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Newly-elected Nigerian UN General Assembly President Pledges Focus on 'Peace and Prosperity' for Most Vulnerable



Newly-elected Nigerian UN General Assembly President, Tijani Muhammad-Bande.
UN Photo/Manuel Elias

Tijani Muhammad-Bande, Nigeria's current UN Permanent Representative, was elected to head the world body by acclamation on 4 June 2019, in the General Assembly Hall in New York and will succeed Ecuador's Maria Fernanda Espinosa. "Peace and security, poverty eradication, zero hunger, quality education, climate action and inclusion will constitute a major priority of my presidency", said the Nigerian ambassador.

When he takes the reins at opening of the 74th session in September, he committed "to promoting partnerships that are needed from all stakeholders to achieve our objectives, and ultimately ensure that we do our best to ensure peace and prosperity, particularly, for the most vulnerable".

Mr. Muhammad-Bande spoke about a number of September's high-level events that will be convened at UN Headquarters in New York to support the Sustainable Development Agenda, including a High-Level Political Forum, the Climate Change Summit, the High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, the High-level meeting on Universal Health Coverage, as well as the high-level meeting to review progress made in addressing the priorities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

"The promotion of human rights and the empowerment of women and youth deserve special attention, and I will be devoted to the promotion of gender parity throughout the whole UN system, starting from my own Office", said the president-elect. Noting that the 75th anniversary of the UN's founding would be commemorated during his tenure, he called it "a unique opportunity for us to reduce the trust deficit between nations".

HIGHLIGHTS

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EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Rolls out Inception Workshops in Calabar, Lagos, Yola



Cross River State Deputy Governor, Prof Ivara Esu (2nd right) with the Spotlight team lead by Head of Resident Coordinator's Office, Kwasi Amankwaah (Left).

The European Union (EU) and the United Nations in Nigeria has continued the Spotlight Nigeria project inception workshops for the implementation of the EU-UN Joint Spotlight Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. Held in Calabar, Cross River State; Lagos, Lagos State and Yola, Adamawa State; the Inception Workshops aimed to create a common understanding and obtain the buy-in of critical stakeholders on the Spotlight Initiative; clarify the expected roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders and inform the key stakeholders on the implementation arrangement and key deliverables; among others...*continue on page 2*

Spotlight Initiative Rolls out Inception Workshops in States...Continued from page 1

...Receiving the Spotlight team on 24 June 2019, in his office in Calabar, the Deputy Governor of Cross River State, Prof Ivere Esu, expressed the commitment of the State Government to ensuring the success of the Spotlight Initiative projects. Cross River State will not disappoint. We will justify our selection as one of the five beneficiary States for the project.

Responding the Head of the UN Delegation to Calabar, Kwasi Amankwaah, explained that the Spotlight Initiative focused on ending all forms of violence against women and girls to achieve gender equality and women empowerment.

"A Nigeria where all women and girls are free from violence and harmful practices is the vision of the Spotlight Initiative project." He disclosed.

On 24 June, the Governor of Adamawa State, Alhaji Ahmadu Umoru Fintiri reiterated the State's support for indicators that would empower women and reduce out-of-school children. The Governor, represented by the Secretary to the State Government, Alhaji Bashir Ahmed, made this assurance, in Yola while declaring open, the Inception Workshop in the State. The Permanent Secretary, Adamawa State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Hajiya Maisaratu Ahmed Bello, expressed her trust in the capacity of Spotlight Initiative to strengthen efforts of the State in keeping girls in schools.

On 20 June in Lagos, the Permanent Secretary of the State Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Mrs Yewande Falugba, assured that the State government would do everything possible to ensure that all set objectives of the Spotlight Initiative in the State. "Lagos State government is committed to ending



L – R: Erelu Kuti IV of Lagos, Her Royal Highness Abiola Dosunmu; Permanent Secretary of the State Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Mrs Yewande Falugba,; and the Agoloto of Badagry Kingdom, High Chief Samuel Hundogan at the Lagos Inception Workshop held on 20 June .

violence against women and girls and have established strong structures to deal with the issues." She said.

The workshops were attended by representatives of traditional institutions; religious leaders; government Ministries, Department and Agencies; Civil Society Organisations; and Media.

In her remarks, the President of Women Arise, Dr Joe Okei Odumakin charged women to "Agonize less, organize more. Rise up in unison to end violence against women and girls. Silence is no longer golden."

UN Condemns Suicide Attack on Civilians in Borno State

On the evening of Sunday 16 June 2019, multiple suicide bombings tragically killed at least 30 civilians and injured more than 40 others in the Mandarari community of Koduga Local Government Area, less than 40 km away from Maiduguri, the Borno State capital.

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Edward Kallon, strongly condemned the multiple suicide bombings and expressed his sympathy to the families of the victims, stressing that the "UN and its partners deplore these abhorrent acts of violence and call for those responsible for these attacks to be swiftly brought to justice. Our deepest condolences go to the families of the victims in Konduga."

The series of attacks targeted civilians who were gathered in a sports viewing hall to watch a televised football match, as well as at a nearby cafe. Among the deceased is a community volunteer who was contributing to the humanitarian response in north-east Nigeria. Those seriously injured as a result of the bomb blasts were rush to Maiduguri for medical treatment.

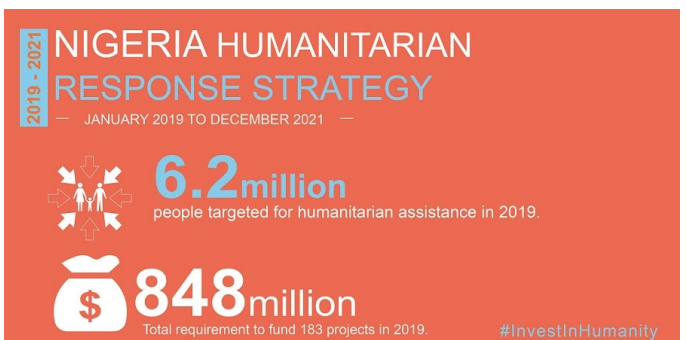
The humanitarian crisis in north-east Nigeria is one of the most severe in the world – and is first and foremost a protection crisis. Since the start of the conflict in 2009, more than 27,000 people have been killed. Women, men and children face grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law every day.

Thousands of women and girls have been abducted, meanwhile thousands of children swell in the ranks of armed actors. In 2017 and 2018, 289 children, mostly girls, were compelled by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) to carry borne improvised explosive devices. Two teenage girls were reported to be involved in the suicide attacks in Konduga.

Targeted attacks on civilians constitute a grave violation of international humanitarian law. The UN and its partners in Nigeria consistently urge all parties to the conflict to protect civilians and comply fully with international human rights and international humanitarian law.



United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mr Edward



UN Supports SME Development for Women, Organises Workshop on Skills

ILO organises a Training of Trainers workshop on “Improve Your Exhibition Skills” (IYES) to build the capacity of Business Development Services providers supporting female and rural entrepreneurs to successfully organize and participate in trade fairs and exhibitions.

As part of its SME development objective and support for women in business, the International Labour Organisation Country Office Abuja is reinforcing the capacity of local business and development service (BDSPs) providers in the use of its management tool, “Improve Your Existing Skills” (IYES) through training of trainers workshop on the IYES modules to establish trainers in Nigeria. The five day workshop held from 10-14th June 2019 aimed to support business expansion and growth; capacity of local women and men led-MSMEs to access markets and sustain their businesses.

In his opening statement, Mr Dennis Zulu, ILO Country Office Director welcomed and introduced the participants to the work of ILO on SME development particularly, promoting entrepreneurship for women and in rural areas. He noted that the importance of the training course towards business development and growth, and highlighted the need for local entrepreneurs in various regions nationwide to promote their products effectively to allow for business growth and expansion beyond Nigeria. He explained that one way to accomplish this is through effective participation in trade fairs and exhibitions. He emphasized on the core responsibility of the workshop participants to roll out the IYES training program and build the capacity of women and rural entrepreneurs to capture trade fair opportunities, successfully organise and participate in trade fairs and sustain their businesses.

The workshop participants are drawn from NECA’s Network of Entrepreneurial Women (NNEW)- a Network deeply committed to empowering and nurturing entrepreneurship amongst women



Mr Dennis Zulu, ILO Country Office Director (Right) presents a certificate to one of the participants

and a subsidiary of the Nigeria’s Employers Consultative Association, and Abuja Enterprise Agency (AEA) focused on the development of micro, small and medium enterprises within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and aimed to assist new and existing entrepreneurs to overcome obstacles to growth through access to finance, proper business planning, developing entrepreneurship skills and suitable work-space. It is FCT vehicle for Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) development and poverty reduction.

Following the conclusion of the workshop, participants will embark of the certification process by providing guidance in marketing, communication and promotional activities through training activities to small-scale women/rural entrepreneurs for their successful participation in trade fairs and exhibitions.

UN Holds Consultation on the Treatment of Children Affected by Terrorism

It is estimated that Boko Haram and ISWAP since 2009 have recruited about 8000 children. Due to the difficulties associated with collecting reliable data it is likely that these figures are underestimated. In 2014, the abduction of 276 girls from their school in Chibok attracted international attention, unmasking the brutality and disregard these groups hold against children.

“Armed groups in the north-east have been recruiting and using children as combatants and non-combatants, raping and forcing girls to marry, and committing other grave violations against children. Some of the girls become pregnant in captivity and give birth without any medical care or attention” reported a civil society representative from Maiduguri. A 2017 report by UNICEF found that the use of children to carry out suicide attacks had become a defining feature of the conflict.

Recruitment and exploitation have a long-lasting impact on children’s lives. Today, rehabilitating and reintegrating these children poses significant challenges, not only in view of their number, but also due to the intense and lasting traumatic effects.

In June 2019, UNODC therefore organised a consultative workshop to address the situation of children recruited and exploited by terrorist groups under the EU-Nigeria-UNODC-CTED Partnership Project. UNODC gathered all relevant stakeholders in Abuja, including representatives from the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA), Federal Ministry of Justice, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development as well as representative of the State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States, Federal High Court, National Human Rights Commission, Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, The Presidential Committee on the North- East Initiative, prosecutors, social workers, and civil society organizations, as

well as UNICEF, OHCHR, IOM. The Chief Judges of Borno and Yobe State High Courts were also in attendance.

The consultation aimed to identify priorities in the areas of prevention, reintegration, and justice and to foster a multi-disciplinary coordination in addressing these pressing challenges. UNODC introduced the training package (including the UNODC Handbook), and Roadmap on the treatment of children recruited and exploited by terrorist and violent extremist groups. Participants discussed gaps in the current preventative framework, needs to improve coherence and effectiveness of rehabilitation and reintegration efforts, as well as necessities for specialized training on the protection of children in a counter-terrorism context. National authorities asserted their renewed commitment to addressing this phenomenon and guaranteeing children’s rights. UNODC reiterated its readiness to support Nigeria in pursuing the complementary objectives of preserving public safety and protecting children.

UNODC has been providing technical assistance since 2015, through its Global Programme to End Violence against Children to support the efforts of over 30 Member States in different regions of the world addressing this urgent and complex phenomenon.



Thousands of Youth Rally to Advocate for Quality Education



Young people in Abuja join their peers across States in northern Nigeria to advocate for quality education for all children, especially girls. UNICEF Nigeria/2019.

On the 2019 Day of the African Child (celebrated on 16 June every year), about 2000 youth across 10 Nigerian states - including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja - presented petitions to their governors, parliamentarians, policymakers and other influential persons in a mass effort to draw attention to the need to act on commitments to increasing access to safe, quality education for all children, especially girls.

The action, supported by UNICEF, came as the world celebrated the Day of the African Child, commemorating the day in 1976 that hundreds of students were shot in Soweto, South Africa, while demonstrating for their right to quality education.

The Nigerian campaign for access to quality education will hold the newly-elected government officials at all levels accountable for their campaign promises to provide equitable access to free, safe and quality education for every child, especially the girl child, in Nigeria.

The 10 states where the mass actions took place - Bauchi, Niger, Katsina, Kano, Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba and the FCT - have about eight million children not in school and, an average enrolment rate of only 57 per cent.

The global theme for this year's Day of the African child is child rights in all situations, including during humanitarian crises.

In Nigeria today, over 10.5 millions children are unable to access safe and quality education, including due to the ongoing crisis in the north-east, which has left schools destroyed, teachers unavailable, and parents terrified to send their children to school due to insecurity – especially for girl children, who have been the victim of kidnapping while at school.

“Schools should be a safe place for children – one in which they can get a quality education that will put them on the path to a secure future,” said Peter Kawkins, UNICEF Representative in Nigeria.

“Sadly, the demand for quality education by children in Soweto, South Africa in 1976, is still valid today, in too many countries around the world. The youth actions we are seeing today across several states is a wake-up call for leaders to act on their commit-

ments to provide quality education for all children, in all situations.”

The engagement sought to secure commitments from national and state governments to prioritize children's rights to education in their governance agenda, including through budgeting, in their states and at the national level.

“This engagement creates an opportunity for Nigerian youth to advocate to policy and decision makers and urge them to commit resources to education, without which the substantial number of out-of-school children in Nigeria will not be reduced,” said Peter Hawkins.

The action called for improved school infrastructure, a massive enrolment campaign to bring all children to school, and targeted investments to ensure an uninterrupted 12 years of schooling for girls. In addition, it hoped to extract a commitment for a 10% increase in budgetary allocation and release of funds for education, with 50 percent of the total budget to basic education, recruitment, deployment and provision of incentives for 1000 female teachers per year and recruitment and deployment of 1000 qualified teachers per year, especially to rural areas, where they are most needed.

The action also came as the world celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Convention is the most widely-ratified human rights treaty in history, and stipulates that every child has the right to education. It has helped to transform children's lives; inspiring legislative changes to protect children and enabling them to participate actively in their societies. Nigeria ratified the CRC in 1991.

As part of the commemoration, UNICEF has released a “Passport to Your Rights” – a copy of the CRC in child-friendly language, in pocket format. UNICEF aims that every child in Nigeria has a copy by 2030 – the deadline for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The CRC ‘passport’ is also available in Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and Pidgin languages, helping to ensure access by millions of Nigerians.

UN Commemorates World Refugee Day Across Nigeria

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) observed the World Refugee Day (WRD) on 20 June 2019 with a week-long commemoration in collaboration with the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced (NCFRMI), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other key partners.



Road walk in Abuja (UNHCR/H. Suliman)

This year, the WRD commemoration emphasized the movement of solidarity with refugees, in addition to observing the African Union's (AU) 50th anniversary of the 1969 Refugee Convention and the 10th anniversary of the 2009 Kampala Convention. Under the overall context of AU's "Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa," activities took place across the country, driven from Maiduguri in Northeast Nigeria; Abuja, FCT and Ogoja, Cross River State; as well as Taraba, Lagos and Adikpo (Benue State).

In Abuja, starting the week with inspiring classroom lectures in three Abuja schools, UNHCR joined forces with NCFRMI and ECOWAS to engage citizens from different walks of life. The official press briefing and live radio and TV programmes ensured that the message of solidarity reached Nigerians in their homes while the #StepWithRefugees road walk brought them together to walk several thousand steps in solidarity. At the official WRD commemoration, hosted by ECOWAS on 20 June, the UNHCR Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Antonio Canhandula, reminded the audiences that: "In emergencies, UNHCR and its partners are on the ground, helping to provide shelter, food, clean water, and medical care,- yet it is the people in local communities who give so much - sometimes over many years. This solidarity/hospitality is essential—it inspires and moves us to believe that people can thrive together." The WRD week in Abuja culminated in the distribution of non-food items (NFIs) to refugees, in an event organized by ECOWAS.

In Maiduguri, the WRD activities started on 17 June, at the Mohamed Goni Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp (Stadium Camp) with traditional dance, theatre and music. The WRD week here featured thought-provoking discussions and debates with members of the academia, media and humanitarian actors including professors of the University of Maiduguri, the Nigerian Human Rights Commission and UNHCR, at the NTA TV station, on Peace FM Radio Station and local radio stations. These discussions were complemented by community dialogue and awareness activities to engage the IDPs in the camps in Banki, Monguno, Damasak and Ngala, Bama and Pulka, organized by UNHCR



Activities including the internally displaced children in Maiduguri (UNHCR/T. Monboe)

partners INTERSOS and Borno Women Development Initiative (BOWDI). The observance also featured exhibitions, music

and theatre art. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Edward Kallon reiterated UN's solidarity with refugees as he addressed the participants.

In Yola, the commemoration activities from 20 to 23 June included solidarity walks with IDPs, TV talk shows, a football match and close participation of IDPs who contributed an exhibition of products, music, dance, drama and poems. In the same period in Damaturu, activities were carried out jointly with the IDPs' children at their schools, in addition to football games, awareness and community dialog exercises on the Kampala Convention.

In Ogoja, the WRD commemoration was held on 20 June at the Ogoja Local Council premises and presided by the Ogoja Head of Local Government Administration (HOLGA), Ms. Margaret Bassey, State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), NCFRMI, the Atol Nkim (traditional rulers) and UNHCR. At the colourful, rhythmic and exciting event, Cameroonian refugees presented their cultural dance, costumes, masks and music. Hundreds of refugees, local guests and UNHCR partners were also in attendance.

In her remarks, the HOLGA reminded refugees that they are welcome and the UNHCR Head of Office appreciated the support so far from stakeholders responding to the situation. In their messages, the refugees reminded that they have mixed feelings of joy and sadness, as they have found protection in asylum, but the crisis continues in Cameroon.



Colourful activities in Adikpo (UNHCR/L. Agiende)

In Adikpo, the events commenced on 17 June at the Anyake Settlement, with sensitization sessions on the rights and obligations of refugees; distribution of food items to

all the refugee communities, a friendly football match with mixed teams of the refugee and host community, spelling competition, songs and poems by the refugee children. On 19 June, an advocacy workshop was organized by UNHCR in Makurdi (Benue State), to sensitize the Nigerian Immigration Service, Police, Civil Defence Corp, SEMA, FHI 360, FJDP, Ministries of Education; Agriculture; Justice, as well as the Nigerian Union of Journalist on UNHCR's work and to seek support for the Cameroonian refugee situation.

In Calabar, the day started with the #stepwithrefugees road walk, attended by refugees, host, government officials, partners and UNHCR. Participants



Beautiful dance in Calabar (UNHCR/C. Ntampaka)

were addressed by SEMA as representative of Cross River State authorities, NCFRMI, representative of CRS Ministry of Information and Orientation, the representative of immigration and partners including UNFPA, Cuso International, Caritas, FHI360, Nigeria Red Cross and Mediatrix. UNHCR applauded refugees in the audience for their resilience after they were invited to share how many kilometres they may have walked to reach safety.

The gathering proceeded with a fantastic cultural display by young refugee women and the the celebration was concluded by the symbolic signature of a banner by all the audience to show their commitment to continue standing with refugees.

Albinism Has Nothing to do With Intelligence and Productivity of a Person - UN



R-L: National Information Officer of the UN Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, Oluseyi Soremekun carries a child living with albinism; Director of OAM Foundation, Ms Onome Majoro and a participant at the event held on 13 June 2019 in Lagos.

The Director of the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) for Nigeria, Mr Ronald Kayanja, has reiterated that people living albinism are equally talented, intelligent and productive as those without. "People living with Albinism are not different from other people in terms of their intelligence, talents, influence and productivity." He emphasised while addressing participants at the commemoration of the International Albinism Awareness Day 2019 held on 13 June 2019, at the Library Auditorium of UNIC, Lagos Nigeria.

Represented by the National Information Officer of UNIC, Oluseyi Soremekun, the Director buttressed his point and made reference to Article One of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which states that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

Mr Kayanja emphasised that "we must not discriminate against anyone regardless of their religion, ethnicity or colour. We are #StillStandingStrong with people living with Albinism. Drumming support and recognising the rights of people living with albinism is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which aim to leave no one behind."

He added that the 2019 theme: "Still Standing Strong", encouraged everyone to stand in solidarity with persons with albinism around the world and support their cause, as well as promote and protect their human rights.

The commemoration which was held in collaboration with Onome Akinlolu Majoro (OAM) Foundation, had scores of men and women, boys and girls living with albinism in attendance; and also featured Poem Recitation, Panel Sessions, Interactive Discussions, Eye Check-up and Exhibition of photographs of persons living with Albinism.

The UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of human rights by persons with albinism, Ms. Ikponwosa Ero, in a keynote address read by Mr. Ojisi Emezie of OAM Foundation, stated that: "Serving and improving the lives of persons with Albinism, where they have been marginalized, is a glowing example of leaving no one behind, as echoed through the Sustainable Development Goals". "To ensure an inclusive society, we must begin to change our orientation about stereotypes around people living Albinism and continue to push for advocacy to promote and protect the rights of people with Albinism." She added.



National Information Officer of the UN Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, Oluseyi Soremekun (left) and Mr Chimezie Udechukwu



A group photograph of some of the participants.

Men Promoting Breastfeeding and Improved Child Nutrition in Kano State

In 2017, a farmer from Gurum community in Kano State, 28-year-old Umar Tanimu, heard about the infant and young child feeding programme supported by UNICEF to promote good nutrition for Nigerian children. Umar volunteered to be a counsellor and subsequently received training from UNICEF on how men can promote improved child nutrition. Since then, Umar and many other men in the community have taken up a challenge to put an end to child malnutrition.

In Gurum, fathers support groups are being formed as the men in the community adopt new behaviours to ensure children are well-nourished. Umar, who leads one of the groups consisting of 15 members, facilitates a meeting once a month and encourages exclusive breastfeeding at every opportunity. For the new fathers, even though they might not be able to breastfeed their newborns themselves, they are learning how to provide the necessary support to their breastfeeding spouses.

Child malnutrition in Nigeria is at a critical stage - an estimated 2 million children suffer from severe acute malnutrition. The exclusive breastfeeding rate is also low and has not improved significantly over the past decade, with only 17 percent of babies being exclusively breastfed during their first six months of life.

Men and women have a shared responsibility to ensure children receive good nutrition. In a community like Gurum, where the majority of the men are farmers, they play an important role in ensuring that pregnant women have access to the right foods. After a child is born, men can also support their spouses as they begin a journey of exclusive breastfeeding and ensuring that as the babies grow beyond 6 months, they are fed properly with adequate quantity and quality of food, and continued breastfeeding.

Using a counselling card with graphic illustrations, Umar, who is expecting to be a father soon, explains the importance of

breastfeeding and eating the right food. “Exclusive breastfeeding helps the child grow well and prevents malnutrition. It is also important to support your spouse to cook the right kind of meals for the older children, adding beans, vegetables and other necessary ingredients to their meals.”



Umar Tanimu, leader of a fathers support group in Gurum, Kano State, facilitates a session on breastfeeding & nutrition for infants. UNICEF Nigeria/2019/Owoicho

Currently, there are three fathers support groups in Gurum community. In the support group, fathers, grandfathers and soon-to-be fathers meet once a month to learn more about good nutrition, ask questions and receive counselling. The fathers support group is a great place for sharing experiences and creating bonds with other fathers taking care of infants and young children.

“I now include eggs, milk and vegetables in my children’s diet so they can be healthy. These meetings have enlightened me and many other men in this community,” says 57-year-old Ishak Nasiru, a farmer from Gurum.

Through the fathers support groups, the men in Gurum are beginning to understand a father’s role in parenting and are sharing the child care responsibility with their spouses. Fathers are becoming key agents in championing good nutrition for every child in their homes and in the community.

To the men who are too busy to make time for their children, Umar says: “Helping your spouse take care of the children is more important than any other work.”

Joint United Nations Team on AIDS (UNJTA) Holds Retreat



Joint UN team on AIDS retreat, Lagos, 11-14 June 2019

The annual mid-year retreat for the UN Joint team on AIDS (UNJTA) in Nigeria took place in Lagos from 11-14 June 2019. The meeting brought together some 40 participants from the UN agencies, the government (NACA and MOH) and major donors (PEPFAR and Global Fund) to reposition the HIV response and maximise impact in Nigeria, in the aftermath of the historical Nigeria AIDS Indicator and Impact Survey (NAIIS). The retreat was framed within the broader context of the 2018-2022 United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF), along with the ongoing UN reform agenda at the country level emphasizing new generation country teams fixated on strategic collective actions, results and accountability.

The ongoing UN Reform and the repositioning of the HIV response in Nigeria post-Nigeria AIDS Indicator and Impact Survey (NAIIS) provided impetus for the UN system gathering together to

reposition the UN's policy and programmatic support to Nigeria in the area of HIV.

The UNJTA also used this as an opportunity for strengthening partnership and collaboration with the Government of Nigeria and major donors in the HIV response and to identify opportunities to build synergies and complementarities in Nigeria's HIV re-

sponse. The UNJTA saw this as an opportunity to strengthen the health sector's programmatic leadership, ownership, coordination and reporting.

Partners underlined the urgency of local action and the imperatives of an enabling policy environment. To build on this progress, the participants discussed, reviewed and agreed on result-oriented recommendations to further strategize and prioritize support to Government of Nigeria to address the critical gaps and challenges.

By the end of the retreat, the team had improved clarity on how the UN will support the Government of Nigeria, PEPFAR and Global Fund to achieve greater impact and to foster country/State ownership and stewardship. To this end the Joint Team was able to generate prioritized deliverables for supporting the Government of Nigeria to achieve the 90-90-90 targets by leveraging on cosponsor convening and partnership responsibilities within the UNAIDS Division of Labour.

Promising Results from Malaria-prevention Medication among Children in Borno State, Nigeria

“I had always asked my family members to sit outside for one or two hours at night just before bed-time, when I usually spray the bedroom with indoor sprays,” says Hajia Hauwa Abiso, who lives in the north-eastern Nigerian state of Borno. “Little did I know that mosquito bites during this period were enough to infect them.”

When she learned about the danger of mosquito bites at night, she worried that her 3-year-old child might be infected with malaria. “Since my child received the antimalaria drugs given during the campaign, and I started to use lessons from the radio drama on household practices for malaria prevention, my children have hardly fallen ill of malaria,” she explains, with great relief.

Hajia Hauwa is the mother of one of the 1.2 million children younger than 5 years reached in four cycles of house-to-house campaigns since 2017 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and partners in Borno State with the seasonal malaria chemoprevention.

WHO recommends the intermittent administration of full treatment courses of an oral antimalarial medicine to children in areas with high transmission rates during the malaria season.

Even though malaria control in Borno State remains a public health challenge, there are suboptimal availability and use of prevention and treatment interventions, such as insecticide-treated bed nets and accessibility to health facilities for diagnosis and treatment using quality-assured artemisinin-based combination drug therapy.

WHO estimates that more than half of the recorded deaths in Borno State in 2018 were due to malaria combined with malnutrition – more than all other causes of death combined, including cholera, measles and hepatitis E.

Seasonal malaria chemoprevention targets the protection of young children from malaria infection. A recent impact survey by



Administering seasonal malaria chemoprevention treatment in Borno State

WHO showed promising results on malaria morbidity and mortality in the state. Based on the incidence of malaria in children aged 3–59 months in 20 randomly selected clusters (using National Immunization Programme sample in 16 local government areas of Borno, the findings indicated fewer cases of malaria among children who participated in the seasonal malaria chemoprevention campaign, compared with children who did not receive the treatment.

The survey findings also showed that children living in areas where the campaign did not take place are at higher risk of malaria infection (at 16%), compared with children who received the treatment (at 5%).

“WHO is impressed by the results of the survey. It confirms our recommendation, and we urge health authorities to conduct seasonal malaria chemoprevention campaigns as a cost-effective and safe means to prevent malaria across the Sahel sub-region of Africa,” emphasizes Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa.

With assistance from WHO, the Borno State Ministry of Health developed a strategy for malaria control in north-eastern Nigeria, with the seasonal malaria chemoprevention treatment as a critical tool for rapidly reducing malaria death and disease among young children.

“In emergencies such as in north-eastern Nigeria, the most effective ways to reduce morbidity and mortality due to malaria among children living in vulnerable conditions is through preventive measures, such as use of insecticide-treated nets, seasonal malaria chemoprevention and the provision of real-time lifesaving messages for prevention,” stresses Dr Clement Peter Lasuba, Officer in Charge for WHO Nigeria.

Borno State Malaria Programme Manager, Mala Waziri, agrees: “From the impact assessment of the seasonal malaria chemoprevention exercise in Borno State, it is evident that the intervention has helped to reduce the incidence of malaria in households, as less cases are reported in the clinics than previously.”



Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa participating in the seasonal malaria chemoprevention campaign in Borno State

PHOTO NEWS



Captions, from left to right and top to bottom:

1. Erelu Kuti IV of Lagos, Her Royal Highness Abiola Dosunmu; at the Spotlight Initiative Inception Workshop in Lagos on 20 June 2019
2. The Spotlight Initiative Team comprising of representatives of UN Women, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIC/ Resident Coordinator's Office and the Ministry of Budget and National Planning
3. The Head of the Resident Coordinator's Office, Kwasi Amankwaah addresses the audience during the Spotlight Initiative Inception Workshop in Calabar on 10 June 2019.



Editor: Oluseyi Soremekun (UNIC)

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