

March 2021



UNITED NATIONS
NIGERIA



NEWSLETTER



Int'l Women's Month Special Edition

UN Commends Buhari For Being Early Champion Of People's Vaccine Campaign



L-R: Mr Edward Kallon, UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator; Dr Erasmus Morah, UNAIDS Country Director Nigeria; Ms Winnie Byanyima, UNAIDS Executive Director/ UN Under-Secretary General; H.E. President Muhammadu Buhari, Minister of Health, Dr Osagie Ehanire; and Prof Ibrahim Gambari, Chief of Staff to the President.

UNAIDS Executive Director and United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Winnie Byanyima, has thanked the President of Nigeria, H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, for being an early champion of the People's Vaccine campaign, which is calling for a fair and equitable distribution of vaccines against the coronavirus to ensure that poorer countries are not left behind in the response.

The UNAIDS Executive Director said this during a courtesy visit to President Buhari at the State House Abuja. Ms Byanyima was on an official visit to Nigeria from March 8 to 10, her first to the country since taking up her post in November 2019.

Nigeria began to vaccinate frontline health workers on 5 March after taking delivery of 4 million doses of vaccine, facilitated through COVAX, the international mechanism set up to bulk buy vaccines and distribute them equitably worldwide.

In her meeting with the President, Ms. Byanyima, discussed Nigeria's response to the colliding pandemics of HIV and COVID-19. The meeting was part of her three-day visit to the country, which also included visits to communities on the frontline of the response and events to mark International Women's Day on 8 March.

Ms Byanyima also applauded the country's progress against the HIV pandemic and said UNAIDS stood ready to strengthen its partnership with Nigeria to further reduce the impact of the HIV pandemic and end AIDS as a public health threat as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"Nigeria has made good progress on expanding the delivery of HIV testing, treatment and care services over recent years, contributing to a steep decline in AIDS-related deaths," said Ms Byanyima, "I look forward to reinforcing UNAIDS' partnership with gov-

HIGHLIGHTS

[Inclusive Governance, Women's Rights Top Agenda As Byanyima Visits... P. 3](#)

[International Women's Month: UN Chats with Gender Activists P. 5](#)

[UN Support Helps Female Bread Winners Feed Their Families... P. 7](#)

ernment, communities and all other stakeholders to drive new HIV infections down and kick-start a decade of action to end AIDS as a public health threat for everyone." She also met community activists, who have been instrumental in minimizing the disruption to HIV testing, treatment and care services despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken to contain it.

SDG 5: Council Of Traditional Rulers Renews Commitment To End Gender Discrimination, Violence Against Women



A group photograph of the traditional and cultural leaders who attended the meeting with UN Women and supported by EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end all forms of violence against women and girls.

The Council of Traditional/Cultural Leaders of Africa (COTLA) has said it will redouble its effort in ensuring violence against women, all forms of gender discrimination and harmful traditional practices come to an end in Nigeria.

This was part of the resolutions at a meeting between the leadership of COTLA and UN Women in Nigeria on Wednesday, March 17th, 2021 in Abuja, supported by the joint EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end all forms of violence against women and girls.

In his opening remarks, the Convener General of COTLA, HRM (Arc.) King Adedapo Aderemi, appreciated the efforts of the UN Women and reiterated their solidarity and commitment to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in Nigeria. According to him, COTLA is committed towards achieving Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which seeks to end gender discrimination against women.

He pointed out that COVID-19 has exacerbated poverty in society, particularly for women who have had to face numerous challenges trying to care for the family.

"Due to lockdown, reports show an alarming increase in shadow pandemic-violence against women and girls. Poor access to services such as counselling, police protection, long term closure of schools due to COVID19 and bandits has exposed girls to GBV, child marriage, FGM and unintended pregnancy as well as health challenges such as HIV.

"Child labour, sexual exploitation and abuse have increased. As COTLA we are not bystanders, we are active advocates for laws and policies, ending early and child marriage in our communities and creating safe spaces.

"We thank UN Women for their support. We are shining light on all forms of violence against women and girls. COVID19 rapid response plan should be championed. We will continue to champion the cause of gender equality and positive masculinity," he emphasised.

Earlier in her welcome address, the UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Ms Comfort Lamprey, highlighted the important role of traditional leaders in ending violence against women, gender equality and women empowerment.

She said the UN Women will partner with COTLA to ensure a sustained development process from the grassroots to the national and in effecting changes in negative social norms, stereotypes, and enhance women's participation in decision making and leadership processes.

Also speaking, the Deputy Convener-General of COTLA, HRH Dr Haliru Yahaya Ndanusa, said as community leaders, COTLA will galvanize efforts within their base to end violence against women. He said: "COTLA is poised to address the issues of gender-based violence, child marriage, child abuse and other discriminatory and harmful traditional practices.

"COTLA has decided to focus on progressive traditional institutions, identify allies in leaders, work towards shifting harmful perceptions of leaders who are not in support of gender equality and women empowerment."

In a goodwill message, the Obong of Calabar, Royal Eminence Chief (Barr.) Edem Duke through his representative said the monarch is relentlessly working towards gender equality and women empowerment.

He said his Palace has worked with the government of Cross River to ensure that out of 5000 political aides, women make up 50% of the positions in the state.

On gender-based violence, the Obong said he has repealed and amended obnoxious traditional beliefs and practices and upheld widowhood rights, among other reforms. He said he is working with Spotlight Initiative through FIDA to ensure access to justice and essential services to women who have been victimised.

Other speakers, including the Emir of Bwari, Alhaji Awwal Musa Ijokoro (II); HRH Eze Martin Nwali of Ameka Ezza South, Ebonyi State; HRH Eze Ngozi of Abia State; Dr Ahmad Ibrahim Mustafa Ubandoma, District Head of Girie in Adamawa and Alh Kabiru Chigari Alhassan, Sarkin Sudan, Sultanate Council of Sokoto, committed to ending GBV while also testifying to the incredible work the Spotlight Initiative has done in mobilising and sensitizing local communities towards eradicating gender-based violence and discrimination.

UN Women and COTLA agreed to implement a strategic plan to accelerate the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.

Inclusive Governance, Women's Rights Top Agenda As Byanyima Visits



L-R: UN Women Country Representative, Comfort Lamptey; First Lady of Ekiti State, Mrs Bisi Fayem; UNAIDS E.D. and Under Secretary General, Winnie Byanyima, Minister of Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen; Public Analyst, Obiageli Ezekwesili and UNFPA Country Representative, Ulla Mueller

As the world once again commemorates Women History Month, addressing gender equality and implementation of policies that will allow more women to participate in leadership and governance, continue to shape conversations. The Executive Director of UNAIDS, Winnie Byanyima in a recent visit to Nigeria held an interactive session with women leaders and government officials to further drum support for women, and assess efforts and strategies deployed in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and HIV/AIDS in Nigeria.

The three-day visit also afforded Ms Byanyima the opportunity to explore UNAIDS' role in its charge to "accelerate the pace of action," in eliminating HIV/AIDS by 2030, and to advance inclusive governance and more leadership responsibilities for women in the country.

While addressing the women in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, Ms Byanyima lamented the lopsided societal expectations on women, which more often than not, result in truncating a bright future for teenage girls and women.

Many women, she said, "die every day due to some pregnancy or childbirth-related issues" while the governments do very little

to prevent these avoidable deaths, which have been worsened by the COVID-19 and HIV/AIDS pandemics.

She emphasised the relevance of women leadership and the importance of healthy living for women that is not dictated by obnoxious traditions and religious practices that give no consideration for the wellbeing/dignity of women.

Earlier in setting the tone for the conversation, the Country Representative for Nigeria and ECOWAS, UN Women, Ms Comfort Lamptey, said the meeting was put together primarily to provide a platform for the visiting UNAIDS' boss to bare the agency's new five-year strategy to end the inequalities that have been fueling HIV globally, with a goal to end the epidemic by 2030.

"It's a strategy that is also very much people-centred and emphasizes the prevention of HIV," said Ms Lamptey, "As some of you may know Nigeria has the fourth-largest HIV epidemic globally, and as with the COVID-19 pandemics, HIV has a woman's face here in Nigeria, as the prevalence is more than double for women than for men.

On her part, Pauline Tallen, Nigeria's Minister of Women Affairs bemoaned the lack of women in decision-making spaces as the reason for developmental and economic challenges facing the country. She encouraged women not to give up but continue to fight the societal injustice against them.

She observed that "most of the women in the north are highly educated but they are denied their rights," promising that women will no longer fold their hands and watch things deteriorate but "will continue drumming and talking until things change for the better."

The challenges of sustainable legal and political frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment in Nigeria also came to the fore at the event, as according to the wife of the Governor of Ekiti State, Erelu Bisi Fayemi, these are vital to ensuring that the rights of women are not arbitrarily violated.

Nigeria Intensifies Call For Women Participation In Leadership

The disproportionate representation of women across sectors, particularly at leadership positions, continues to draw the attention of stakeholders, who are intensifying the call for the inclusion of more women in all levels of decision making.

The Nigerian chapter of the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN), a collective of African women leaders, canvassed this agenda on Monday 29th March, 2021 when the Chairperson, Prof. Oluwafunmi O. J. Para-Mallam mni, alongside other stakeholders appeared on the African Independent Television flagship programme, *People, Power, and Politics* to discuss women inclusion in leadership.

The programme, supported by the joint EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, is part of an ambitious plan to create a continent-wide force of women leaders to contribute to Africa's transformation in line with Africa Agenda 2063 and the Global Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. Spotlight Initiative, a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations had supported the creation of an advocacy toolkit with AWLN Nigeria to strengthen high-level engagement with government and policy makers to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

"For Nigeria, we have a vision to create space for women. We want to see women leading positive change in Africa and the country, Prof. Oluwafunmi said.

She explained that the mission of AWLN is to create space for the transformative participation of women in decision making.

"We're not just asking for women to get on the bandwagon and continue the political space or the political culture as it is.

We're looking at women across a diverse spectrum of the polity, from all walks of life. We are particularly concerned about intergenerational mentoring, to ensure that the women coming up have a platform to express themselves to develop themselves and build their capacity."

"It's important that I stress that we're essentially looking to influence and shape the narrative around gender, around gender issues, and around women in leadership.

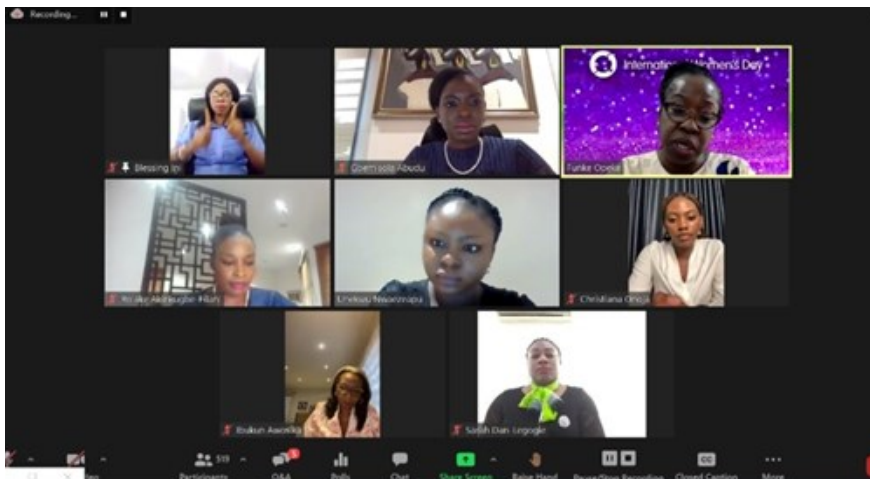
On the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and the role of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative in tackling the challenges of gender based violence in local communities, Ms Hansatu Adegbite, Executive Director, Women in Management, Business, and Public Service (WIMBIZ), said achieving women inclusion in leadership requires a collaborative approach, that also includes fighting gender based violence.

"The initiative has come together to collectively realize that it is important for all stakeholders, including the government, the private sector and every other stakeholder in our community to end violence against women."

She said it's equally important to support the initiative with adequate funding, if the goal must be actualised. She also called for the passage of relevant legislation to support gender equality, and electoral reform that will ensure fairness and level playing for women to get elected into positions.

AWLN was launched at the UN Headquarters in New York in June 2017, under the auspices of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations (UN) through the Office of the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security and UN Women .

Women Business Leaders Harp On Skills, Professionalism At Intergenerational Dialogue



Twenty-five years after the historic Beijing Declaration - the conference that laid out concrete steps to greater equality and opportunities for women and girls - not much progress has been recorded in ensuring gender equality. The COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020 to further deepen and widen the yawning gender gap. While a few Nigerian women have made remarkable breakthroughs, especially in the private sector and the international scenes, the political space remains deeply unwelcoming for women.

To address these challenges, and in line with the Generation Equality Campaign, UN Women Nigeria in partnership with Women In Successful Careers (WISCAR) convened an inter-generational dialogue between private sector women leaders in companies and young female professionals across industries in the private sectors.

The virtual event discussed the key challenges facing women, and lessons on opportunities for expanding women's leadership in the sector, as part of the private sectors' contribution to fostering gender equality outcomes from the Beijing Agenda.

The Chairperson of First Bank of Nigeria, Mrs Ibukun Awosika, the founder and Chief Executive Officer of MainOne, Ms Funke Opeke and the Chief Commercial Officer at Mixta Africa, Ms Rolake Akinkugbe-Filani, were among the panelists.

In her speech, UN Country Representative to Nigeria and ECO-WAS, Ms Comfort Lamptey said the "webinar is a continuation of the dialogue on women's leadership. 25 years after the Beijing Declaration, slow progress has been made in gender equality.

This should not be so.

"Continuity in addressing inequalities is crucial, which is why last year we began an initiative with WISCAR to bring older and younger women together to sustain the tempo of achieving gender equality. We need the government, CSOs, private sector, everyone," she said.

While presenting the keynote address, Mrs Awosika noted that gender equality is necessary for growth and development, saying it is the surest path to reducing poverty and social ills currently overwhelming society.

"Women are already below par on all indices, and with COVID-19, they have become even more vulnerable. They have borne more of the challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic - caring for the family. They have paid a high price.

"Investing in women represents smart economics. It makes economic sense to get women involved. COVID-19 has proved that we can create a new way to work without making women

leave their homes. We need to build a system that keeps/supports women at work."

The Senior Special Assistant to the President of Nigeria on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Adejoke Adefulire, shared a similar view stating: "Gender equality guarantees the socioeconomic development of any society. The involvement of the private sector is very key to this agenda. We must all work together to achieve the SDGs by 2030."

Focusing on results and achievements

Rather than unproductive rivalry, women are advised to focus attention on achieving set goals. This strategy, according to the panellists, is more effective in earning women more seats at the decision-making table.

"One of the lessons I learned early in life is that men tend not to respect women but they respect results. So, I focused on achieving results because that changes the playing field," Ms Opeke said.

"Set yourself high. Do the best you can. Stay focused on what you want to achieve and don't get discouraged along the way" she advised.

She acknowledged the distractions caused by microaggressions and sexual harassment in the workplace and the educational system, saying women must learn to hold their "ground on such situations."

Women need top skills and mentorship

One of the ways to stand out, manage relationships, as well as climb the career ladder is acquiring and upskilling your expertise. According to one of the panellists, Rolake Akinkugbe-Filani, "strategic thinking skills are non-negotiable."

"Beyond complex critical thinking and communication skills, your ability to work with people with diverse backgrounds will help you to pivot in the season of change," she said.

Another panellist Christiana Onoja, the lack of adequate mentorship programmes for young female scientists is a major challenge sustaining gender inequality.

"One of the challenges I faced as a female engineering student was that there were little or no female mentors in STEMs. Even today, there is still a dearth of mentors particular in the field of engineering and technology," she noted.

The virtual conversation, sporting over 455 attendees, ended with commitments to further advance the rights and causes of women in society and public life

International Women's Month: UN Chats With Gender Activists

Connecting up-and-coming gender activists with the older generation of rights advocates is a necessary strategy for passing on knowledge and strategy on the one hand, and the infusion of innovation on the other. This is the mandate Generation Equality seeks to fulfil: to bridge the generational gap in gender leadership roles.

In furtherance of this agenda, the UN Women Country Representative in Nigeria, Ms Comfort Lamptey on Sunday held a special Women's Month Conversation with Blessing Ocheido, a disability rights advocate; Abbiba Princewill, Hillary Rodham Clinton Scholar; Adeola Azeez, founding Trustee Women in Management, Business and Public Service (WIMBIZ) and Abosede George-Ogan, co-founder of ElectHer to discuss women leadership and explore possibilities within the Generation Equality Campaign.

The conversations revolved around 'Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world' being the theme for the International Women's Day 2021; exploring women leadership in public and private sectors, mentorship of younger women, the challenges brought by the pandemic, but also strategies for advancing women in public life.

Abbiba quite understood the role of young women in this direction. She said: "As a young person, I'm really excited about women in leadership and how intergenerational can help get other women into positions of leadership.

"The gender gap is so wide and the intergenerational dialogue has the potential for women to close the gap as quickly as possible." Abbiba who was part of the UN Women Shadowing Scheme - a mentorship program that paired young, aspiring women leaders with women in leadership positions - in government, in the diplomatic space, and in civil society - for career path guidance, described the experience as life-changing.

"I think the Shadowing Scheme was just life-affirming. And in some ways, changed the path of my career. Because I think most times, women were socialised to focus on the things that we believe we're skilled for or we're good at, and we find it odd to try other things.

"But participating in the shadowing scheme, sort of made it easy for me to make a career pivot. Because prior to the shadowing scheme, my educational background, my career path - I've



been in corporate law, in human rights, social issues and gender equality.

Blessing did not mince words noting this as she said: "the pandemic has been especially challenging for women and girls with disabilities. "I was fortunate to be part of a research study carried out by the British Council on the effect of the pandemic of persons with disabilities, and we found that it was especially challenging for persons with disabilities.

ElectHer's Abosede equally agreed that the pandemic brought to the fore the challenges facing women, at the same time, the leadership role of women at different levels in managing the crisis and the recovery process. "And so at ElectHer, at the beginning of the month, launched Agenda35 - a \$10 million fund that is going to empower 1000 women in the pipeline and encourage them to decide to run for political offices, but directly funds 35 women across all positions."

On her part, Ms Adeola of WIMBIZ admonished women to prepare themselves for leadership roles, noting that mentorship programs are critical to this goal. According to her, "mentorship gives hope, supports and encourages younger women to aspire for positions of responsibility.

UN, UK Launch Women Leaders Coalition In Kaduna State

Following the establishment in Kaduna State, of a Coalition of 30 women leaders, from the civil society, the private sector and government- executive and legislative, in January 2021, UN Women and the UK Government in partnership with the Kaduna State Government, on 25 March, launched the Coalition and presented the Collaborative Framework and Action Plan on Increased Women's Leadership in Covid-19 Response and Recovery Efforts.

The launch of this coalition was extremely important as it is essential in the successful implementation of the Project: "Strengthening State Capacities and Women's Participation in COVID Response and Broader Peacebuilding Initiatives."

At the launch, the Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, H.E Dr. Hadiza Sabuwa Balarable, ably represented by the SA to the Governor Barrister Rabi Adamu Musa-Manchi in her remarks said "the birth of the coalition will provide another layer of support to the government in stemming the tide of COVID-19 and its effect of public health". She further added that the Kaduna State Government gladly welcomes this partnership with open arms.

UN Women Deputy Country Representative, Mr. Lansana Wonneh, made the submissions at the launch of the coalition, he commended the Kaduna State government on their inclusion

of women in COVID-19 mitigation efforts in the state, he called for more women in leadership, as the more we have women in leadership, the better and more prosperous Nigeria can be.

Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Representative Sophie Stevens in her remarks applauded the Kaduna State Government for putting the needs of its people at the heart of the COVID-19 response and recovery through partnership with this initiative, she said, "this innovative partnership brings together a wide range of stakeholders, positioned to enhance the recovery of COVID-19 in Kaduna state, as we seek to build back better, we hope the coalition will push for a more equitable and fair world that we all deserve".

In closing, Commissioner of Kaduna Ministry of Human Services & Social Development Hafsat Mohammed Baba in her address said "I hope the coalition will remain even after the pandemic, because there are other issues that need to be addressed, and I can assure you that the Kaduna State government will not relent on its efforts.

The Coalition provides a platform to address the limited engagement between women-led organizations leading local response initiatives and women in the private sector and women in decision making spaces both at the executive and legislative level to strengthen the contribution of women at all levels in the COVID-19 response and recovery efforts in Kaduna State.

Adapting To The New Normal: Engaging Youth In Nigeria Amidst COVID-19



R-L: LASSMUN 2021 Secretary General, Endurance Ohameh; LASSMUN 2021 President of the General Assembly, Joy Akande and LASSMUN 2021 Rapporteur, Micah Asowata

Adapting to the “new normal” the world finds itself in today amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, combined both traditional in-person outreach and virtual digital tools and platforms to reach out, engage and inspire solutions during the Lagos Secondary Schools Model UN (LASSMUN) Conference on 4 March, which is the biggest Model United Nations (MUN) in Nigeria and arguably in the world.

The hybrid event organized by UNIC and Lagos State Government ensured safety first, calling for strict adherence to COVID-19 protocols for its physical audience, and online access via Zoom to its larger virtual audience of nearly 2000 student delegates from over 680 public secondary schools.

The Conference, aptly themed 'Ensuring quality education through technology and innovation' (SDGs 4 and 9), captured the new reality faced by millions of students worldwide who have



been forced to isolate and shelter at home due to COVID-19 lockdowns but are still expected to fulfill their educational obligations by embracing technology and innovations to attend online classes.

Prior to the event, UNIC prepared and disseminated Information and educational material on the theme through MUN Staff Advisors in various schools to over 500,000 students out of whom 1,968 were selected as delegates.

The Conference was attended by the Consul General of France, Her Excellency, Mrs. Laurence Monmayrant; the Consul General of Cameroon, Her Excellency, Ms. Bessem Manga; Lagos State Head of Service, Mr Hakeem Muri-Okunola; Lagos State Commissioner for Education, Mrs Folashade Adefisayo; as well as the six Tutors General/ Permanent Secretaries of the Lagos Education Districts.

UNIC Director, Ronald Kayanja, presented the message of the Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.



L-R: TG/PS Lagos Education District V: Mr. Erinle Olumide Olufolami; TG/ PS Lagos Education District I: Barr. Margret Titilayo Solarin; TG/ PS Lagos Education District III: Dr. Mrs. Olufolayimika Abiose Ayandele; UNIC Director, Mr Ronald Kayanja; TG/ PS Lagos Education District VI: Mrs Okelola Oludara Oyeibisi; TG/ PS Lagos Education District II: Mrs Anike Adekanye; and TG/ PS Lagos Education District IV: Mr. Olajide Charles Adeboye;

UN Support Helps Female Bread Winners Feed Their Families



The sight of large numbers of camels grazing quietly in nearby bushes along the major city roads is probably the first impression for a visitor who arrives in Damaturu, Yobe State’s capital. The lively northern Nigerian town is one of the few in the country where camels are commonly found. The large animals are mainly used for transportation across long distances.

However, further into the sparse settlements a few kilometers from Damaturu, another transport system appears to be more common – wooden carts pulled by bulls and cows. Nearly every household can boast of their own “cow-made” fleet. Carts bumping into one another is common, but the good-natured laughter which sometimes emanates depicts the deeper spirit of oneness among the four predominant ethnic groups found here, who live happily alongside one another.

However, amidst the display of togetherness here are memories of war and violence due to the armed conflict which has swept across northeast Nigeria for over a decade. More than 30,000 people have reportedly lost their lives in the conflict since 2009. Yobe, Adamawa and Borno states bear the brunt of the conflict.

Aisha’s husband lost his life last year when armed fighters attacked their community. Aisha and her children fled into the forest. She explains: “We ran into the bush and stayed there for three months with my eight children. Every day, I would look for firewood and risk taking it to town to sell so I could feed my children.”

One in four women in Yobe, like Aisha, has been widowed due to the fighting. Others have been abandoned or held captive as “wives” for fighters.

Ya Kaka was 18 and recently married with her first child when non-state armed groups attacked her village. She was taken to a camp and forced to marry a fighter. She tried several times to escape. She eventually fell pregnant and had a baby boy.

“I was always scared that I might get caught. But one day, I woke up and I just threw caution to the wind and decided to escape. I was ready to die.”

Three years after being taken captive, Ya Kaka returned to her village, with the fighter’s child in her arms.

Aisha and Ya Kaka are now both receiving assistance from the World Food Programme (WFP). It is the first time Aisha has been a beneficiary of aid. “I really appreciate it. My children and I will eat this food.”

Fourteen months old twins Hassana and Hussaina live with their mother Safiya Musa in the town of Gashua. Four months ago, they began receiving treatment and nutrient formulas as part of WFP’s Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) programme for malnourished children.

UN, Partners Launch 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for North-East



On 16 March, 2021, the United Nations and partner NGOs launched the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan for North-East. They appealed for US\$1 billion to provide critical humanitarian assistance to 6.4 million people in #Nigeria in 2021.

The HRP represents a collective vision for humanitarian action in Nigeria and targets 6.4M people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States facing growing needs due to the ongoing violence and socio-economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Water is Life: The Value Of Water In North-East Nigeria



North-east Nigeria remains besieged by a decade-long conflict between non-state armed groups, commonly known as Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), and the Nigerian forces.

The conflict has left 8.7 million people in need of some form of humanitarian assistance in 2021. Food insecurity, a lack of livelihood opportunities, and insecurity have been further exacerbated by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the north-east of the country, internally displaced persons (IDPs) also grapple with a lack of water in the dry season, spanning the months of October to April, and with contaminated water during the wetter months.

Over 2.1 million IDPs living in camps and camp-like settings and host communities rely on a steady water supply and safe access to clean water to drink, prevent disease and keep their businesses afloat.

Monica Iliya is one such IDP currently living in St. Hilary Camp with her five children. Monica, 52, fled her home in 2011 when non-state armed groups raided her village in Dala, on the periphery of Maiduguri.

"I lost my husband during the attack... We ran away to Michika (a town on the border with Cameroon), and from there we had to flee again, so we came back to Maiduguri," she says.

St. Hilary Camp is an informal settlement in Maiduguri, Borno, the state worst-affected by the humanitarian crisis. The site was previously built to be an administrative building of a local church before the start of the conflict in Borno. The bare concrete structure now provides refuge for 295 individuals.

In 2020, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) rehabilitated a borehole that provides water to camp residents as well as the neighboring host community.

Sitting in the courtyard of the building, Monica pauses when asked what water means to her. "Water is life – without water, humans cannot exist," she says.

"We didn't have water before... There is no light in town, so we didn't have electricity to power the previous borehole so we would normally go and beg to fetch water in people's houses." Her main source of income comes from knitting sweaters, a practice she has passed on to one of her daughters who now helps her support the family. Monica rejoices as she says that her children no longer go out without bathing.

Not far from St. Hilary, along a labyrinth of unpaved roads flanked by market stalls, lies Suleimanti Camp, another informal settlement. Next to the camp, children living in the neighboring houses fill up their jerrycans and buckets at a water collection point before loading their carts. As the children leave, others come to take their place in the queue that leads to one of the water taps.

At the entrance of the camp, Furiara Abdulwaha, 27, tends to her business as her son rests on her lap. Like Monica, she uses the water from the borehole for drinking, cooking and other domestic chores. A mother of eight sons, Furiara is one of the many women in Borno who have lost their husbands to violence or disease and now must single-handedly provide for her family.

"Water used to be scarce before," she says sitting under the shade of her porch. "We used to buy water from vendors but ever since IOM rehabilitated this borehole, we have enough water." "I used to spend a lot of money buying water, but now I use that money for my business."

Furiara sells tiger nut juice and zobo, an infusion made from hibiscus. When asked which one is more popular among her customers, she shrugs shyly. "During the hot weather zobo is very popular," one passerby asserts.

She smiles as she greets the local camp volunteers who come to visit her and buy a drink to keep the scorching heat at bay.

Inside the camp, more people gather to collect water for the day. Camp residents have access to 19 liters of water daily distributed via two water points.

Abatcha Bukar arrived from Konduga seven years ago in the camp.

"Boko Haram came to my town, that's why I left," he says.

"Life before the conflict was prosperous; we had everything we needed in our town... Our greatest hardship now is the lack of food, but we are thankful for the support we are getting because water is plentiful, unlike before."

Last year, IOM designed and installed 659 foot-operated hand-washing stations in Borno and Adamawa States which prevent the spread of COVID-19 by avoiding contact with surfaces while allowing for adequate hand hygiene. Abatcha is one of the 1,060 IDPs in the camp who uses the stations daily.

With his arms outstretched, Abatcha says proudly that he endeavors to raise awareness among his family of the importance of physical distancing and reporting COVID-19 symptoms.



Health Workers Take Nigeria's First Jabs Of COVID-19 Vaccine



Nurse Faith E. Eragbai receiving the first dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine

After Yunusa Thairu became one of Nigeria's earliest vaccination recipients, his mother received a text message that her son had taken the COVID-19 vaccine and something bad might happen to him.

"She got super worried and gave me a call," the doctor recalls. "I had to drive down to go see and assure her that I am fine, [that] there is nothing wrong with taking the vaccine. Upon seeing how healthy I was, she agreed to take the vaccine when it is available."

Her son, a medical consultant at the United Nations Nigeria Isolation Center at Durumi in Abuja and with the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital Gwagwalada, is among the 1 million health workers the Government of Nigeria is targeting in the first phase of its nationwide rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations that begin this month.

"Things like this give me joy, taking the lead and others following," says Dr Thairu. "This pandemic has impacted my work life in so many ways—I see it as a calling on the brave ones to come out and get counted."

Like Dr Thairu, many Nigerians are eager for the vaccine. "I am excited about this vaccine," says Patience Peter. "Finally, we can be at ease. When everyone takes it, we will not have worries of getting infected or losing any loved one. My friends lost their parents and loved ones but it has not affected me directly, it is still sad to see people losing their lives to something that can be prevented. I cannot wait to get vaccinated."

Included along with the front-line health workers in the first phase of the national vaccination campaign are support staff and other health workers as well as first responders in the military, paramilitary and other security agencies, including immigration services.

Once the health workers are vaccinated, the second phase of the roll out will target adults aged 50 and older (with or without an underlying disease) but starting with those aged 60 and older. Phase 3 will accept anyone aged 18–49 with underlying disease (such as hypertension, diabetes, lung disease, cancers and heart conditions). And the fourth phase will expand to anyone in that age group without any underlying disease condition.

"A lot of demand generation and sensitization of critical stakeholders have gone into the preparedness towards the vaccine rollout," stresses Dr Faisal Shuaib, Executive Director of the National Primary Health Care Department Agency. His agency and partner agencies, including the World Health Organization (WHO), have deployed electronic self-registration and house-to-house registration for the vaccination campaign across the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory.

Dr Shuaib also emphasizes the "assurances and subsequent certification from the National Agency for Food and Drug Admin-

istration and Control" that the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine that the nationwide campaign is beginning with "is safe for use".

Although he is aware of all types of COVID-19 candidate vaccines in the market, Dr Shuaib says the Federal Ministry of Health and its agencies, the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control, will ensure that only WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccines are introduced in the country. "Hence, we are prioritizing the number of vaccines that will be rolled out – maximum two or three, depending on availability."

Nigeria is slated to receive 84 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccines from the COVAX Facility, co-led by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, WHO and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, working in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Bank, civil society organizations, manufacturers and others. COVAX is part of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, a ground-breaking global collaboration to accelerate development, production and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments and vaccines.

Through the African Export-Import Bank and the African Union, Nigeria will receive 41.3 million vaccine doses beginning in April.

"We are not ruling out some vaccine hesitancy from the public, but we are putting measures in place to educate and sensitize the citizens that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and efficacious," assures Dr Shuaib.

Dr Thairu wants to help protect that message of safe and effective. "The misinformation on news media is alarming," he says. "A lot of messages on how to use non-pharmaceutical methods to prevent and cure COVID-19 are going on and on. I think this is time for us to use social media and the likes to create awareness on this vaccine and enlighten people of its importance to containing the disease."

Godwin Okpara, for instance, is not sure if he will take the vaccine. He admits the conspiracy theories have him nervous, and he wonders how the vaccine will affect him in the future. "I have lost two loved ones in this pandemic, and I don't want to lose any other person," he admits. But he does not know what to trust. "I and my family are still deliberating on taking it when it becomes available for everyone."

The government strategy to calm fears and create queues for the anti-coronavirus vaccination include high-profile recipients like the country's president and vice-president (already jabbed), state governors and deputy governors, speakers of each State House of Assembly, chief judges and religious leaders.

"We will continue to use all available channels and media to enlighten the public and provide clarifications where necessary," Dr Shuaib says.

"This vaccine coming in is a morale booster," cheers Dr Thairu. "It will boost our confidence as health workers and our ability to take in more patients and eradicate COVID-19. It is going to give us multiplying effects as more people are now willing to participate in the response."



Dr Thairu showing his vaccination card shortly after being vaccinated

UN, NiMET Mark World Meteorological Day



Group photograph with invited students at the event

At the invitation of the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet), the World Meteorological Organization joined NiMet to celebrate the World Meteorological Day. The event took place at the NiMet Head Quarters in Abuja and was attended by dignitaries from the Ministries, Departments and Agencies including the Ministry of Aviation, Nigeria Hydrological Service Agency, National Emergency Management Agency, Students from invited Secondary Schools, and media organizations. Highlights of the event were goodwill messages and a speech by the Director General of NiMet, and quiz competition by students.

The World Meteorological Day takes place every year on 23 March, commemorating the date in 1950 when the Convention establishing the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) came into force. It promotes the all-round work of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in protecting lives and property not just on land but also at sea.

This year's World Meteorological Day on 23 March was devoted to the theme "the ocean, our climate and weather." The World Meteorological Day theme was selected to highlight the start of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021 to 2030). WMO is committed to the "safe ocean", "predicted ocean" and "transparent ocean" goals of the Decade. The ocean drives the world's weather and climate and anchors the global economy and food security. Climate change is hitting the ocean hard, but also increasing hazards for hundreds of millions of people.

In his speech, the Director General of NiMet Prof. Mansur Bako Matazu used the occasion to draw attention to the rising ocean levels across the world including the coastal belt of Nigeria due to the changing climate. He explained to the audience that this could increase the risk of coastal erosions, coastal flooding, storm surges, stronger ocean waves and swells. He stated that the Federal Government was interested in developing capacity for improved meteorological data generation along the coastline of Nigeria by NiMet.

The goodwill message presented by the WMO highlighted how observations, research and services were more critical than ever before for the ocean which covers more than 70 percent of the

Earth's surface. The ocean absorbs over 90% of excess heat trapped by greenhouse gases, thus shielding us from even greater temperature increases as a result of climate change. But this comes at a heavy price as ocean warming and changes in ocean chemistry are already disrupting marine ecosystems and people who depend on them.

The "blue economy," accounts for more than three quarters of world trade and providing livelihoods for over 6 billion people. Millions of dollars in goods and hundreds of lives are still lost at sea each year due to extreme weather conditions such as high winds, large waves, fog, thunderstorms, sea ice and freezing spray. The accuracy and timeliness of standardized weather forecasting over the last decades has improved, and the WMO community striving to improve impact-based forecasting, not just on what the weather will be but what it will do. Here are some links to media highlights of the event.



Nigerian Returnees Turned Mentors To Help Peers Overcome Social Barriers



Nigerian returnee mentors lead a colouring session for child returnees to promote self-expression. Photo: Narulita Ayu/IOM 2021

On 9 - 11 March 2021, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) hosted a series of psychosocial activities for Nigerian returnees in Benin City, Edo State, the main place of origin of migrants returning to the country.

Twelve returned who have recently been trained as psychosocial mentors under the direct supervision of IOM officers led three group sessions targeting vulnerable returnees including victims of trafficking (VoTs), single mothers, survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) as well as child returnees, and family of returnees with mental health needs.

“The project, focused on a community-based approach to psychosocial reintegration to bring returnees together in an environment that promotes dignity and allow each member to share experiences without shame or fear of discrimination,” said Narulita Ayu, IOM Nigeria MHPSS Project Officer. “The activities provided also an opportunity to share messages on COVID-19 prevention,” she added.

The pandemic has compounded the vulnerabilities of people around the world including Nigerian returnees. Among 105 people surveyed in May last year, 90 per cent reported that their emotional wellbeing had deteriorated since the outbreak of COVID-19.

On the first day of activities, participants joined a peer-to-peer psychosocial group session for family members and caregivers of returnees experiencing severe mental health conditions to connect, share experiences and draw support from each other.

The second day was dedicated to colouring activities for children, aimed at providing a vehicle for self-expression and the opportunity of sharing feelings and experiences in a safe space.

Thirteen participants, including child returnees, were tasked with drawing and colouring images related to COVID-19 protection guidelines.

On the third day, the mentors organized make-up and self-care activities for 15 female returnees. The mentors initiated the activity with key messages on the importance of self-care and it was followed up with self-make-up sessions.

“This activity is an eye opener for me and a better reflection of myself. I am very happy to be a part of the make-up session because I hardly think of myself, I feel have no added value to family,” said one of the participants.

The project titled Facilitating a mentoring system among returnees through a community-based approach to psychosocial reintegration is funded by the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration.

GOAL
OF THE MONTH



UN Supports 2021 Nigerian National Labour Advisory Council Meeting

The National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC) in Nigeria meets to discuss ratification of international labour standards, and other labour related matters to promote decent work in the country.



Dignitaries at the stakeholders' workshop

The Nigerian NLAC, established in 1955 is the highest tripartite body on labour matters with the responsibility of promoting and ensuring best practice of labour administration in line with international standards as well as recommend to the parliament on the ratification of international labour standards, convened over a two day session from 23-24 March to discuss labour matters and legislation concerning Nigeria.

The ILO Country Office Abuja, officer in Charge- Mr David Dorkenoo in his address noted that Nigeria is one of the very few countries in Africa where all the tripartite partners are elected members of the Governing Body (GB) of the ILO. He noted the importance of the NLAC and its role in strengthening social dialogue and tripartism in Nigeria. The address concluded with assurances of ILO's continued commitment to working with the tripartite partners to maintain an active NLAC, promote decent work and meet the aspirations of Nigerians. The "role of NLAC in ensuring a peaceful industrial relations environment in Nigeria cannot be over emphasised, frequent meetings of the NLAC will strengthen social dialogue and tripartism in Nigeria" he said.

During the 2021 NLAC session, the council members including ILO tripartite partners- Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress, Nigeria (TUC) as well Ministries, Departments and Agencies with mandates relevant to the world of work and State Government representatives discussed the various labour matters including the ratification of ILO labour conventions.

The NLAC sessions covered discussions on four International Labour Conventions: Convention No. 143 – Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143); Convention No. 181 – Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181); Convention No. 187 – Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187); and Convention No. 190 – Violence and Harassment Convention 2019 (No. 190).

Some of the resolutions and recommendations from the NLAC 2021 sessions are that: Government should demonstrate political will to honour and implement Collective Bargaining Agreements

(CBAs) in order to sustain tripartism and social dialogue; Mechanisms for Collective Bargaining in both public and private sectors should be strengthened; Labour inspection and social protection should be extended to all sectors of the economy to curb unfair labour practices; and that government should promote full and decent employment in all sectors of the nation's economy.

Others included: All four conventions discussed at the 2021 NLAC sessions are to be ratified, and the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment should forward to the Federal Executive Council (FEC) Memoranda for the ratification of the conventions; Sequel to Nigeria's ratification of any ILO convention, Government should set up a Technical Committee to look into critical issues relevant to its domestication; Non-functional sectoral Employers' Association should be revived to promote social dialogue and tripartism; and that the composition of the Joint National Public Service Negotiating Council (JNPSNC), Trade Union side be reviewed to accommodate other Trade Unions that are currently excluded; among others.

The ILO is currently supporting the development of the first National Industrial Relations Policy and the Decent Work Country Programme III for the country.



Tackling Illegal Wildlife Trade In Nigeria



There is high pressure on Nigerian wildlife, where pangolins, forest elephants, and other endangered species, are traded both domestically and internationally. Animals are hunted for their bushmeat and body parts, such as pangolin scales and elephant ivory tusks. The country's deforestation has also led to further decrease in endangered animals.

Nigeria is not only a source of wildlife products, but also a major transit country. There appears to be geographic consolidation of trafficking routes across several markets, with Nigeria emerging as a key source/transit country for many shipments of protected species and products. According to a report of the CITES, Elephant Trade Information System to COP17, Nigeria is the second most prominent ivory exporting country of West Africa, functioning as a major ivory hub that draws in ivory from Central Africa and, increasingly, as far away as East Africa.

UNODC's World Wildlife Crime Report (WWCR) 2020, found that, in 2019 alone, at least 51 tons of pangolin scales seized globally originated from Nigerian ports, compared to only 2 tons in 2015. More than half of all seizures of pangolin scales worldwide could be traced back to Nigeria in 2019. Data further suggests an increasing role of Nigeria in the illicit ivory trade. Despite a global decline in trafficking in ivory since 2011, Nigeria has been

identified in a growing number of incidents as part of the illegal trade chain.

The January 2021 seizure at the Apapa Ports by the Nigeria Customs Service of 20 feet container containing the remains of various endangered species further highlights and buttresses these findings in the WWCR 2020. The container included 2,772 pieces of elephant tusks of different shapes weighing about 4,752kg; 162 sacks of pangolin scales weighing 5,329kg; 5kg of rhino horns, dried and fresh animal bones; 103 kg of skulls suspected to be of lions and other wild cat; and 76 pieces of timber (semi processed and processed).

The 17th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES (COP17) adopted a resolution 17.6 on "Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention" and decision 17.83, which called for the development of guidelines that could "assist Parties to mitigate the risks of corruption in the trade chain as it relates to CITES-listed specimens".

UNODC's Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime and the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch have developed practical tools to support wildlife management authorities to strengthen their capacity to mitigate against the risk of corruption that prevents them from achieving their mandate to protect wildlife.

The Government of Nigeria has requested UNODC's support for interventions to tackle wildlife crime, including the conduct of a corruption risk assessment (CRA) for the wildlife and forestry sectors in Nigeria.

Consequently, UNODC in partnership with the relevant national ministries, departments and agencies is undertaking a series of activities to facilitate corruption risk assessments and the development of corresponding corruption risk mitigation strategies for Nigeria's wildlife and forest sectors. This intervention is being funded by the European Union through the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC).

Bringing Judges And Prosecutors Together To Combat Impunity For Trafficking In Person

In a recent article about the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, Professor Yemi Akinseye-George stressed the "powerful role of the judge as the driver of criminal justice administration" and emphasized that "unless the judges understand, embrace and proactively apply the provisions of the Act, its lofty vision of restoring the effectiveness of the Nigerian criminal justice system may remain an illusion." This central role played by the Judiciary is particularly true when it comes to the criminal justice response to trafficking in persons in Nigeria, where the conviction rate for this crime remains low.

Indeed, between 2017 and 2019, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) recorded 2,165 persons suspected of or arrested for trafficking in persons. Yet over these three years, NAPTIP recorded only 101 national convictions related to trafficking in persons.

Judges' interpretation of the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act of 2015 and other relevant legislation is crucial when it comes to deciding that the elements of the various trafficking offences are met, the type of evidence that is admissible or the type of sentences that should be given.

In order to tackle these challenges and explore opportunities to improve the criminal justice response to trafficking in persons, UNODC organized on 9 and 10 March a technical retreat with judges and NAPTIP prosecutors under a project funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the United States of America.

Participants examined the legal framework and jurisprudence, discussed current practices and opportunities in using electronic evidence, and debated issues pertaining to victim and witness management in trafficking cases. Prosecutors used the opportunity to raise key challenges they face in preparing and presenting their cases, while judges gave insights into recurring shortcomings of evidence presented.

"I found the sessions very enlightening, particularly with regards to the challenges being faced by prosecution in ensuring that both the victims and defendants get justice," said Honourable Justice Nduka M. Obi from the Delta State High Court.

"The retreat was an eye opener. I now have a better understanding on tendering digitally generated evidence in line with the provisions of Section 84 of the Evidence Act, 2011," said Rosemary Emodogo, prosecutor at NAPTIP zonal command in Benin City, Edo State.

“My Request To Muslims: Always Remember IDPs When Disbursing Your Zakat Funds”

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, launches a new Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund in Nigeria to provide critical support to internally displaced Nigerian families in the North-East and North-West



UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, launches a new Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund in Nigeria to provide critical support to internally displaced Nigerian families in the North-East and North-West

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, launches a new Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund in Nigeria to provide critical support to internally displaced Nigerian families in the North-East and North-West

In response to the growing levels of internal displacement in Nigeria, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, on Thursday, 8 April 2021 in Abuja, launched the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund – a Islamic philanthropic tool to collect yearly alms by Nigerian Islamic institutions and Muslims to support the most vulnerable internally displaced families in the country.

“We are witnessing a growing level of internal displacement within Nigeria. While the relentless violence by the non-state armed group in north east Nigeria continues to cause mass suffering and displacement in the region, we are also concerned about the critically evolving situation in north west Nigeria, where violence and banditry is aggravating communities, forcing families to flee their homes,” stated Ms. Chansa Kapaya, UNHCR Representative to Nigeria.

“But as displacement situation increases, so too does the willingness and generosity of Nigerians to respond,” continued Ms. Kapaya. “Undoubtedly, the private sector, including citizens, companies and foundations in Nigeria has a crucial role in assisting vulnerable internally displaced families. My hope is that the launch of this Fund will encourage the Muslim community to give generously to support IDPs in dire need.”

UNHCR’s Zakat Fund was originally established in 2019 and has since helped millions of people who have been forced to flee their homes because of conflict, violence, and persecution. With the launch of the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund in Nigeria, Muslims in Nigeria and across the world will now be able to contribute their Zakat to Nigerian IDP beneficiaries. The Zakat contributions will be used to for livelihoods development for the most vulnerable IDPs and the provision of emergency relief items including mattresses, sleeping mats, kitchen sets, laundry soap, and solar lanterns.

“In 2020, UNHCR’s Islamic Philanthropy programme was able to provide critical assistance to over 2.1 million people in 13 countries”, explained Mr. Khaled Khalifa, Senior Advisor on Islamic Philanthropy to UNHCR’s High Commissioner. “With the vast majority of IDPs in Nigeria being eligible for Zakat, we endeavour, through the Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund, to channel Zakat to help alleviate their suffering. The fund does not charge any administrative fees on collection and implementation of Zakat activities. 100 per cent of your contribution goes to those in need. It is a globally trusted, Sharia’ compliant program that offers a most effective vehicle to any donor to channel their Zakat to those who are eligible to receive it.”

The Refugee and IDP Zakat Fund has received the endorsement of 10 fatwas by leading Muslim scholars and Islamic institutions in the Middle East, East Asia, and North America.

Responding to the launch, Alhaji Muhammed Lawal Maidoki, the Chairman of Sokoto State Zakat and Waqf Commission (SOZECOM), commented: “We Muslims have a responsibility and duty to give Zakat each year. There is an immense opportunity in contributing our Zakat towards Nigeria’s internal displacement crisis. My request to Muslims and Zakat Managers is to always remember IDPs when disbursing their Zakat funds and ensure a significant portion of their ‘Sadaqa’ in Ramadan and beyond is set aside for IDPs. In Nigeria we have witnessed the dire situation of the IDPs, and we have sought to assist and support them. But the needs are growing.”

Alhaji Maidoki also conveyed the support of the Sultan of Sokoto, His Eminence, Alhaji Muhammadu Sa’ad Abubakar to UNHCR’s new initiative. A few days later, SOZECOM pledged the first one million Naira to UNHCR’s fund.

As of March 2021, there are 2.9 million internally displaced women, men and children in Nigeria. Of the 97.7 million USD funding requirement for UNHCR’s programme in Nigeria, only 14 per cent have been funded for the year.

PHOTO NEWS



Captions, from left to right in a clockwise direction

1. L-R: UN Women Country Representative, Comfort Lamptey; First Lady of Ekiti State, Mrs Bisi Fayem; UNAIDS E.D. and Under Secretary General, Winnie Byanyima, Minister of Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen; Public Analyst, Obiageli Ezekwesili and UNFPA Country Representative, Ulla Mueller during an interactive Round table discussion with Ms Winnie Byanyima and a cross-section of Nigerian Women in Abuja on Monday 8 March. Credit: UNAIDS/A.Alabi
2. Lagos State Governor, Mr. Bbabajide Sanwoolu (Right) presents a souvenir to the WHO Representative, Dr. Walter Kazadi Mulombo (Left) at the Government House, Alausa Lagos.
3. UN Women Country Representative, Comfort Lamptey (Right) and Chief of Defence Staff, Armed Forces of Nigeria, General Leo Irlabor (Left), at the unveiling of the Gender Policy for the Armed Forces (GPFAN), an outcome of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).

Editor: Oluseyi Soremekun (UNIC)

Editorial Team: UNCG members— Ronald Kayanja (Chairman) - UNIC; Charity Warigon (WHO); Eliana Drakopoulos, Geoffrey Njoku & Rita Abiodun (UNICEF); Rupa Bhadra (UNAIDS); Alison Clement & Rejoice Emmanuel (UNDP); Vanessa Curney & Kori Habib (UNFPA); Pius Udo & Wura Ladipo-Ajayi (ILO); Roland Schoenbauer & Gabriel Adeyemo (UNHCR); Jorge Galindo & Mariam Owoeye (IOM); Emmanuel Kihale & David Tsokar (FAO); Yachat Nuhu (UNESCO); Olivia Okorundu (UNODC); Chukwuemeka Ezekiel (UNIDO), Abiodun Banire (UNOCHA); Chi Lael, Kelechi Onyemaobi & Adedeji Ademigbuji (WFP); Katrien Nollen (UNMAS); Oluwatobiloba Moody (WIPO); Vera Onyeka-Onyilo (IFAD); Roland Abah (WMO).

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**