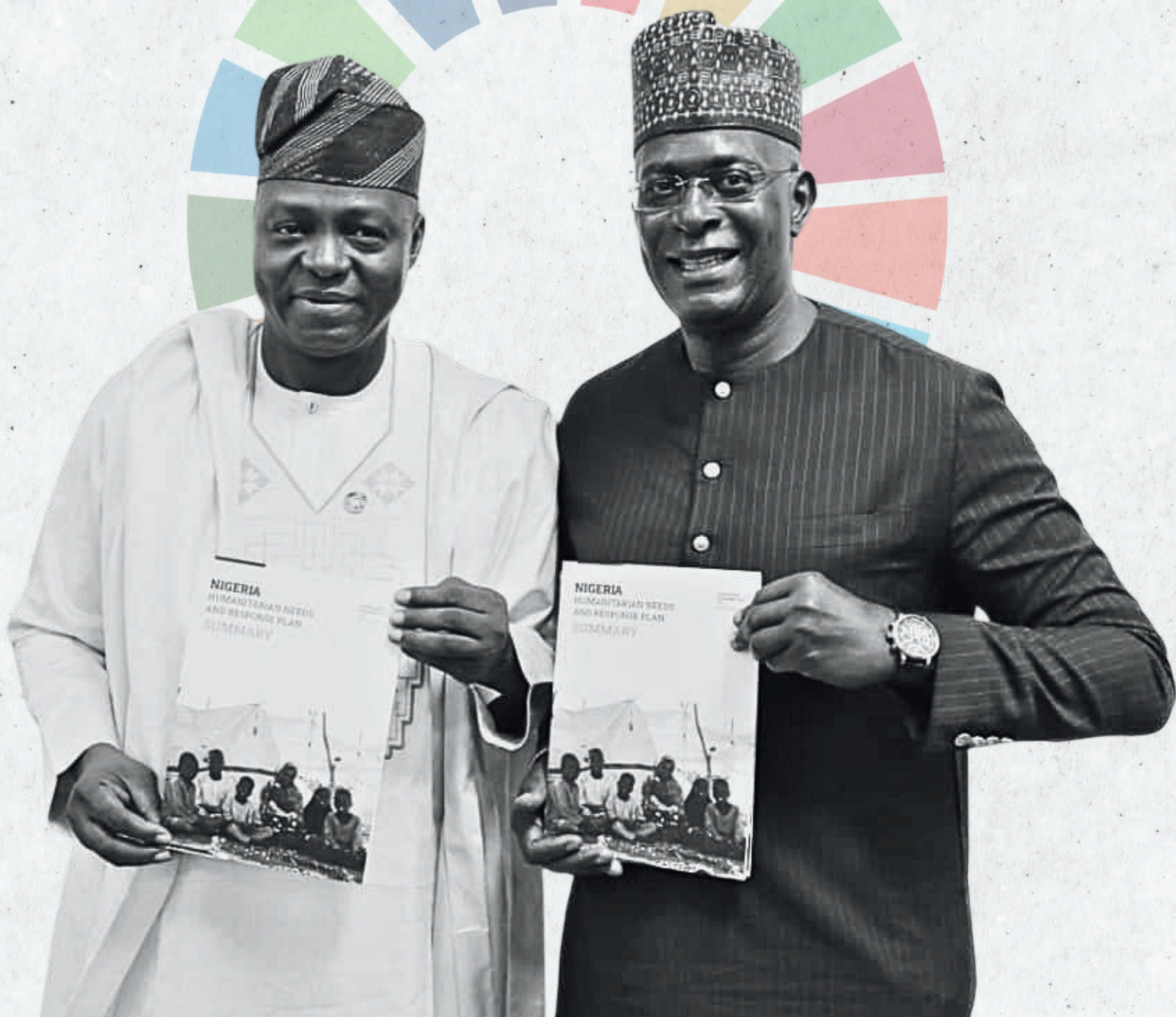
and more stories..



# TABLE OF

# CONTENTS

<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	<b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER 	<b>1</b> NO POVERTY 	<b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 
<b>03</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>
UN Deputy Secretary-General Official Visit	Humanitarian Appeal for North- East Nigeria	Scaling up Tom Brown Production in Borno state	Commit \$183.1m to Northern Nigeria's Agric Value Chain & Review COSOP to Boost Nigeria's Rural Economy, Food Systems	Stakeholders Advocate for Labour Standards Bill in Ondo State	International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust





# UN DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OFFICIAL VISIT



UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (Left) and the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Prof Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda.

The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina J. Mohammed has concluded a 2-day official visit to Nigeria.

While in Nigeria, she had a series of high-level meetings, including with H.E. President Bola Ahmed Tinubu; Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Mr. Wale Edun; Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Prof Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda; senior government officials; President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Dr. Omar Aliou Touray; as well as the UN Country Team under the leadership of the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mohamed Malick Fall.

The Deputy Secretary-General, accompanied by the Secretary-General's Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), Leonardo Simão, on 9 – 10 January 2025, engaged and mobilized support for regional integration, stability and development; strengthening humanitarian-development-peace nexus; Pact for the future; partnership for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts; ensuring food security; durable solutions to internal displacement; and leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) to enhance Nigeria's trade and economic relations across the region.

"Member States, including Nigeria, and with the support of the UN and other stakeholders, need to deliver more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to ensure a safer and more livable future for both the planet and people everywhere." She said.

On the Pact for the future as an outcome of the Summit of the future held in September 2024 in New York, Mohammed emphasized that the Pact remained a sure pathway to getting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) back on track.

"The Pact is not a separate agenda from the SDGs. It is one and the same. That is why the first chapter is on SDGs and financing for development. It is about international peace and security; science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation; youth and future generations; and transforming global governance." She explained.

The Deputy Secretary General reassured that the United Nations in Nigeria would strengthen its partnership with the government through diligent implementation of the UN and Nigeria Cooperation Framework (2023-2027), and would continue to support the development aspirations of the people of Nigeria, leaving no one behind.



President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Dr. Omar Aliou Touray (Right) welcomes UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed to the ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja.





*"The Pact is not a separate agenda from the SDGs. It is one and the same. That is why the first chapter is on SDGs and financing for development. It is about international peace and security; science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation; youth and future generations; and transforming global governance."*

**Amina J. Mohammed**  
UN Deputy Secretary-General



UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (Left) and the Minister of Finance/ Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Mr Wale Edun at his office in Abuja.



# HUMANITARIAN APPEAL FOR NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

## UN Launches US\$910.2 Million Humanitarian Appeal for North-East Nigeria in 2025

The United Nations alongside the Nigerian Government, launched the 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) in Abuja. The Plan seeks just over \$910 million to help 3.6 million people in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe (BAY) states. Overall, 7.8 million people in these states need humanitarian assistance.

According to the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mohamed M. Fall, humanitarian needs are “driven by conflict, climate shocks, and economic instability,” with the compounding effects of flooding, disease outbreaks, food insecurity, and malnutrition deepening vulnerabilities. He was speaking in Abuja at the launch of the HNRP, where he was joined by the Federal Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Reduction, Professor Nentawe Goshwe Yilwatda, high-level representatives of the diplomatic corps, and senior officials from diverse Government agencies as well as national and international non-governmental organizations.

Minister Yilwatda highlighted the growing humanitarian needs in north-west and north-central Nigeria. He called for combined humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts for that region as well. “This will enable us to get humanitarian efforts translated into durable solutions that can move people out of poverty and provide livelihoods to reach sustainable development,” he said.

Given the declining global funding for humanitarian efforts, the 2025 HNRP aims to enhance efficiency in aid delivery through anticipatory action for disasters like floods and disease outbreaks. It also focuses on increasing direct funding for local partners and scaling up cash assistance for a more tailored response, and reducing transaction costs.

The Governors of the BAY states reaffirmed their commitment to continued engagement with the UN and its partners.

In 2025, 33.1 million Nigerians will face acute food insecurity during the lean season, 5.1 million of them in the BAY states alone. Urgent funding is needed to provide nutritious food and emergency agricultural interventions.



A cross-section of senior government and humanitarian officials and development partners at the launch of the Nigeria 2025 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan in Abuja. © UNOCHA/Princewill James Chukwuebuka



**IN BORNO, ADAMAWA, AND YOBE STATES,**

**7.8M** people urgently need humanitarian assistance.

Over **1.8M** individuals remain internally displaced.

**5.1M** people are at risk of food insecurity by June 2025.

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**HUMANITARIANS ARE APPEALING FOR**

**US\$910.2M**

Supporting humanitarians means:  
**Clean water, Shelter nutritious meals, quality education,  
and hope for those need it most.**





# SCALING UP TOM BROWN PRODUCTION IN BORNO STATE

## FAO and Government commits to scaling up Tom Brown production in Borno state



FAO Nigeria Representative Koffy Dominique Kouacou and Governor of Borno State Babagana Umara Zulum at the high-level roundtable discussion to scale up the production and utilization of the Tom Brown initiative in Borno State.

The Government of Borno State, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), convened a high-level roundtable discussion to scale up the production and utilization of the Tom Brown initiative in Borno State.

During the event held at the UN House in Abuja, representatives of Federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Borno State Government, donors, UN agencies and NGOs, reaffirmed their commitment to addressing food insecurity, particularly in northeastern Nigeria.

The roundtable was held at a critical time following the recent release of alarming Cadre Harmonisé figures, which indicate that 25 million Nigerians are currently experiencing food insecurity – a situation that is projected to worsen during the upcoming lean season, between June - August 2025 to 33.1 million across 26 states and the Federal Capital Territory.

According to the Northeast Nutrition Sector, represented by the Nutrition Sector Coordinator John Mukisa, an alarming 3.7 million children in northeastern Nigeria are stunted, wasted, or anaemic. Investments in low-cost, innovative, and locally sourced solutions such as Tom Brown could save the Borno Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states an estimated USD 120 million annually.

“Nigeria continues to bear one of the highest burdens of malnutrition globally. This reality underscores the urgency of our gathering today. It is imperative that we adopt innovative, community-driven approaches to combat malnutrition and ensure food security. Tom Brown has demonstrated remarkable effectiveness in addressing malnutrition, particularly among vulnerable groups such as children under five and lactating mothers,” said Professor Baba Mallam Gana, Commissioner of Health and Human Services for Borno State.

“Scaling up Tom Brown will not only meet urgent nutritional needs but also create livelihood opportunities, strengthen local markets, and generate revenue for regional development. To bring this vision to life, we need partnership, expertise, and resources. Beyond figures and policies, we must remember the human faces behind the statistics—the children whose lives we can save, the families we can uplift, and the communities we can transform,” said FAO Representative ad interim, Koffy Dominique Kouacou.

“The production and commercialization of Tom Brown will attract investment from the private sector, boosting state revenue and positioning Borno as a leader in nutrition-sensitive agriculture,” added Governor Babagana Umara Zulum.



# Multiple benefits of expanding the production of Tom Brown



LIVELIHOOD  
CREATION



AGRICULTURAL  
MARKET  
STRENGTHENING



REVENUE  
GENERATION



REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT



*"we must remember  
the human faces  
behind the statistics  
— the children whose lives  
we can save,  
the families we can uplift,  
and the communities  
we can transform."*

**Koffy Dominique Kouacou**  
FAO Nigeria Representative





# IFAD, AFD, FG COMMIT \$183.1M TO NORTHERN NIGERIA'S AGRIC VALUE CHAIN

United Nations Agency the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the French Development Agency (AFD in collaboration with) the Federal Government of Nigeria has earmarked \$183.1 million for the Value Chain Programme in Northern Nigeria (VCN).

The initiative, designed to strengthen agricultural productivity and market access, aimed to reduce poverty, enhance nutrition, and improve resilience among vulnerable rural populations in nine northern states of Borno, Bauchi, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Jigawa, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara.

The VCN is an eight-year programme set to be signed in August 2025, with implementation expected to commence thereafter. The initiative will directly benefit an estimated 456,000 smallholder farmers and rural entrepreneurs, with a strong focus on inclusivity where 40 per cent of beneficiaries will be women, 60 per cent youth, 10 per cent persons with disabilities and five per cent Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) returnees. The programme will be financed by IFAD, AFD with co-funding by the federal government and is also projected to indirectly support 3.1 million household members.

Speaking at the validation workshop of VCN complementary studies conducted by FAO Investment Centre held recently in Abuja, IFAD Nigeria country director, Dede Ekoue said that the project implementation manual has been developed to guide execution in the nine states with complementary studies, funded by IFAD, AFD, and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United (FAO).

"We are front-loading the work that needs to be done after signature of program documents as we understand the urgency in launching the implementation of the VCN Program in support of government ongoing efforts for sustainable and inclusive development in the North", Ekoue said.

Project manager for AFD, Sally Ibrahim reiterated AFD's commitment to fostering economic opportunities for vulnerable populations and tackling food and nutritional insecurity. She noted that AFD's involvement in the VCN programme complements its broader efforts in Nigeria's agricultural sector, particularly in rural access and market infrastructure development.

FAO Nigeria representative, Braimah Tofiq, stressed that addressing malnutrition in Northern Nigeria is a priority. Director, of the projects coordinating unit, ministry of agriculture and food security, Bukar Musa, stated that VCN would play a critical role in strengthening value chains, boosting agricultural productivity, and expanding market access. Musa emphasised the programme's alignment with Nigeria's National Agricultural Technology and Innovation Policy (NATIP), the Presidential Emergency Declaration on Food Security, and the government's Renewed Hope Agenda.

FAO's studies for the VCN programme recommend promoting nutrient-rich crops, maternal and child nutrition initiatives, backyard gardening, and small-scale livestock farming to combat rising malnutrition rates. The VCN programme will promote climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive production, strengthening agricultural value chains for staple crops, cash crops and horticulture.

Key initiatives include; community-based seed production and the promotion of biofortified seeds and organic fertilizers and strengthening linkages between farmers and input suppliers to ensure access to quality agricultural inputs.

Others are encouraging entrepreneurship, particularly among youth and women, by integrating them into profitable value chains and enhancing food security and nutrition through improved post-harvest handling, value addition, and food fortification.



Group photograph of key stakeholders at the IFAD/AFD Value Chain North Complementary studies validation workshop held on 29th January, 2025 in Abuja.



# IFAD, FG REVIEW COSOP TO BOOST NIGERIA'S RURAL ECONOMY, FOOD SYSTEMS



IFAD Nigeria Country Director, Mrs Dede Ekoue (2nd right) with key stakeholder at the IFAD and FGN joint Annual COSOP Review held recently in Abuja.

In a bid to accelerate inclusive and resilient growth of Nigeria's rural economy and food systems transformation agenda, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (FMAFS) in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) hosted a joint annual review of Nigeria Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) 2024-2029, on 19th December in Abuja.

COSOP is the framework of the Cooperation Strategy between IFAD and a country for IFAD financing and facilitating management for results. The current Nigeria COSOP 2024 -2029 was designed through intensive consultations with stakeholders in each geopolitical zone under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and the Federal Ministry of Finance and was approved by the IFAD Executive Board in April 2024.

The Nigeria COSOP is aimed at promoting inclusive and resilient growth of the rural economy through market-driven, agri-food system transformation for food and nutrition security for 1.2 million beneficiaries including smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs, particularly women and youth, IDPs and PWDs. In line with Government priorities under the COSOP, IFAD is funding three sovereign investment programmes in Nigeria.

In her remarks, IFAD Nigeria Country Director, Mrs Dede Ekoue, said the workshop was organised to highlight some key results of the strategy for 2024; discuss strategies to facilitate a better implementation of the COSOP taking into account the major challenges and risks as well as opportunities; and for exchanges on best approaches to build synergies/partnership in support of the COSOP implementation.

Dede stated that least 74,000 farmers and agro-entrepreneurs in Nigeria benefitted from the COSOP in year 2024. "The COSOP was also instrumental during this year 2024 in reaching out at least 20,000 persons in rural areas to access financial services and 10,000 beneficiaries access financial literacy. The projects have supported at least 24,000 women, youth, and start-up income-generation activities".

"With regard to the matter of land, the projects helped beneficiaries access over 30,000 hectares of land. As you know access to land is critical, especially for youth and women and other vulnerable groups." She noted that the new COSOP puts a new emphasis on fragility and addressing the root cause of fragility which are poverty and insecurity, ensuring inclusion of the most vulnerable.

The Director, Projects Coordinating Unit of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Mr. Bukar Musa said the COSOP framework has been a cornerstone in driving sustainable agricultural transformation in Nigeria. "Through this partnership and cooperation, we have been able to reach underserved rural communities, empower vulnerable populations, and promote resilience in the face of challenges such as climate change, economic fluctuations, and insecurity."

"In line with the COSOP strategic objectives, IFAD and FGN have made headways in productivity, nutrition and resilience through agribusiness empowerment of smallholder farmers in various value chain sectors. The COSOP objectives are achieved through the ongoing FGN/IFAD projects – VCDP, LIFE-ND and SAPZ and non-sovereign initiatives such as Zero Hunger, AgriHub and Babban Gona," he added.



# STAKEHOLDERS ADVOCATE FOR LABOUR STANDARDS BILL IN ONDO STATE

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The International Labour Organization (ILO) in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMLE), Social Partners and relevant stakeholders with technical and financial support through the Action Against Child Labour in Agriculture in West Africa (ACLAWA) project, organized a Civil Society sensitization in Akure to engage on the enactment of the Labour Standards Bill. This event gathered key players from civil society, media influencers, labour unions, and government to discuss the urgent need to advocate for the enactment of the Labour Standards Bill.

Nigeria's current Labour Act, which dates to 1971, has failed to keep pace with the country's evolving labour market, particularly in the areas of gender equality, workplace safety, and informal sector protections. Despite amendments in 2004, the Act remains insufficient in safeguarding workers' rights. The Labour Standards Bill, now pending with the Federal Ministry of Justice, seeks to address these gaps and align Nigeria's labour laws with global standards. There is an urgent need to advocate for its enactment to align with international standards and secure the rights of Nigerian workers, including the interest of the Employers and Government thereby promoting Decent Work environment. This urgency informed the engagement with the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Labour Unions, Social Media Influencers, Public Affairs Commentators/Analysts and Journalists in Ondo State.







In her welcome remarks, Mrs. Olanike Magboruko, the Ondo State Controller for the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, emphasized the global urgency of eliminating child labour through improved labour standards. Stating that the Labour Standard bill has provisions on the Minimum age for employment and the prohibition of the hazardous work list for child labourers. Mrs. Magboruko also highlighted the ILO's vital role in promoting Decent Work in Akure and in Nigeria as a whole.

Comrade Adewale Sanusi, representing the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), reiterated the union's commitment to fighting child labour and supporting the enactment of the Bill, while Clement Fatuase, Chairman of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), stressed the importance of active participation by all stakeholders to ensure successful outcomes.

Child labour data in Ondo State presented by Mr. Olusola Ajayi, Acting Statistician-General of Ondo State, revealed that 35.6% of children aged 5-17 in the state are engaged in child labour, with the agricultural sector accounting for the majority.

Dr. Agatha Kolawole, ACLAWA's National Project Manager, representing the ILO country Director, stated ILO's intervention in the elimination of child labour through the ACLAWA, GALAB and ACCEL Africa projects. She spoke on the importance of the Labour Standards Bill in the elimination of child labour. She emphasized that the Bill is crucial in preventing children from hazardous work and urged stakeholders to raise awareness within their communities.

The participants at the workshop were divided into four groups; each assigned a specific topic for discussion. Following their deliberations, representatives from each group gave a presentation on their topics and devised action plans attached in the appendix below.

At the end of the meeting, Stakeholders in Ondo state expressed their commitment to combating Child Labour in the state towards a sustainable future for children in Ondo state.





# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

## Educational Outreach



United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Abuja created awareness about the dangers of antisemitism, at an educational outreach with over 400 students at Government Secondary School, Federal capital Territory, Garki, Abuja in observance of the Day for the commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust. The students were advised on the importance of fighting hatred, hate speech and antisemitism and the need to act to eschew discrimination and all forms of prejudice. But to promote love, tolerance and ensure social cohesion in their schools and communities. The exhibition "Lest we Forget" displayed at the briefing, provided glimpses of moments of family love and intimate connections that existed in Jewish families and communities before the Holocaust and our responsibility to defend the right of all to live with dignity and peace.





# Educational Briefing

The educational briefing organized by UN Information Centre and UNESCO with support from the German Embassy in Nigeria and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is a universal reminder of the devastating consequences of hatred, discrimination and indifference.

The Officer in Charge of UNESCO Regional Office Abuja, Albert Mendy represented by Mr Antony Ogunniyi, Education Programme Officer (M&E), advised the students to see the Holocaust commemoration as a powerful reminder that hatred, even within the classrooms can grow to unimaginable consequences if unchecked and urged the youths to ensure tolerance, respect, and empathy are values that must guide their daily interactions.

Part of the activities in commemoration of the Holocaust Remembrance at the UN House, with over 120 students from schools in the FCT Abuja, was the screening of the Holocaust video shared by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, a quiz session to test students' knowledge of the Holocaust Facts, and the exhibition 'Lest We Forget' curated by UNIC Digital Media Assistant. The exhibition revealed the moments of intimate connections of family that existed amongst the Jews before the Holocaust. The exhibition speaks of our responsibility to defend the rights of all people to live with dignity and peace.

The commemoration had in attendance Ms Adwoa Kufuor, the UN Senior Adviser on Human Rights, Mr Ronald Kayanja, the Director UN information Centre, Mr Matthias Dold First Secretary, German Embassy, Mr Michael Murphy, Representative of the Canadian High Commission, and Ms Victoria Cook and Bella Ndubuisi, US Embassy Representative.



"The observance is to **remember and honor the memory** of the six million Jewish men, women, and children who were murdered in the Holocaust—alongside millions of others who suffered under the Nazi regime—but also to reaffirm the commitment to **ensuring that such atrocities never happen again.**"

**KLipman Garden**

Israeli Deputy High Commissioner in Nigeria





# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION

**AI & Education:**  
**Preserving human agency in a world of automation**

## PANELISTS



**Adebayo Abayomi**

Associate Professor  
Federal University of  
Agriculture, Abeokuta



**Titilola olojede Ph.D**

Lecturer/ Head, Dept. of  
Philosophy, NOUN



**R. Williams Olatunji**

Professor of PR & Ad.,  
Faculty of Communication  
& Media Studies, LASU



**Lois Moses**

Head of Research  
Pan-Africa Centre for  
Artificial Intelligence Ethics

## MODERATOR

**Anthony Ogunniyi**

UNESCO Abuja Education  
Programme Officer (M&E)



**LISTEN TO THE FULL PODCAST**





# OTHER UPDATES

## 5th Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum

The UN Resident Coordinator in Nigeria, Mohamed Malick Fall, Spoke at the 5th Edition of the Lake Chad Basin Governors' Forum in Borno State, Nigeria. He called for a combine humanitarian, development & peacebuilding approach.

[Learn more](#)



## Benue State Action Plan on Durable Solutions

The UN Resident Coordinator in Nigeria, Mohamed Malick Fall, joined H.E. Governor Hyacinth Alia and Hon. Minister Prof. Nentawe Yilwatda in Makurdi for the launch of the Benue State Action Plan on Durable Solutions.

[Learn more](#)





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