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President Buhari Receives ILO Director-General, Restates Commitment to Job Creation



Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari (2nd right) welcomes Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Guy Ryder (2nd left), to the State House Abuja while the Director of ILO in Nigeria, Mr Denis Zulu (1st from left) and Chief of Staff to the President, Alhaji Aba Kyari (1st right) look on.

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari on 1 August 2019, received in audience the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Guy Ryder, at the State House, Abuja and restated the commitment of his administration to creating jobs for the youthful population of Nigeria.

President Buhari said: "In the last four years, this government prioritised Agriculture, Housing and Infrastructure development. Our focus in these areas was to create jobs today and ensure peace and equitable prosperity for future generations." He described Nigeria as "a country with a population of close to 200 million," which "has to be able to feed itself. We cannot rely on importing food."

ILO's Director-General Guy Ryder, disclosed that the organisation had worked with Nigeria's Ministry of Labour on employment policies for youths but noted that what was left was the implementation.

"We have worked with the labour ministry to prepare employment policies about youths' employment, migration safety and health productivity. "The focus is the practical implementation of these plans", He explained.

Mr Ryder further said that he was in Nigeria to attend the Global Youth Employment Forum where over 60 countries had gathered to address practically the most pressing challenge of finding decent jobs for young people.

He also expressed the commitment of the Organisation to existing partnership and co-operation with Nigeria.

HIGHLIGHTS

UN, Sokoto Government Sign Work Plan, launch Spotlight Initiative P. 3

UN, Partners Mark Youth Day, Advocate Support for Young People P. 6

Youth participation key to end open defecation in Nigeria P. 8

Sultan of Sokoto Receives UNCT, Commits to Women & Children's Education, Health



L-R: Country Representative of UNICEF, Mr Peter Hawkins; Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar; UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Edward Kallon; Officer-In-Charge of UN-FPA, Mr Mamadou Kante and Deputy Country Representative of UN Women, Mr Lansana Wonneh

The Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, has reaffirmed his commitment to women and children's education and health. He spoke on 26 August 2019, as he received in audience, the United Nations Nigeria team led by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Edward Kallon. "A child's first teacher is a woman and she must be educated. Our children must go to school. If you have education, you will go for ante-natal and deliver safely and without complications," said the Sultan.

On insecurity and violent extremism, His Eminence...continue on page 2

Humanitarian Community in Nigeria Commemorates Ten Years Since Start of the Crisis in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states



The humanitarian community convened at the UN House in Abuja on 31 July 2019 in remembrance of ten years since the start of the crisis in north-east Nigeria, predominantly affecting Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states.

Senior officials from the United Nations, international and national NGOs, representatives from the diplomatic and donor community, and the Government represented by His Excellency the State Governor of Yobe, the Chairman of the North East Development Commission (NEDC), and the director General of the National Emergency Agency (NEMA) among others solemnly marked the occasion and held a moment of silence for the tens of thousands of civilians killed and the millions of people affected.

"We are here today to remember those who have lost their lives in the conflict, and to remind of those still struggling to survive and rebuild their lives. Ten years on, it is not the time for us to spare any effort. In this very critical period, we must collectively redouble efforts, with support at all levels – locally, nationally and internationally," said Mr. Edward Kallon, United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria.

To raise awareness of the decade-long crisis and garner support for the response, the UN and international NGOs also held a virtual reality experience called "Holding On" which shares the real-life story of Hannatu, a woman from Borno State, who was displaced from Baga town in Kukawa LGA to Maiduguri. The remembrance ceremony also served as a launch for this virtual reality experience, which was open for two weeks at Jabi Lake Mall in Abuja and provided an opportunity for the public to experience the stories of conflict-affected people in the north-east firsthand.

"This is the first time the Holding On exhibition visits one of the countries where these stories originate from and it is a unique opportunity for the people of Nigeria to experience these testimonies through their own eyes," said Mr. Richard Danziger, IOM Regional Director for West and Central Africa.

A digital campaign with the tagline #10YearsTooMany complemented both the official remembrance ceremony and the two-week virtual reality experience, sharing both staggering statistics of how many people have been affected as well as the achievements of humanitarian partners in averting the worst of the crisis. Ten years since the start of the conflict, some 7.1 million

people are still in dire need of humanitarian assistance and 1.8 million people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states have been uprooted from their homes, more than 80 per cent of them women and children. So far this year, the humanitarian community has reached some 2.5 million people with urgent, life-saving aid.

Sultan of Sokoto Receives UNCT...continued from pg. 1

...the Sultan of Sokoto, identified illiteracy as the root cause of extremism. He explained, "Illiteracy is the root of our problems. It breeds extremism and Islam abhors extremism."

Earlier, Mr Kallon called for revitalisation of the traditional peace architecture to address the challenges of radicalisation and violent extremism in the country.

On the EU-UN Spotlight initiative to end violence against women and girls, the Resident Coordinator, expressed concern about sexual and gender-based violence in the State and emphasised the need to promote more vigorously, women and children's education. "Spotlight Initiative recognises the important role of traditional and religious institutions in the empowerment of women and girls with life-saving information and education.



Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar (Left) presents his book to the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Edward Kallon, during the visit of the UN Country Team to his palace.

UN, Sokoto Government Sign Partnership Framework Annual Work Plan, launch Spotlight Initiative

The United Nations system in Nigeria and the Sokoto State Government have signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF) State Annual Work Plan and the Delivery as One.

The document which was jointly signed on 26 August 2019, by Governor Aminu W. Tambuwal of Sokoto State and the UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Edward Kallon at the Government House in Sokoto, requires all the UN Agencies with operations in Sokoto State to work coherently with the State government and deliver as one for greater impact.

The signing ceremony was held in the Council Chambers of the Government House shortly before the flag-off of the European Union-United Nations Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls in the State.

The UN Resident-Coordinator Edward Kallon and the Sokoto State Governor, H.E. Aminu Tambuwal, jointly performed the flag-off ceremony which was attended by the State's Executive Council members and some members of the UN Country Team.

Addressing the audience at the Council Chambers of the Government House, Mr Kallon noted the concern about sexual and gender-based violence and underscored the importance of access to education and health facilities in addressing majority of the challenges. "Spotlight initiative recognises the need to work with traditional institutions to empower women and girls to contribute better to national development." He said, "Youth involvement in implementation of Spotlight initiative is a critical success factor."

Governor Tambuwal expressed appreciation concerning the choice of Sokoto State as one of the 5 + 1 States in the implementation of the Spotlight project. "We will support the UN's efforts to achieve the objectives of Spotlight initiative and the Sustainable Development Goals".

On gender equality he explained the State was making progress, although slow. Sokoto State has three female members of cabinet, and more need to be done to empower women to compete favourably.



Governor Aminu W. Tambuwal of Sokoto State (Left) and the UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Edward Kallon (Right) at the Government House in Sokoto.



Governor Aminu W. Tambuwal of Sokoto State and the UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr Edward Kallon, officially flag-off the Spotlight Initiative at the Government House in Sokoto

Spotlight Partners' Orientation Workshop Opens in Lagos, Clarifies Roles

Towards ensuring a deeper understanding of implementation deliverables for the Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls, a three-Day partners' orientation workshop, was organised on 15 August 2019, in Lagos. The workshop which had participants drawn from CSOs and government partners from Adamawa, Cross River, Ebonyi, Lagos and Sokoto States, including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), aimed at clarifying roles and responsibilities of partners in the implementation of Spotlight Initiative to end all forms of violence against women and girls in the focal States.

Addressing the participants, the Head of the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Mr Kwasi Amankwaah, explained that it was necessary to "brainstorm and jointly strategize on how to achieve the intersecting outcomes within the different Spotlight Initiative pillars; as well as identify potential barriers and possible risks and develop a corresponding risk mitigation strategy."

He emphasised the importance of 'leave no one behind' and noted that all women and girls, irrespective of marginalization and exclusion due to poverty, ethnicity, disability, religion, age, geography, migratory status, HIV status, profession, and other background, should live free of violence.

Amankwaah explained further, "women and girls with disabilities, women and girls in situations of poverty, women and girls of all ages living with HIV, girls and young women living on the

streets and those out of school, women and girls living in rural areas and in deprived urban areas, are engaged and are reached. Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between European Union - EU and the United Nations - UN, to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. It is the world's largest targeted effort to end all forms of violence against women and girls.



A group photograph of Spotlight Initiative partners at the orientation workshop held on 15 August 2019 at Lagos.

Three Years without a Case of Wild Poliovirus, Gov't warns Against Complacency



A child gets vaccinated against wild polio

As Nigeria reached three years (on 21 August 2019) without reporting a case of wild poliovirus (WPV), the Executive Director (ED) of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), Dr Faisal Shuaib cautioned that the major milestone is “one which we must delicately manage with cautious euphoria.”

Speaking in a Press Conference in Abuja, he acknowledged that Nigeria passed the three-year benchmark without a single WPV case is a step forward to certifying the entire African region wild poliovirus-free. The ED however noted, “This achievement would certainly not have been possible without the novel strategies adopted in the consistent fight against polio and other vaccine preventable diseases. We commend the strong domestic and global financing and the commitment of government at all levels.”

While speaking at the event, the World Health Organization Officer in Charge (OIC) for Nigeria, Dr Peter Clement, applauded the efforts of Government of Nigeria, partners and the thousands of polio workers over the past three decades to bring the WPV count to zero.

“Since the last outbreak of wild polio in 2016 in the northeast, Nigeria has strengthened supplementary immunization activities and routine immunization, implemented innovative strategies to vaccinate hard-to-reach children and improved acute flaccid paralysis and environmental surveillance. These efforts are all highly commendable”, the OIC affirmed.

Despite the significant progress, ending all forms of polio across the region remains an unfinished success story. Low immunization rates pose a major risk to other forms of polio virus

outbreaks; furthermore, inaccessibility to some children pose as a major threat to sustaining recent gains.

High routine immunization coverage and quality surveillance remain most critical in the build up towards certification and post certification. “As long as polio virus still exists in any part of the world (as it currently does in Afghanistan and Pakistan), all children are at risk, therefore we must maintain the momentum towards regional and global certification,” stated Dr Clement.

It is important to note that following the Nigeria three-year mark, the Africa Regional Commission for Certification of Polio Eradication (ARCC) will begin a rigorous process to confirm if each country in the region is wild polio-free. Nigeria will submit its final country data for evaluation in March 2020, provided there are no new wild polio cases. If the data confirms zero cases, the entire WHO AFRO region may receive wild polio-free certification as soon as mid-2020, leaving only one region out of six around the world (the Eastern Mediterranean region) where wild polio virus still exists.

The press briefing was attended by country representatives of all GPEI partners: WHO, UNICEF, CDC, Rotary and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; as well as USAID, Government of Germany, EU and Canada. The Emir of Jiwa, representing the Northern Traditional Leaders Committee was also in attendance.

Support for Polio Eradication to the Federal Government of Nigeria through the World Health Organization is made possible by funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, European Union, Government of Germany through KfW Bank, Global Affairs Canada, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department for International Development (DFID UK), Rotary International and the World Bank

World Humanitarian Day Celebrates Women Humanitarians in Nigeria

This year's World Humanitarian Day, marked annually on 19 August around the world, celebrated women humanitarians. In Nigeria, national and international aid workers gathered around the country to pay tribute to the contributions of women aid workers and the sacrifice they make in providing life-saving assistance to millions of people in the country's north-east. Speaking on behalf of the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria at a humanitarian walk in Abuja on 17 August, Peter Ekayu, Deputy Head of OCHA Nigeria, conveyed the crucial role women play in the humanitarian response, particularly in the north-east where 80 per cent of the affected population are women and children.

"Women humanitarians bring a unique perspective to humanitarian work through their understanding of the specific needs and priority of girls and women. From reuniting separated children to ensuring people uprooted by conflict have shelter, access to clean water, healthcare, food and education, women are active in every aspect of humanitarian action," he said.

The commemorations around the country also mourned the death of the 37 aid workers who have been killed since the start of the crisis in 2009, and especially the three women who lost their lives in service to humanity in the past year.

Saifura Hussaini Ahmed Khorsa and Hauwa Mohammed Liman were midwives with ICRC who were executed in September and October 2018 respectively, after being held in captivity by non-state armed groups for more than six months. Faye Mooney, a British communications and learning specialist with the non-governmental organization Mercy Corps, lost her life in an attack by gunmen in Kaduna State earlier this year.

The day also served as a call to action for the release of aid workers who are still being held captive and the protection of humanitarians and civilians. "It is our duty and obligation to do



our utmost to protect civilians and aid workers, who should never be a target", stressed Mr. Ekayu.

Throughout the various commemorations held around the country, women humanitarians also raised their voices to share stories of their experiences as aid workers and what drives them to serve in some of the most volatile places in Nigeria.

"I aim to inspire the women in conflict-affected communities in north-east Nigeria. In return, their strength and resilience inspires me to do and give more," said Zainab Murtala, Humanitarian Affairs Officer with UN OCHA in Nigeria.

World Humanitarian Day events included radio programs across the country and humanitarian walks and photo exhibitions in Yola, Adamawa State and Damaturu, Yobe State. The occasion concluded with a humanitarian symposium on 22 August at the University of Maiduguri, which featured the testimonies of six women humanitarians from Borno State and the "Holding On" virtual reality experience.

UN Cares Hosts UN Staff Children in Abuja

UN Cares Inter-Agency Team Nigeria with the support of UN Resident Coordinator, Mr Edwards Kallon, Common services and UNAIDS country Director, on 24 August in Abuja, organized a special annual event for UN staff Children from 5-18 years.

The event provided an opportunity for UN Cares to reach out to staff families and their children and increase awareness on HIV, provide information to enable staff and families to make informed decision to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS, access services and reduce discrimination in the UN workplace.

With enthusiasm, children and spouses of UN staff participated in the events. This year's event focused on learning activities including conducting Quiz on HIV/AIDS for age groups 5-9 years, conducted by the UN Physician, Dr Ryan Canlas. An interactive session on "Use of social media and substance use" was also organized for the adolescents of 13-18 years hosted by a team of professionals from Education as Vaccine (EVA). The objective of this session was to build their capacity on the positive use of the social media.

Other sessions included sporting activities like football and Dance competition. The winning teams, best players and best performers were appreciated and given awards for their performance. It was a successful event as the children enjoyed participating in interactive sessions and were engaged in the discussions on HIV related issues.

UN Cares is the UN system-wide workplace programme on HIV, which provides UN personnel and their families access to information, learning opportunities, preventive commodities, post-exposure prophylaxis (treatment taken immediately after exposure to HIV in an effort to prevent infection) and a sup-

portive and respectful work environment as established by the UN Cares 10 Minimum Standards.



UN, Partners Mark Youth Day, Advocate more Support for Young People



R-L: European Union Ambassador to Nigeria and the ECOWAS, Amb. Ketil Karlsen; Wife of Ogun State Governor, Her Excellency, Mrs Bamidele Abiodun; National President of JCI, Ms Adetola Juyitan; Director of UNIC Nigeria, Ronald Kayanja, (2nd left) and other dignitaries at the event organised in collaboration with JCI on 20 August.

Pursuant to the strategic importance of youth to national development and the work of the United Nations, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Nigeria in collaboration with Civil Society partners, has organised series of events in observance of the International Youth Day 2019 under the theme, “Transforming Education”.

The events which took place across different locations in Lagos State from 10 to 21 August, were attended by over 2000 young people.

At the observance organised in collaboration with the Junior Chambers International (JCI) and the European Union, and held at the Eko Hotels and Suites, Lagos, the Director of UNIC Nigeria, Ronald Kayanja, representing the Resident Coordinator of the UN Systems in Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon, highlighted the United Nations Youth Strategy (#Youth2030) which he said “seeks to amplify the youth voices for the promotion of peace: support young people’s greater access to education and health services: economic empowerment through decent work and to support young people as catalyst for peace & security.”

The theme, “Transforming education”, he explained further, highlights efforts to make education more relevant, equitable and inclusive for all youth, including efforts by youth themselves. According to him, this is rooted in Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. “Education plays a pivotal role in accelerating progress across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, be it poverty eradication, good health, gender equality, decent work and growth, reduced inequalities, action on climate or building peaceful societies.” The Director explained.

In his remarks, the European Union Ambassador to Nigeria and the ECOWAS, Amb. Ketil Karlsen, noted that the solutions to the problems of Nigeria must come from Nigerians. He enjoined young people to be committed to the growth of Nigeria; use



A youth makes a contribution at the event organised in collaboration with Luciano Global Development Initiative, at Ayobo Lagos on 21 August.

technology to find solutions to education challenges, by ensuring equitable and inclusive education where no one is left behind.

The wife of Ogun State Governor, Her Excellency, Mrs Bamidele Abiodun advised youth to remain committed to the growth and development of Nigeria while the National President of JCI, Ms Adetola Juyitan urged youth to take up the mantle of responsibility and come up with innovative and actionable ideas that will change the society.

At the event in collaboration with Mind to Mind Initiative, a discussion panel of youth-led organisations highlighted the importance of government showing clear vision and consistent policy to transform education in Nigeria. They advised young people to get education because it is the key to resolving all issues.

“Let us work towards seeing the youth as an opportunity for Nigeria. Youth can be a positive force for development when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive. Let us also endeavour to include young people in policy formulation and implementation”, said Mr Kayanja at the event.

At the Youth Day event organised in collaboration with Strategy For Mentoring Initiative and Leadership Empowerment (SMILE) held at Gbagada, Lagos, Ms Bukky Shonibare of Adopt-A-Camp, spoke on leveraging digital media for sustainable impact in the social sector, and advised youth led organisations to be clear about their message and use digital media to advance their work for visibility and impact.

Other Youth day activity was held in collaboration with Luciano Global Development Initiative at Ayobo Community in the Alimosho Local Government Area of Lagos State.

‘To achieve sustainable economic development, young people must have access to quality and inclusive education and the education system in Nigeria must be technology driven’ noted Mrs Kemi Adetuwu-Olaniyi, Founder Luciano Global Development Initiative.

The Permanent Secretary, Lagos Ministry of Youth Sports & Development, Mrs Yewande Falugba who was represented by Mrs Vera Oronsaye acknowledged that “Youths are the bedrock of any Nation, when youth are built, society would be stable. Youth access to education will transform any Nation for growth and development which in turn, will improve economic, social and political stability.”



Director, United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, Mr Ronald Kayanja, addresses the participants at the event organised in collaboration with Mind To Mind Initiative and held at Victoria Island, Lagos on 15 August.



Ms Bolanle Olumekor representing Mr Ronald Kayanja, Director, United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, Mr Ronald Kayanja, (3rd right); P resident of SMILE, Mrs Bimpe Bamgbose-Martins (2nd right); Ms Bukky Shonibare, a panellist (4th right) at the event held on 10 August.

UN delivers Implements, Agro-inputs to farmers, trains 280 on vegetable value chain

As part of efforts to boost food security, enhance livelihoods and support government's drive to curb unemployment, the United Nations (UN) system in Nigeria has delivered 3,976 farm implements and agro inputs to farmers in Kaduna, even as 280 representatives of cooperatives received capacity on sustainable vegetable value chain development.

The items were delivered under the Food Africa Project- Empowering Youths and Promoting Innovative Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) through more Efficient Agro-Value Chains in Nigeria, a UN Joint Project (UNJP) anchored by the SDGs Fund in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Trade Center (ITC), the private sector- Sahara Group and Kaduna state government.

Receiving the items on behalf of the Governor of Kaduna state Nasir El-rufai, the Deputy Governor Dr. Hadiza Balarabe said the project fits into the administration's plan to empower rural farmers for enhanced income generation and accelerated employment creation through agriculture value chains.

"We are prepared to support FAO and the UN system in general to upscale this intervention and capacity building initiative to other local governments and farming communities in the state, in fulfillment of our promise to the people to deliver to them, the dividends of democracy", Balarabe said.

The FAO Country Representative Suffyan Koroma said the project targets to eliminate the perennial waste that characterize farming in Nigeria and foster a culture of exploiting the vegetable value chain by the farmers, so as to reap the full benefits of their labour.

He said the benefits vary from enhanced livelihood to improved food and nutrition security. "For our primary target – women and youths, Jobs are created, livelihoods are secured, the value chains are taken advantage of and through better government policies, approaches to end hunger and malnutrition are developed".



FAO Country Representative Suffyan Koroma, Kaduna state Deputy Governor Dr. Hadiza Balarabe and other officials inspect the farm implements/inputs donated to farmers in the state

Items distributed include; 2500 Plastic carriage crates, 246 knapsack sprayers, 123 Water pump, 246 Wheelbarrow, 246 Watering cans, 123 specially made Jab Planters, 246 Garden Fork, 246 Head pan. Others are 738 litres of bio-pesticides, 52.5kg of improved seeds of Okro, Tomato and Pepper.

Beneficiaries of the training, facilitated by Leventis Foundation were selected from 15 cooperatives societies/farming groups; 78 lead farmers, market agents and food processors (44 women) are empowered through the project, while 45 women groups and farmers associations have been encouraged to register their cooperatives after the training.

They testified that the training and implements as well as other inputs received from FAO will go a long way not only to improve vegetable production but also help in reducing post-harvest losses. Tasiu Haruna who represents Tomato Growers Association in Kaduna State said many of his members have been experiencing heavy losses at harvest and in the market, but the training on processing of vegetables, excess produce can be processed in time of glut to avert losses.

ILO DG Emphasises More Investment in Basic Education and Youth Skills

The ILO DG, Mr. Guy Ryder highlighted the need for ILO tripartite partners to intensify efforts and collaborations to address the issues of unemployment facing Nigerian youths today and prepare them for the future of work.

The Director-General, International Labour Organization, Mr. Guy Ryder, has called on the government of Nigeria to intensify efforts aimed at tackling the issue of youth unemployment. He made this statement at a press briefing on the second day of his visit to Nigeria for the Global Youth Employment Forum (GYEF) held from 1-3 August 2019. According to him "Youth unemployment is not just a matter for Labour ministries, Youth and Sport ministries. It is also a matter of Finance and Industry Ministries as well. To put it in a nutshell, it is a whole-of-government approach". Mr Ryder, who was the first Director-General of the ILO to visit Nigeria since its independence paid glowing tributes to the vibrancy and perseverance of Nigerian youths across the world and applauded the commitment of the government in addressing youth unemployment.

Mr Ryder explained that creating jobs for Nigerian youths would not happen unless the relevant skills were inculcated into them from an early age and these were of top quality that conformed to the needs of the labour market. He stressed the need to put greater emphasis on lifelong learning because education is a lifelong process. He further emphasized the need for Nigeria to give high priority to universal access to quality basic education. He also expressed the need to improve investment in employment services to direct young people to the right types of jobs. This, according to him, also involves the process of transitioning workers and employers from the informal to formal sector.

Mr Ryder admitted that in Nigeria, youth entrepreneurship and self-employment were key to boosting the economy of Nigeria. He noted that the energies and talents of young people needed to be harnessed for them to have better opportunities at starting their own businesses and subsequently becoming employers of labour. He also highlighted the importance of acknowledging and being considerate of the rights of young people. "We should not think of getting young people into work at the expense of their basic rights. They are workers like any other, the quality of jobs which they are entitled to are in no way reduced by the fact that they are young people", he said.

In his response to a series of questions posed by various media correspondents and journalists, Mr. Ryder advised that there should be a greater synergy among the tripartite partners in the implementation of intervention programmes and plans to make them a reality. To him, existing implementation plans must be operationalized before taking up new ones. Based on the request of the Nigerian president to upgrade the ILO office, Mr Ryder expressed his appreciation to partners for their recognition and value they place on the work of the ILO.

Speaking about the various categories of economies, Mr. Ryder believes that no economy was less important than the other since each economy was capable of enhancing job creation. He urged governments not to be dependent on one economy. He called for more investment in infrastructure to enhance growth and expansion of businesses.

Youth participation key to end open defecation in Nigeria



Yunusa and Abdullahi

When Abdulahi Yunusa, 25, is not farming, he spends time riding his motorcycle around Yammawar Kafawa community in Dambatta Local Government Area of Kano state. He transports villagers for a small fee, which supplements the income he makes from selling his farm produce.

Yunusa also spends his free time volunteering as a member of the community vanguards for the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committees (WASHCOM), a local group that supports communities to effectively manage their WASH affairs.

The WASHCOM in Yammawar Kafawa community also brings various communities together to form associations at ward and Local Government Area level. Along with some other members of his community, including children, Yunusa was trained by the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASSA) and UNICEF, to convey messages about the importance of safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) practices in Yammawar Kafawa. “We get information from the training on what to tell households especially housewives on the importance of good hygiene practices,” said Yunusa.

With an estimated population of 199 million, according to recent data by UNFPA, more than half of Nigeria’s population is under 30 years of age. It is no surprise that in Yammawar Kafawa community young people and children are active members of WASHCOM.

“WASHCOM plays significant role in influencing the community to end open defecation and adopt safe hygiene behaviors not only among all households but also in neighboring communities,” said Bioye Ogunjobi, WASH specialist. “By so doing they become change agents and create a local movement raising awareness about the negative impact of open defecation in communities,” he said.

Nigeria ranks second among countries with the highest number of people practicing open defecation. With an ambitious goal to get the 47 million people who defecate in the open to use the toilet, the Nigeria government in November 2018 declared a state of emergency in the WASH sector, launched a national campaign tagged, “Clean Nigeria: Use the Toilet, and reaffirmed its commitment to end open defecation in the country by 2025.

Although only 13 Local Government Areas have been certified open defecation free in Nigeria, Yammawar Kafawa stands among some 70,000 communities spread across the country, that have been able to achieve and sustain an open defecation free status.

Young people like Yunusa are playing a critical role in helping their communities achieve the feat through their membership of WASHCOM.

The Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the human right to express their opinion and to have that opinion listened to and taken into consideration when decisions are being made that affect them or other children.

Young people in Yammawar Kafawa having keyed into the relevance of this article are actively protecting the wellbeing of their community without dismissal on the grounds of age. And they are being given the information they need to make good decisions, which has helped the community attain and maintain an open defecation free status.

“Since the beginning of this initiative, there have been no cases of diarrhea,” said Abdullahi. Considering more than 100,000 children under the age of five die yearly from WASH-related illness, the progress in Yammawar Kafawa could be an inspiration to other communities.

“Communities should form youth groups as a pressure group and get [the needed] support for their communities to end open defecation,” said Yunusa, while strongly advocating for more youth involvement in Nigeria’s drive to end open defecation.

The youth engagement is beyond handouts and tokenism. “Policymakers cannot enforce laws in communities without the support of youths of the community,” said Rabiu Musa, UNICEF communications specialist.

“If they support a social movement, nothing can stop them,” he added.

As Nigeria embarks on its journey to end open defecation by 2025, UNICEF will keep involving young people as stakeholders by continuously applying a social reward mechanism.

This includes publicly recognising youths who actively involved in the fight against open defecation as change agents.

“We’ll encourage the involvement of more youths in WASHCOMs, support the development of economic value chain for sanitation where youths can take advantage and create an opportunity for regular open engagement of youths in social dialogue on issues around safe sanitation,” said Zaid Jurji, Chief of WASH.

To learn more about the Clean Nigeria Campaign to end open defecation, please visit www.cleannigeria.ng



A group photograph of some of the participants.

Group of Women Living with HIV Holds Capacity Building Training



Participants at the capacity building training held on 14-17 August in Abuja

The Board of International Community of Women Living with HIV West Africa (ICWWA) in all their diversities met at the Savannah Suite Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria from 14th to 17th August 2019 for a 4-day capacity building training towards providing leadership at regional and country level.

Participants were drawn from Ghana, Senegal, Togo, Nigeria, Sierra-Leone, Liberia, Burkina-Faso and Cote d'Ivoire. The meeting convened by ICWWA with financial support from Robert Carr and UNAIDS and technical support from Federal Ministry of Health Nigeria, UNAIDS, WHO and AfroCAB. The partners provided an opportunity to strengthen the leadership capacity of ICWWA board members, review/update policies and strategic plan, discuss barriers that impede women's access to health/HIV services and how women living with HIV could more effectively contribute to the attainment of 90-90-90 targets. It also provided an opportunity to assess performance of ICWWA programmes and activities, emerging evidence from clinical trials, ART guidelines and plan a way forward towards holistic response to HIV/AIDS in the region.

ICWWA also took the opportunity to congratulate Mrs Winnie Byanyima who is recently appointed as the new Executive Director of UNAIDS.

The participants acknowledged the progress and efforts made by government and partners towards the fight against HIV/AIDS and noted the following challenges that have continued to limit women's access to health services: Unconditional switching/transitioning of women living with HIV to "care-providers preferred ARV regimen" without information and consultation; Discriminatory attitudes of healthcare providers towards women and adolescents living with HIV when accessing health/HIV services; Disclosure of HIV status by healthcare providers without consent which has left many women living with HIV homeless; and Poor involvement of women and adolescent girls living with HIV in the planning, implementation and monitoring of HIV programmes at all levels; among others.

Participants urged the government fulfill the highest attainable standard of health for all the citizens and called on the leaders to ensure that women are consulted to make informed decision and choice of preference with respect to ARV regimen; ensure meaningful engagement of women and adolescent girls living with HIV in the planning, implementation and monitoring of HIV programmes; ensure that all HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health services are free and accessible and respect the rights and dignity of people living with HIV including the key population; as well as increase domestic funding for HIV/AIDS and accelerate the implementation of West and Central Africa Catch-Up Plan for attainment of 90-90-90 targets.

Summer Holidays: UN Engages Pupils, Holds Book Reading on SDGs



National Information Officer of UNIC Nigeria, Oluseyi Soremekun, addresses participants at the Book Reading event on Sustainable Development Goal, held on 8 August 2019 at UNIC office, Lagos.

The United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Nigeria, on 8 August, held a book reading session to create awareness and sensitise students to take action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The book reading session organised by UNIC, Leeland Schools and Data Consult, to engage the pupils during the summer holidays, focused on SDG 8: 'Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All' and held at the Library Auditorium of UNIC, Ikoyi Lagos.

Reading from the books "A Fairy Tale for a Fairer World" by Kirsten Deall and Carolina Rodriguez; "The World We Want" and the "Charming Gardeners" by Data Jaja, the students had a better understanding of the importance of clean energy, gender equality and the need to preserve the planet.

The stories provide entry around global challenges especially the SDGs and through interactive discussions, the students were advised to take personal actions to help achieve the Goals for a better world in their communities, homes and schools.

Addressing the pupils, the National Information Officer of UNIC, Oluseyi Soremekun, informed that there were so many things individuals could do to save the planet. He urged the pupils to always turn off the lights when not in use. "Your TV or computer screen provides a cosy glow, so turn off other lights if you don't need them." He explained, "Take short showers. Bathtubs require gallons more water than a 5-10 minute shower."



Pupils read along at the Book Reading event on Sustainable Development Goal, held on 8 August 2019 at UNIC office, Lagos.

UN interventions in Underprivileged Communities Enhance RI Turnout, Disease Surveillance



WHO's RI supportive supervision capacity building team engages with beneficiaries

Located in a slum on the outskirts of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) at Dutse-Alhaji Primary Health Care Centre (PHC), baby Gift Okorie gazes deeply at Nurse Margaret Okpara as she drops a tinge of Vitamin A in her mouth.

"I'm happy that the majority of mothers at our facility have been consistent with the necessary routine immunization for their infants. I wish all Nigerian parents take routine immunization (RI) as seriously as these parents do," she says.

Nurse Margaret, the Matron at the Dutse Alhaji PHC is one of the many beneficiaries of WHO's RI supportive supervision capacity building interventions. Similar to over 10,000 health-workers trained by the World Health Organization (WHO) in RI/disease surveillance, case reporting, monitoring and evaluation, Nurse Margaret said,

"WHO has been extremely helpful in our facility. The Organization provide incentives during our outreach sessions in the slums, they have trained many of our health workers and we particularly and greatly appreciate their supportive supervision particularly in RI and surveillance, we have learned so much from WHO".

Although located in densely populated areas like Dutse Alhaji, slum based health care facilities more often than not witness a large influx of patients, as the services are usually free or available at subsidized prices. At Dutse Alhaji PHC for instance, an estimated 200 infants come for assessment and RI on a daily basis.

Supplementary Immunization Activity-natural complement to RI In the past 12 months, WHO office in FCT has supported Supplementary Immunization Activity (SIA) teams and RI outreaches to immunize 25,595 under 5 children with Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) in 69 border settlements across the 6 Area councils. A total of 17,841 have been immunized with OPV in 199 Nomadic settlements and 81,521 have been immunized with OPV in 165 Slum settlements across the 6 area councils of the FCT. Some of the slum settlements include Mpape, Dutse Alhaji, Idu Karmo, Dei-Dei, Dakwa.

However, like most low-budget health facilities, Mrs Florence Chinweike, a supervising nurse from the Bwari Area Council

Health Department highlights challenges being faced in most slum-based facilities. "Our PHCs need more funding for outreach and more of our personnel need to be trained. We also need more qualified hands on deck and more quality equipment to work with," she states. "We are nevertheless grateful to WHO because they have helped us to improve our record keeping system and closely follow up cases that need to be monitored."

Meanwhile, in the neighbouring Karu LGA of Nasarawa State, WHO provided support and assistance to run RI activities. A total of 3,833 children have received immunization from January to June 2019 for the following antigens (vaccines) - Measles, Inactivated polio vaccine (IPV), Bacillus Calmette-Guérin vaccine (BCG), OPV Pentavalent and Hepatitis B vaccines at various times depending on their age. Between 40- 60 children, attend weekly immunizations sessions at the facility and 15- 20 children daily.

Promoting UHC in slums, rural, urban areas and everywhere In total, there are 39,550 PHCs in Nigeria, of which many serve underprivileged communities including slums and WHO has worked closely with PHCs in rural and urban areas of the FCT and beyond. Twice every week, WHO personnel assist PHC health workers during outreaches in villages and slums.

"During our outreaches, we assist health workers to immunize at least 20 children every day and a total of roughly 40 children every week," stated Dr Fururatu Zakari, FCT State Coordinator, WHO Nigeria.

According to her, "Over the past 6 months, WHO has built the capacity of over 100 Health workers in Bwari Local Government Area (LGA) and supported nearly 24 outreach sessions within the same period. We believe through building the capacities of health workers in underprivileged communities, the health indices will increase and residents of such communities will be more aware of vaccine preventable diseases and better advised on the right measures to take. These are all steps to achieve universal health coverage - for everyone everywhere".

Humanitarian Actors Equip Protection Teams to Tackle Trafficking in Persons



A group photograph of participants at the workshop on integrating anti-trafficking into existing protection mechanisms held 19– 23 August 2019 in Maiduguri

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Heartland Alliance International (HAI) have organized a workshop to draw attention to the issue of human trafficking and the support available to victims in the context of humanitarian crisis.

The workshop which was organised by the Protection Sector in Nigeria, in collaboration with the Global Protection Cluster Anti-Trafficking Task Team, co-led by UNHCR, IOM & HAI was attended by 75 protection actors from related government agencies, civil society organizations, and humanitarian organizations working in north-east Nigeria, a region ravaged by ongoing conflict which is now entering its tenth year of crisis.

Evidence shows that humanitarian crises, such as armed conflicts, natural disasters, and protracted unrest, disrupt State and community structures. Instability, combined with an environment where people face material, social and economic losses enable human traffickers to thrive. Increasingly severe manifestations of trafficking witnessed in crises around the world have drawn calls for humanitarian actors to better incorporate anti-trafficking initiatives into protection efforts.

Despite this evidence, prevention of trafficking in persons and protection of victims remain overlooked or not addressed comprehensively. This is due to a multitude of challenges faced by humanitarian workers to make an anti-trafficking response feasible and effective. Obstacles to prevention measures and protection are also due to the complexity surrounding human trafficking, as well as a lack of specialized knowledge, and limited data on the prevalence of trafficking.

To build stronger anti-trafficking responses in the north-east, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force in Borno was established in July 2019 by the National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), the Ministry of Women Affairs

and Social Development, and in cooperation with UNHCR, IOM and Heartland Alliance International. One of the challenges that the Task Force aims to address is how to embed anti-trafficking action into the humanitarian response. The week-long workshop served as an opportunity to bring together key stakeholders to consider ways to operationalize and accompany the establishment of anti-trafficking action into the Protection Sector.

The workshop, entitled 'Integrating Anti-Trafficking into Existing Protection Mechanisms', aimed at providing an interactive opportunity to generate ideas, solutions and to consult protection practitioners on tools and guidance recently developed by the Global Protection Cluster Anti-Trafficking Task Team.

As agreed by M. Alexander Kishara, UNHCR Head of Sub Office, "Trafficking in persons, as a grave violation of human rights is a protection issue, and in the context of north-east Nigeria, concerted actions must be taken by all involved to ensure integration in ongoing protection mechanisms. It is a collective responsibility."

"The complexity of human trafficking is compounded by the grim reality of displacement and other humanitarian needs in the north east," said Dave Bercasio, IOM Nigeria Emergency Coordinator. "This training is an effort to gather all the key players at the table to generate ideas on how to integrate counter-trafficking work into our overall response," he added.

The participants explored ways to incorporate anti-trafficking initiatives into existing mechanisms, including the steps to be taken to strengthen the identification of trafficking cases and provide a systematic response to assist victims of trafficking.

"The training has equipped us with a broader understanding of trafficking in persons in humanitarian action. The tools developed and shared during the training will assist us with practical measures to address TIP in our work as humanitarian workers", said Patience Peret, a Project Coordinator from Heartland Alliance International, one of the training participants.

PHOTO NEWS



Captions, from left to right and top to bottom:

1. Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, exchanges pleasantries with the Country Representative of UNICEF, Mr Peter Hawkins after presenting him a set of his books on 26 August 2019 in Sokoto
2. Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, exchanges pleasantries with Officer-in-Charge of UNFPA, Mr Mamadou Kante, after presenting him a set of his books on 26 August 2019 in Sokoto.
3. Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar, exchanges pleasantries with Deputy Country Representative of UN Women, Mr Lansana Wonneh, after presenting him a set of his books on 26 August 2019 in Sokoto
4. A group of youths at the signing of the UN– Sokoto Government Partnership Framework/ State Annual Work Plan and the Delivery as One at the Council Chamber of Sokoto State Government House on 26 August 2019.



Editor: Oluseyi Soremekun (UNIC)

Editorial Team: UNCG members— Ronald Kayanja (Chairman) - UNIC; Charity Warigon (WHO); Eliana Drakopoulos, Geoffrey Njoku & Oluwatosin Akingbulu (UNICEF); Rupa Bhadra (UNAIDS); Lucky Musonda & Rejoice Emmanuel (UNDP); Vanessa Curney & Kori Habib (UNFPA); Pius Udo & Wura Ladipo-Ajayi (ILO); Husam Eldin Suliman, Gabriel Adeyemo (UNHCR); Amala Ibeneme; Maimuna Aboki (UN Women); Jorge Galindo & Mariam Owoeye (IOM); David Tsokar (FAO); Olushola Macaulay (UNESCO); Sylvester Atere (UNODC); Chukwuemeka Ezekiel, Michaela Moye and Ivy Clem (UNIDO), Eve Sabbagh, Leni Kinzli & Abiodun Banire (UNOCHA); Chi Lael, Kelechi Onyemaobi and Adedeji Ademigbuji (WFP); Katrien Nollen (UNMAS).

Advisory: United Nations Country Team (UNCT)

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