



UNITED NATIONS  
NIGERIA



# NEWSLETTER



## UN Deputy Chief Calls For Collective Action To End Energy Poverty As Nigeria Launches Solar Mini-Grid Plant

L-R: Minister of Works and Housing, Mr. Babatunde Fashola; Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Mr. Boss Mustapha; UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed; and Minister of State for Works and Housing, Engr Abubakar D. Aliyu. at the commissioning of the solar mini-grid plant in Abuja. Photo: © UNIC/ Oluseyi Soremekun

As President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria launched the 1.52MWp Solar Microgrid Plant to improve access to electricity in Abuja, the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, has reiterated that the challenges of energy poverty could be surmounted by collective action.

“Together we can and must end energy poverty and ensure a just, resilient, and healthy world for all.” She said at the commissioning of the 1.52MWp/2.28MWh Solar Microgrid System and Energy Retrofitting of the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing Headquarters, in Mabushi, Abuja.

The solar microgrid system was commissioned on Tuesday, 6 July 2021, by the President, H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, who was represented by the Secretary to Government of the Federation, Mr Boss Mustapha.

The President noted that “This 1.5MW solar farm, which is the largest solar project for a public building in Africa will enable us to reduce carbon emissions and we are proud that we are contributing to saving the climate for future generations.” He stressed that access to electricity would improve service delivery in the public sector and translate into the ease of doing business “which is a major objective of our economic plans to grow the Nigerian economy and create jobs.

The UN Deputy Secretary General further disclosed that 759 million people in the world still lack access to electricity and all the opportunities it brings for achieving the sustainable development goals. 2.6 billion people lack access to clean fuels and technology for cooking, lighting or heating their homes. “It gives me great pleasure to be part of this launch ceremony today”. She added.

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The Minister of Works and Housing, Mr. Babatunde Fashola said that “What we have delivered, based on the mandate of the Federal Executive Council, is a 1.52MW solar system that will provide uninterrupted power supply to five blocks housing the Ministry of Works and Housing and Ministry of Environment and Lands.”

He added that the project employed 382 artisans and 176 skilled workers throughout its duration.

## World Day Against Trafficking In Persons: Victims' Voices Lead The Way



L-R: UN Resident Coordinator Edward Kallon; Chief of Mission at IOM Nigeria, Franz Celestin; and UNODC Deputy Country Representative, Ms. Elisabeth Bayer, at the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. 2021.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) jointly with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), on 30 July 2021, organized an event to mark the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2021.

Trafficking in persons is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. Every year, thousands of men, women and children fall into the hands of traffickers. Despite significant efforts carried out by authorities to curb the problem, Nigeria is a country of origin, transit and destination for victims of human trafficking.

This year's World Day Against Trafficking in Persons theme - Victims' Voices Lead the Way - puts victims of human trafficking at the centre and highlights the importance of listening to and learning from survivors of human trafficking.

In the midst of a global pandemic, accompanied by rising inequalities and economic devastation, the voices of human trafficking survivors and victims risk being drowned out. Listening to their stories is more crucial than ever as the COVID-19 crisis increases fragilities and drives up desperation.

The event portrayed survivors of human trafficking as key actors in the fight against human trafficking and stressed the need to listen to and learn from them as they play a crucial role in establishing effective measures to prevent this crime by identifying and rescuing vic-

tims and supporting them on their road to rehabilitation. Four survivors shared their stories and stressed the need for all stakeholders to continue working towards eradicating this heinous crime and towards the reintegration of rescued victims.

H.E. Hajia Sadiya Umar Farouq, Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development assured that "Nigeria will at all times ensure that victims of human trafficking are given their rightful place and that all reintegration and rehabilitation efforts will take into cognisance their special needs."

Senator Basheer Garba Muhammed, Director-General of NAPTIP, stressed that "the impact of exploitation on victims is so devastating that victims are physically affected, they are psychologically and emotionally traumatized and are often times socially

excluded. I feel it is time for victims of trafficking to anchor the awareness raising on their situation, for a better promotion and protection of their rights, while experience shared could also serve as warning to prevent potential victims from being trafficked."

"Our efforts must be guided by survivors of trafficking. Their contribution is essential to address risk factors and patterns, and to identify and protect victims and ensure their access to justice and recovery, while holding their exploiters accountable" stated Mr. Edward Kallon, UN Resident Coordinator to Nigeria.

Franz Celestin, Chief of Mission at IOM Nigeria further said "we recall the commitments made by the Federal Government of Nigeria in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to facilitate the access of trafficked persons to justice, to allow them to safely report experiences without fear of detention, deportation or penalty, and to provide migrants who have become trafficking victims with protection, assistance and redress."

Ms. Elisabeth Bayer, UNODC Deputy Country Representative added that "bringing perpetrators to justice is the only way to provide restitution for identified victims, to ensure they have access to justice, and to prevent further abuse and exploitation.

## Nelson Mandela Day: UN #Act4MandelaRules

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNODC consultant Mrs. Ugonna Ezekwem, former magistrate and long serving former UNODC staff, visited the Kano Medium Security Custodial Center to conduct interviews with select prisoners for an ongoing UNODC study on organized crime. While identifying suitable interviewees, Ugonna came across a young female prisoner who told her about the difficult conditions she and her 46 fellow inmates were facing with regard to their personal hygiene and selfcare - no access to soap, sanitary towels and other basic necessities.

Disturbed by these reports, Ugonna informed UNODC management who in turn contacted the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). UNFPA has been supporting vulnerable women and girls across Nigeria, including those living in refugee and IDP camps. In that context, UNFPA's support includes the provision of Dignity Kits, which provide women and girls with a range of products specifically designed to address their hygiene needs as well as challenges to resupply themselves, like for example

washable and reusable sanitary pads. Within less than 48 hours, UNFPA mobilized 50 such kits and deployed them to the prison where they were distributed under the cheers of the women prisoners.

The distribution of the Dignity Kits to the Women of Kano Medium Security Custodial Center was more than an ad-hoc humanitarian intervention. It also constituted a very practical assistance to the Nigeria Correctional Service in their effort to comply with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, better known as the Nelson Mandela Rules, as well as the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) which together constitute the body of soft law that should be guiding the way in which men and women around the world are treated when imprisoned. These rules stipulate, inter alia, that:

The sanitary installations shall be adequate to enable every prisoner to comply with the needs of nature when necessary and in a clean and decent manner.



Spotlight Initiative



EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to end violence against women and girls

## Journalists Breaking Boundaries To Help End Violence Against Women And Girls



Ms. Adaomaowo Udemé

Most will agree that ending violence against women and girls is a necessary goal, but one that often forces people outside of their comfort zones. This is particularly true for journalists, who must separate themselves from the subject matter and remain unbiased in their storytelling. And now some journalists are keen to use their platforms to try to help.

Journalists like Adaomaowo Udemé and other members of the media network set up by the Spotlight Initiative - a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union (EU) and United Nations to end all forms of violence against women and girls - are using editorials, feature stories and special reports to challenge the sometimes difficult narrative around violence and bring about positive change.

"Violence against women and girls is a silent epidemic in Nigeria. In the middle of the COVID-19 lockdown, I could only leave home to verify stories - but even with these limitations, I discovered the extent of violence that is being perpetrated against women and girls," said Adaomaowo Udemé

Udemé is first and foremost a journalist, but the extent of the epidemic of violence against women and girls has had an impact on her. Relying on news stories via phone and SMS, and only venturing out to verify before publishing, meant that she was relying on news reaching her first. What she found was that most of the stories that did come to her were related to domestic violence. She received up to 20 calls per day from women and children who were subjected to violence, which led to the creation of a Facebook page, 'Movement Against Domestic Violence and other Related Issues', later transformed into the Network Against Domestic Violence (NADV).

"NADV intervened in the case of a pastor that molested a 13-year-old girl. They traced her village outside of Abuja, wrote extensively about the case and secured the attention of prominent Nigerian

journalists and the Ibom People's Union USA, who supported the family and more than 25 other victims of sexual and gender-based violence," said Udemé.

A recent media dialogue on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting, advocacy and solutions journalism carried out by UNICEF has further strengthened the skills of journalists like Udemé. The media dialogue touched on issues such as the strategies journalists can use to advocate for causes actively and intentionally, in order to draw the attention of government and policy makers to the need to address gaps in funding and program implementation.

"Writing human angle stories helps me uncover under-reported stories, especially in hard-to-reach areas, so that the poor can speak out on issues affecting them - essentially being a lynchpin between the masses and the government. This is what excites me the most," said Udemé.

"The UNICEF-led training gave me renewed energy for my work. Human-interest stories is what I love doing, so the training gave me a pathway to better reporting. Our visit to the traditional ruler in Jikwoi was an eye-opener," said Udemé.

UNICEF Nigeria is implementing the Spotlight Initiative through effective media engagement; addressing negative socio-cultural norms, root causes of gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls (such as child marriage and female genital mutilation); ensuring access to inclusive, timely, and quality services for those who have experienced violence; strengthening and enabling legal and policy frameworks and coordinated institutions, in addition to community mobilization and empowerment.



## Emergency Shelter In Calabar Helps Survivors Of Violence Against Women And Girls

Three girls in identical, colourful dresses walk into the main hall of Basic Rights Counsel Initiative (BRCI), their newly-found friendship with each other masking the trauma that led to them boarding at their new but temporary home.

The girls each have a bed, a change of clothing, well-prepared meals and a matron who sees to their daily needs, including chaperoning any visit to their bedroom. Previously accused of ‘witchcraft’ or abandoned to the streets, the girls have found BRCI to be a haven, where dreams can come true.

BRCI’s intervention for child survivors in Calabar came about when children were discovered held in police custody a clear contravention of the provisions of the Cross River State Child’s Rights Law (2009). Often, the children had been rescued from an abusive environment and taken to a police station. BRCI was motivated to step in and establish an emergency shelter, as the state lacked appropriate facilities to accommodate rescued children – inevitably exposing them to more abuse.

As the programme manager at BRCI, Kebe Ikpi credits his current role and success to his experiences during his formative years. “I grew up in a peaceful home and my parents made it clear to us that differences of opinion should not lead to a fight,” said Kebe Ikpi.

“As a teenager who grew up in army barracks, I was concerned when I saw children in my neighborhood with bruises on their bodies. I found it ridiculous for a man to beat a woman or inflict injury on a child in the name of discipline. I remember telling my friends that I will never beat anybody, no matter the reason. These incidents informed my interest in defending the rights of the vulnerable.”

BRCI responds to over 100 cases a year, but during the COVID-19 lockdown, the team supported more than 250 vulnerable children by providing them with food, handwashing materials and face masks, while offering remote support and supplies to about 30 women.



Girls at the Shelter

“We have rescued and successfully reunited some children with their family members and successfully facilitated foster parenting for those branded as ‘witches,’ while also achieving several convictions of perpetrators of sexual abuse - five of which happened this year.”

The group also supports the training of teachers, religious leaders, social welfare officers, case workers, community surveillance team members and community volunteers, in Calabar, Akamkpa and Obanliku local government area of Cross River State on detecting and responding to incidents of violence – and helps communities to take ownership of ending violence against women and girls.

The work is done with the support of the Spotlight Initiative - a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union (EU) and United Nations to end all forms of violence against women and girls.

“Children need all the support they can get, and in the case of survivors of abuse, they require psychosocial support in order to make a full recovery,” said Kebe Ikpi.

## 103 Women And Girls Living With Obstetric Fistula Receive Surgical Repairs

103 Women and Girls Living with Obstetric Fistula in Sokoto, Northern Nigeria had their dignity restored following the Successful Repair of their Obstetric Fistula with funding provided by the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative. The cases range from complex fistulas deemed inoperable and ureteric fistulas that require implantations through abdominal open surgery.

Nasara Bello, 40 years old from Maganawa community had suffered the fistula for at least 2 years and had an initial surgery that didn’t work. This is her second surgery. She had to endure negative comments in her community because of her condition before she was listed to be a beneficiary of the surgery. She says “the urine was continuously leaking before but there’s a huge difference now and I feel better”

Without treatment, fistula can severely impact a woman’s health and wellbeing; she may be unable to control the flow of her urine or faeces, suffer nerve damage in her legs, be rejected by her husband, family, and/or community, and experience shame and isolation.

Corrective surgery to women suffering from obstetric fistula is the first and most important step towards a successful reintegration. The success of the surgery and subsequent continence is seen as the first step to reintegration, and unsuccessful repair



seen as leaving the women in the same or worse off state of alienation.

Surgical repairs give the patient hope of recovery and improves her mental state. It affords the woman freedom to relate well with family, support the family, interacts with the general community and her ability to lead a normal life.

Following surgery, Ms. Bello and other girls and women are now monitored for complications on a post-operative ward by qualified nursing staff for 2 to 4 weeks with a catheter in place, to reduce the risk of infection and to encourage healing.

## UN, Ministry of Women Affairs Visit Defence HQ, Decorate Defence Chief 'HeForShe' Champion

UN Women Country Representative Ms Comfort Lamptey together with the Honorable Minister for Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen paid a courtesy visit to the Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Leo Irabor, alongside departmental chiefs, directors, leaders from CSOs, Women-led organisations, and press members.

Dame Pauline Tallen in her remarks commended the Nigerian Army for the launch of the Gender Policy for the Armed Forces, as this has led to other security forces taking similar steps in launching their gender policy, most recently, the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps.

"The Nigerian Military has reported lower cases of issues around GBV across its forces, this is largely due to consistent campaigns by the Gender Desk Officers of the Armed Forces. I appeal for the increase of women in the Nigerian Defence Academy (NDA), as female officers have proven over time to be outstanding, the representation of women in the security sector is quite low and inclusion is crucial". She said.

In recognition of his good work, the Chief of Defence Staff was decorated as a HeForShe Champion by Ms. Lamptey and Dame Tallen.

In response to the request from the Hon. Minister, Gen. Irabor remarked "women should be given opportunities to showcase themselves, beyond what we see. I must also inform the Minister that the 'Women in Uniform' conference has now been approved as an annual forum and we will do everything to institutionalize it".



Chief of Defence Staff, Gen. Leo Irabor (Right) after his decoration as a HeForShe Champion by Hon. Minister for Women Affairs, Dame Pauline Tallen (2nd left) and UN Women Country Representative Ms Comfort Lamptey (Left).

Further in his statement, "...the Nigerian Army has been able to factor women in facets across all training in the Military and will continue to fine-tune this. We believe that women must be supported, and I urge the Hon. Minister not to relent, we recognize the centrality of women and their values, which is why this support and push is extremely important. As a New HeForShe Advocate, I will do all in my power to push further its objectives, and let's also note that in a bid to promote women in the Armed Forces, the Gender Adviser unit has been upgraded to a Directory".

## I Am Generation Equality: Asmau Aliyu, Nigerian Girl Guides Association

*Girl Guiding has moved from the confinement of educational intuitions towards the community especially during COVID-19*

Since her early primary school days, Asmau was a brilliant girl performing well both in her academics and social life. She had a strong passion for community work which led her to joining the Girl Guides Association of Nigeria- a platform that would enable her to give back to both her school and community.

She joined the club in primary school, with a hope to not only give back to her school through various activities, but to also mentor other younger upcoming guides: brownies (age 5-10), guides (age 11-14), rangers (age 15-18) and young leaders (18+). Now, a graduate of Computer Science, Asmau, in her words "Our mission as an Association is to ensure that girls and young girls and women achieve their full potential as responsible citizens of their communities, country and world at large. In the recent years, we have seen the impact of guiding move from the school into the community".

As the largest voluntary association of young women in the world, the Girl Guides Association aims to reach out to every girl and has membership across tribe, religion, class and race with members in over 150 countries.

Being in a leadership position in the Nigerian Chapter has enabled Asmau and her peers provide non- formal education activities including workshops, camps, leadership trainings and door to door sensitizations.

According to Asmau, when COVID-19 pandemic hit, and the cases of gender-based violence soared, the guides knew that this was their chance to step up for their community. Hence the association was able to carry out community sensitizations on Covid 19 protocols including proper hand washing, social distancing as well as distribution of relief items including sanitary materials for the girls and young women. the Nigerian Girl



Asmau Naphatiti Aliyu

Guides Association played a crucial role in reaching communities through various advocacy campaigns and messaging.

"We are now working on issues related to girls empowerment and are the channel through which solutions reach girls and women at the grassroots level. I look forward to a future where various stakeholders come together and enhance efforts towards addressing and preventing issues of gender-based violence against women and girls' she concludes.

Asmau Aliyu is currently the National Youth Commissioner of the Nigeria Girl Guides Association. She works closely with the UN Women RCCE project for COVID 19 response. Through her role in the organization, she works to ensure that the voices of young people are included in decision making within the association and communities.

## UN Mobilises NUJ, NOA Against Child Labour In Mining And Agriculture

*In July, the ACCEL Africa Project of International Labour Organization (ILO) equipped media professionals and other stakeholders in Nigeria with the required skills for message optimization to ensure quality communication to various participant groups in the quest to eliminate child labour especially in Nigeria's Artisanal Gold Mining and cocoa value chains. Accelerating action for the elimination of child labour in supply chains in Africa (ACCEL AFRICA) facilitated the capacity building activities in various states.*



*Dignitaries at the Osun training workshop.*

In July, the International Labour Organization's ACCEL Africa Project in Nigeria trained 145 media professionals and tripartite representatives in Niger State, Ondo State and Osun States in a 'Stepdown Training Workshop for National Orientation Agency (NOA) Staff and Media Practitioners on the Elimination of Child Labour.

These series of activities were sequel to the 'Training of Trainers Workshop' held in Lagos State in June 2021, where 20 focal persons were equipped to replicate the experience in their states.

Participation in this highly enlightening interaction was drawn from the membership and staff of the NOA, Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Radio, Television and Theatre Workers Union (RATTAWU) and Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD). Others were from Ministry of Information, Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel Development (FMMSD), Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment (FMoLE), Niger State Ministry of Mining and Mineral Resources (NSMMMR), Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, and Osun State Ministry of Information and Civic Orientation.

While the step-downs in Ondo and Niger State held simultaneously from July 12 to 15 2021, the Osun step-down held from 26 to 29 July 2021. The central objective of the training was to deepen the inclusion of media professionals in the strategic application of messages designed to change behaviour and influence mass action at all levels against the scourge of child labour. It also aimed to support the achievement of SDG Target 8.7 which requires UN Member States to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2025.

In Niger State, the 47 participants were drafted from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, Ministry of Labour and Employment, National Orientation Agency, and Nigeria Union of Journalists.

The workshop in Ondo State attracted 51 participants from: the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, Ministry of Labour and Employment, National Orientation Agency and Nigeria Union of Journalists.

In Osun State, 47 participants from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, Ministry of Labour and Employment, National Orientation Agency, Nigeria Union of Jour-

nalists and Radio, Television and Theatre Workers Union (RATTAWU) were in attendance.

Speaking during the opening ceremony of the training, the ILO Abuja Country Office for Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, and Liaison office for ECOWAS, represented by Agatha Kolawole, the National Project Coordinator identified reorientation as critical in influencing collective responsibility across the value chains where child labour was prevalent. Ms Kolawole also highlighted the need for media professionals to take immediate ownership of the campaign for "Responsible Farming", "Responsible Mining" and "Responsible Consumption".

According to Phala, "Children have the right to be protected and given the chance to develop mentally, physically and spiritually... the alarming rate of child labour in Nigeria may increase if we fail to take ownership of this fight immediately."

In Niger State, the Desk Officer, Child Labour Unit, FML&E, Alhassan Adamu Mohammed lamented the abuse of children through trafficking in persons and forced labour in Nigeria and the ECOWAS region. According to Mr Mohammed "children within the school-age of 11-15 are involved in various dangerous activities such as digging on mining sites, breaking, chiseling, heating, cracking, crushing, hammering, excavating, and carrying of stones dust and sands, exposing them to various hazards, Mohammed added"

In Ondo State, the Federal Labour Controller, Micheal Folayan, highlighted the efforts of Federal Government (through Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment) in combating the scourge to include establishment of National Steering Committee on Child Labour. Others included the constitution and inauguration of State Steering Committees on Child Labour with designated Desk Officers, and advocacy visits to various states on the elimination of child labour among others. Folayan identified child labour as a threat to the future of Nigeria, stressing the need for support from all stakeholders to meet the year 2025 benchmark for total eradication of child labour in Nigeria.

While delivering a lecture titled "Investigating and Writing Human Interest Stories in the Context Of Child Labour", the Ondo State Chairman of the NUJ, Adetona Aderoboye, identified the need for detailed, factual and comprehensive features and investigations by media professionals on child labour related issues in the state.

In Osun State, the Commissioner for Information and Civic Orientation, Funke Egbemode, called for the re-establishment of a "Failed Parents Tribunal", to restore traditional family values and for media professionals to refocus their agenda setting responsibility on the child labour emergency.

Addressing participants, the Osun State NUJ Chairman, Ajadosu Wasuu expressed concerns at the low level of enforcement and implementation of the Child Rights Law in Osun State, challenging media professionals to solution journalism in addressing child labour problem in Nigeria.

Ibikunle Abiodun, the Osun State Director of NOA identified endemic poverty and greed as direct causes of child labour globally and further urged parents and society in general, to pay more attention to children.

At the end of the workshops, participants were issued certificates and included on social media group platforms to foster information sharing and synergy between participating organizations and members.

## Joint Efforts To Fight Hunger In North-East Nigeria



*Little girl getting nutritional assessment*

**H**unger is on the rise worldwide. The combination of conflict, COVID-19, increased food prices and the effects of climate change are decimating livelihoods and people's access to food. Across the world, high levels of food insecurity are in danger of deteriorating into catastrophic conditions, unless this is urgently addressed. Millions of people are at risk.

North-east Nigeria is on the brink of catastrophic food insecurity

In north-east Nigeria, the outlook is dire. Without sustained humanitarian assistance in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, millions will struggle to feed themselves during this critical 2021 lean season. According to the March 2021 Cadre Harmonisé food security assessment, an estimated 4.4 million people, including internally displaced people, are expected to face critical food shortages. Some 775,000 people are at extreme risk of catastrophic food insecurity—the worst outlook in 4 years.

The humanitarian community, the United Nations and non-governmental organisations, have joined efforts to address the rapidly deteriorating food insecurity situation in the north-east, working closely with the Government of Nigeria at federal and state levels.

"The humanitarian community is deeply concerned by the alarming food insecurity in north-east Nigeria. Levels of food insecurity today are similar to 2016-17, when the crisis was at its worst. The U.N. and its non-governmental partners are working with the Government to respond to this growing threat of catastrophic food insecurity," said Edward Kallon, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria.

"Women in affected communities have shared stories of sleepless children who cry through the night due to hunger," said Mr. Kallon. Conditions for some households are so desperate that families are living on nutritional supplements meant to ensure the survival of their children. The nutrition situation is at risk of deteriorating to critical levels due to persistent and poor underlying conditions, including inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene and limited health access.

**Climate change, the ongoing conflict and its impact on food security**

The situation may likely worsen during the rainy season if diseases like cholera and malaria are not prevented or controlled.

The insecurity plaguing north-east Nigeria, intense rains, flash flooding and periods of drought are some factors preventing farmers from accessing their fields and growing crops. They are doubly impacted by the food insecurity, not only losing their ability to grow food they need to feed their families but also suffering the loss of income from not being able to yield a harvest. Solving food insecurity must be approached as a long-term effort that requires enabling people to have livelihoods through agriculture, and supporting them through capital and agricultural inputs.

The worst affected during the lean season are women and children. A considerable percentage of the affected people are female-headed households, who depend on farming to provide for their families. They are facing the impossible dilemma of needing to earn a living while simultaneously placing themselves at risk of sexual violence by collecting firewood or going to the open fields for farming activities—areas that are well outside the relative safety and protection of their communities.

"Parents are taking their children out of school to beg in order to survive. This exposes children, especially girls to the risk of trafficking, rape, and sexual harassment," said Mr. Kallon. "Women have shared that they resort to eating grass." This illustrates the levels of desperation early in the lean season. Domestic and sexual violence is on the rise, as men struggle to provide for their families, taking their frustrations out on the family. Women and young girls are also forced into child labour, child marriage and transactional sex for food and survival.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation has also deepened vulnerabilities. In addition to losing livelihoods, people have had to cope with decimation of their incomes and increased food prices. For many people across the Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, they can no longer afford to buy food.

"We have been able to avert catastrophic food insecurity in the past by working together, and we can do it again given the resources required. We are grateful to our donors and partners for their generous support. Our operational plan sets out the requirement of USD\$250 million for immediate action. We desperately need the funding now to urgently save lives," said Edward Kallon.

## New Platforms Strengthen Statisticians' Capacity For Tracking SDGs Progress In Nigeria



The Director of Fisheries, Mrs. Olatokunbo Emokpae representative of the Permanent Secretary, Lagos state Ministry of Agriculture (standing) flanked on her left by the Managing Director of the Lagos ADP Dr. Pereira-Sheteolu and on her right by the FAO project focal point Alphonsus Onwuemeka at the launch of the Step-down training in Lagos.

Nearly 200 statisticians and data managers in Nigeria have been empowered with new tools and skills to generate, process, analyse and disseminate accurate information relevant for policy planning and tracking progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The training aligns with the Lagos State “overarching development agenda of enhancing technology through a planned food security system”, when accomplished would translate to strategic and technical value addition which results into key outcomes to end poverty in all its forms, end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, among others. The Permanent Secretary Lagos state Ministry of Agriculture Hakeem Adeniji declared at the opening of the 5-day step-down training in Ikeja.

Strategic planning requires accurate and timely data, “our recent efforts at formulating our Lagos state Food and Agriculture Systems Roadmap was hinged on the bedrock of statistical data”, Adeniji who was represented by the Director of Fisheries, Mrs. Olatokunbo Emokpae said.

The food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organised the step-down training in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) and the National Bureau for Statistics (NBS) for participants drawn from Federal and State Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of the three priority states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). This training is funded within the framework of FAO Technical Cooperation Programme, ‘Strengthening Institutional Capacity for improved Data and Information Systems for Policy Planning and Tracking the SDGs in Nigeria’.

The FAO Representative in Nigeria and to ECOWAS Fred Kafeero said it is part of FAO’s mandate to support Member States

to strengthen their agricultural and food security data and statistical systems, thus the training is to ensure that the Federal level counterpart MDAs and those of the participating States i.e. Cross River, Lagos and Kano as well as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) acquire relevant competencies for the consistent and systematic generation and analysis of data and information for policy planning and tracking progress on the implementation of the SDGs and Malabo Protocol commitments.

“This training focused on practical learning with the available cost-free software for data analysis and it deepened the knowledge and skills of the trainees on the use of those tools in data analysis and making of inference on statistics,” Mr. Kafeero pointed out.

Earlier in February, there was a Training of Trainers FAO conducted in Abuja, where about 40 beneficiaries drawn from the participating states given the necessary capacities. They have now stepped down the training in their respective states, starting with the FCT in the first week of June, Kano in the second week, Lagos in the third week and Cross River in the last week of June into July.

In the stepdown trainings, more than 150 (including 44 females) data manager and statisticians (minimum of 30 from each of the states and the FCT) were exposed to the use of Open Data Sources Kit (ODK) Technology as well as Cost-free R- package and python software for data generation and analysis.

To ensure operative consolidation of the knowledge gained and accentuate data analysis skills in data management, the trainees were further exposed to hands on data generation processes - survey management, farmer profiling, data entry, manual editing, handling of questionnaires, report writing, statistical analysis, modeling and descriptive statistics among others.



## Community Informants' Network Consolidating Surveillance To Sustain Polio Eradication Gains



Little girl getting nutritional assessment (MUAC).

As a health worker and a patent medicine vendor living in Gubio 1 ward, Borno State, Dauda Ahmed encourages members of his community to notify him or the nearest health facility of any child under 15 years with weakness or paralysis of any of the limbs.

Mr Ahmed is one of the pioneer Auto-Visual AFP Detection and Reporting (AVADAR) community informants in Borno State. He has been drawing from experience garnered during the polio eradication campaign activities to report Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases, using the Auto-Visual AFP Detection and Reporting (AVADAR), a mobile application that sends automatic case alerts to the appropriate disease surveillance officers in the Local Government Area and State who investigate it.

"I have been a pioneer AVADAR informant since November 2016. I was trained in Maiduguri, Borno State. As a reputable health worker with Gubio 1 MCH, the members of my community respect me due to the quality care and empathy I show to them wherever they bring their children to the hospital for treatment, immunization or when the mothers come in for child birth. This made it easier for them to listen to me and also notify me when they suspect a case of weakness of the limb in any child," says Dauda.

In August 2020, the global health community celebrated the eradication of wild poliovirus from the African Region.

Polio is a highly infectious viral disease that can cause paralysis and death. The disease primarily spreads through eating and or drinking contaminated foods or drinks. There is no cure yet for the disease, and its disabling impact is often irreversible. Gladly though, the disease is vaccine preventable.

Despite the country being wild poliovirus free, Nigeria's polio programme faces challenges that include widespread outbreak of

vaccine derived polio virus type 2 (cVDPV2) due to poor population immunity and surveillance gaps.

In 2021, as at the end of June, outbreak of cVDPV2 had been reported in 11 states – Abia, Bayelsa, Borno, Jigawa, Kano, Kebbi, Nasarawa, Rivers, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara.

### Keeping polio at bay

To keep cVDPV2 at bay, WHO has continued to work with all stakeholders including the government across all levels, donor agencies, frontline health workers, and the community to deliver immunization services and surveillance across the nation, especially in security compromised communities of Borno state.

The WHO Borno State Coordinator (ai) Ayodeji Isiaka, noted that WHO has been supporting the state to strengthen surveillance by building the capacity of the surveillance actors including the AVADAR community informants and also providing them with phones with airtime and supportive supervision.

"Once a case of suspected AFP alert is received, an investigation is conducted to confirm it. If found to be 'true AFP', stool samples are collected from such child and transported to the lab with the supported of WHO. WHO provides data analysis on the VADAR/Community Informant performance and provide feedback to relevant stakeholders to inform decisions for improvement.

### Laudable partnership

The Borno State Incident Manager (IM) Dr. Aliyu Shettima said the systematic engagement of Community informants from insecure areas (CIAs) to vaccinate eligible children residing in those communities and conduct active surveillance has led to remarkable improvement in Polio surveillance activities in the state.

"As of July 31st, 2021, a total of 1,715 CIAs have been engaged and implemented active surveillance and vaccination across 5,691 security compromised locations in the state with valid geo-evidence," he added.

## UN Extends SRH Support To Female Cameroonian Refugees In Abuja



The worsening violence in Cameroon’s Anglophone regions continues to take an increasingly heavy toll on civilians. UNHCR estimated that the ongoing hostilities have led to the displacement of over 700,000 and have forced up to 63,800 civilians to flee across the border to Nigeria. This displaced population are frequently subjected to economic and physical vulnerabilities.

Rose was a practicing Nurse in Cameroon before the crisis led to her displacement to Nigeria as a refugee in 2018, where she had high hopes of restarting her life. This hope was quickly stifled when she was sexually assaulted by someone she trusted and believed would support her economic empowerment and survival. Despite this trauma, Rose demonstrated resilience and used her experience as a motivating factor to start a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) to support Cameroonian refugees that continue to face similar risks and protection issues in Nigeria. Some of the refugees needed encouragement as they also encountered gender based violence (GBV) and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) issues, lack of access to basic

healthcare and economic hardship resulting in day to day struggles to make ends meet, which often propelled them into sex work.

In order to empower refugees to make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health and rights, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in collaboration with UNHCR and Endam Home of Hope (EHOP) in Abuja organized a one-day awareness session with female Cameroonian refugees. This session created awareness on SRH, including family planning, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV, GBV and Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

The refugees expressed their appreciation and described how empowered and enlightened the session was for them. The interactive exercise also included a demonstration of the correct use of male and female condoms, framed in the context of dual protection against unwanted pregnancies and STIs, including HIV. Male and female condoms and awareness materials were also donated to the participants. As a result, UNFPA has been requested to continue to provide similar support to the Cameroonian refugee population in Nigeria.



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# UN Supports Nigeria To Validate Revised National Policy On Labour Migration

*Towards strengthening the national policy environment that facilitates effective labour migration and adequately protects and promotes rights of all migrant workers, the International Labour Organization supported the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment to convene a two-day stakeholders' workshop from 7 – 8 July, 2021 to validate the revised National Policy on Labour Migration (NPLM).*



*A group photograph of dignitaries and participants at the workshop*

The Federal Government of Nigeria with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) within the framework of the FAIRWAY project convened stakeholders to validate the revised National Policy on Labour Migration.

In 2014, Nigeria adopted a National Policy on Labour Migration (NPLM) which was designed to promote effective labour migration governance. The policy provided for a three year implementation period upon which a review would be initiated. The provision forms the basis for which the government initiated the review process in 2019 in collaboration with ILO and relevant stakeholders including tripartite partners.

The two-day event drew participation from representatives of the Technical Working Committee (TWC) on the implementation of the NPLM, including the Nigeria Employers Consultative Association (NECA), Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and their respective affiliate members. It provided an opportunity for a presentation of the revised draft policy by the national consultant to stakeholders, noting comments and feedback which were considered and integrated into the document.

Director of the Wages and Employment Department at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment, Mr. John Nyamali while speaking at the event stated that the government in addition to convening the workshop remains committed to promoting an environment marked by a robust labour migration framework where rights of all migrant workers are duly protected. He particularly noted the support of all stakeholders who continue to work towards the review of the policy, and ILO for supporting the Ministry in providing technical oversight over the process.

On her part, Director of ILO Abuja Country Office, Ms. Vanessa Phala acknowledged the leadership of the government in initiating and driving the process to review the 2014 policy to reflect current realities in labour migration, especially in view of the current global pandemic occasioned by COVID-19. She further pledged ILO's commitment and support where needed in concluding the review process and over the implementation stages especially as the revised draft as currently presented introduces a gender responsive component which is a critical aspect of advancing protection mechanisms for female migrant workers.

Mr. Manuel Mühlebach and Ms. Sandra Vermuijten, representatives of the Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation and the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) respectively, expressed appreciation for being a part of the process in addition to commending the government for demonstrating commitment and leadership in the area of labour migration as it convenes the validation workshop. Mr. Frantz Celestin, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) also commended the initiative of the process as led by the government and extended well wishes for the event.

At the end of the event, a motion was moved to validate the revised policy by Mr. Geoffrey Akor of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and subsequently seconded by Ms. Adenike Ajala of the Nigeria Employers Association (NECA) as well as Ms. Abiodun Badru of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC)

Closing remarks delivered by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment while appreciating ILO and all stakeholders for supporting the successful validation workshop, further committed to expedite action towards adoption of the revised validated policy by the Federal Executive Council (FEC)

The revised draft policy contains seven chapters including an implementation Plan of Action and is proposed by the Government of Nigeria to enhance the national policy environment that facilitates effective labour migration in a safe and orderly manner with a gender responsive framework. In addition, the revised policy is conceived on a rights based approach, and anchored on internationally recognized labour standards that protect the youth and other vulner-



# UN, NAPTIP Launch Tools To Strengthen Identification, Screening And Reporting Of Victims Of Trafficking In Nigeria



Launch of Identification, Screening and Reporting Tools for Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) in Abuja.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM), in collaboration with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), launched new tools in Abuja, to ensure a standardized approach to the identification, referral and protection of Victims of Trafficking (VoTs).

The launch coincides with this year’s commemoration of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, (WDATIP) with the theme ‘Victims’ Voices Lead the Way’. The day is established to raise awareness of the plight of victims of trafficking and promote and protect their rights. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the situation of vulnerable persons who, due to their worsened economic situation, were recruited for labor or sexual exploitation.

In 2018, the Walk Free Foundation estimated there were almost 1.4 million individuals living in modern slavery in Nigeria. Research also shows that two-thirds of Nigerian victims of trafficking are victims of domestic human trafficking. The tools developed are a first step in providing a voice to the victims as it allows them to share their experiences, help service providers facilitate referral pathways and provide comprehensive protections services.

The event had in attendance, high level government stakeholders, representative of the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, the UN Resident Coordinator, members of the diplomatic community, donors, partners, stakeholders, and civil society organizations.

“This initiative will strengthen the identification process and ensure that more VoTs are referred to the right services,” said Franz Celestin, IOM Nigeria Chief of Mission. “I believe this profiling exercise will strengthen the understanding of Trafficking in Persons in Nigeria and inform the development of national policies and future programming” he added.

Data collected from screening activities will be disaggregated by sex, age, forms of exploitation, and other relevant indicators. The aim of the identification tools is to provide first line officials with harmonized tools to effectively identify and refer victims of human trafficking in line with the National Referral Mechanism.

The process for the development of these tools commenced in November 2020 and received reviews from relevant stakeholders to ensure that the tools are comprehensive and stand the test of time.

Following the launch, the tools will be piloted in Edo, Lagos, and Delta states where NAPTIP officials will be trained on how to use them. Additionally, screening and reporting tools will be rolled out along the Nigerian border at points of entry and exit.

“Victims of human trafficking need to be protected to ensure they live a life of integrity devoid of any form of dehumanization and degrading treatment” said NAPTIP Director General Sen. Basheer Garba Mohammed.

Since 2017, IOM Nigeria has provided support to 21,771 returnees of which 2,302 are Victims of Trafficking (VOTs). The long-term goal is to ensure these tools are integrated into an information management system (IMS) that all stakeholders can easily access. The IMS system will strengthen recording, analyzing, and reporting of data and improve accessibility of real time data by all stakeholders.

The project “Strengthening Direct Assistance to VoTs in Nigeria Through a Victim-Centered Approach is funded by the UK Home Office.

2021 WORLD DAY AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Anti-Trafficking Awareness Walk

FROM OLD PARADE GROUND (AREA 10) TO MILLENNIUM PARK

DATE: THURSDAY, 29TH JULY 2021

TIME: 0800HRS

## UN Zero Hunger Roundtable Launches Innovation Sprint In Nigeria



Winners of the Zero Hunger Innovation Sprint with their cheques

The Zero Hunger Roundtable, a multi-sector forum aimed at collectively addressing food challenges, has launched an initiative to foster innovative approaches to end hunger, championed by Nigeria's entrepreneurs.

Ten cutting-edge start-ups participated in the first "Zero Hunger Sprint – Nigeria's Innovation Challenge". The innovators took part in a customised boot camp facilitated by the World Food Programme (WFP) Innovation Accelerator based in Munich, Germany. The innovation challenge is an initiative designed to fast-track innovative solutions to food crises and help end hunger worldwide.

During the boot camp, experts helped the teams to sharpen their concepts and refine their plans for business success. The initiative and the backing it receives help to support and contribute to Nigeria's own efforts at achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 – which aims to bring an end to hunger.

The finalists show-cased their proposals at a pitch event held in Lagos July 30, 2021, to a group of leading private sector investors: Promasidor; Guinness Nigeria; TGI Group; Nigerian Breweries and Tolaram Group. At the end of the competition, six entrepreneurs won the 'Zero Hunger Sprint – Nigeria's Innovation Challenge'.

The six young men and women received cheques totaling N120 million to support their start-ups. In addition to the cash awards, the start-ups will also receive mentorship from the investor companies and participate in a six-months' Sprint Programme designed by WFP.

The winning innovative entrepreneurs and the amounts they received are: Jerry Oche: ZOWASEL (an online marketplace and crop testing service that connects smallholder farmers with premium buyers): N42 million; Adepeju Jaiyeoba: COLOURFUL GIGGLES (a natural baby food company working to fight hidden hunger by making baby food affordable and readily available): N21 million; Tosin Ayodele: AGRORITE (a company which helps smallholder farmers to access credit, data driven advisory services and premium markets): N21 million; and Ayoola Dominic: KOOLBOKS (a company producing eco-friendly and easily accessible refrigeration solutions, powered by solar energy and equipped with Pay-As-You-Go technology): N21 million

Others are Luther Lawoyin: PRICEPALLY (a digital food cooperative enabling families or small businesses to share bulk food items among a group or buy food in bulk directly from farmers or wholesalers, making it cheaper and fresher than retail): N10 million; and Michael Ogundare: CROP2CASH (a company which creates reliable, verifiable credit scores and risk profiles for farmers to unlock much-needed finance to improve their productivity and income): N5 million.

The initiative and the backing it receives help to support and contribute to Nigeria's own efforts at achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 – which aims to bring an end to hunger. The funding for the first Zero Hunger Sprint in Nigeria was provided by five large corporations who are passionate in supporting innovative ideas in the food security and nutrition sector, under the Zero Hunger Roundtable: Promasidor; Guinness Nigeria; TGI Group; Nigerian Breweries and Tolaram Group.

Paul Howe, Country Director, WFP Nigeria, said: "What we saw at the Zero Hunger Innovation Sprint was amazing. The pitch show-cased the incredible talent, energy and dynamism of young Nigerian entrepreneurs – and the Zero Hunger Roundtable is trying to harness this energy in a way that is socially beneficial and sustainable in addressing hunger challenges".

## STRIVE Juvenile In Nigeria: The Path Towards Enhanced National Ownership

The European Union (EU), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Nigerian Governmental and Non-Governmental actors gathered on the occasion of the 1st National Roundtable and the 1st Steering Committee Meeting on 13 - 14 July, of the STRIVE Juvenile project in Nigeria.

During the National Roundtable, conducted by UNODC under the guidance of the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), the participants discussed the findings of the Situation Analysis related to the issue of children recruitment and exploitation by terrorist and violent extremist groups.

Representatives from more than 30 institutions, including the Office of the National Security Adviser, Federal Ministry of Justice and State Ministries of Justice Yobe and Adamawa states, Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and State Ministries of Women Affairs, Yobe, Adamawa and Borno states, Nigerian Military, Nigerian Police Force, National Human Rights Commission, Nigeria Correctional Services, Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs critically analysed the findings, provided additional information and highlighted the importance for strengthening national coordination to strengthen the prevention of children

recruitment and exploitation, the rehabilitation and reintegration of children who have been recruited and exploited, and the security and justice responses.

Coordinator, Counter Terrorism Centre, Office of the National Security Advisor, Rear Admiral Y.E.M. Musa stated: "Through the Situation Analysis, the development of a better understanding of existing institutional and social structures which exist at national and local levels to address the issue of children's recruitment by terrorist and violent extremist groups, is key to boost the national ownership drive towards the implementation of STRIVE Juvenile."

Cooperation Officer, Delegation of the European Union to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and ECOWAS, Jérôme Rivière said: "Establishing national level governance mechanisms and credible platforms for dialogue at all levels, such as the Steering Committee Meeting, remains crucial to enhance national ownership and enables STRIVE Juvenile partners to set up viable and sustainable project infrastructure and architecture operating at the federal, state and local level."

UNODC Country Representative, Oliver Stolpe stated: "The Government of Nigeria and the EU are key partners for UNODC when it comes to strengthening the rule of law and the rights of children. The new STRIVE Juvenile project provides an opportunity to work together to protect children from terrorist and violent extremist groups in line with UNODC's Strategic Vision for Africa."

## Mothers Not Giving Up On Exclusive Breastfeeding During COVID-19 Pandemic

*Optimal nutrition provided by breastfeeding, along with nurturing care and stimulation, strengthens a child's brain development with positive impacts that endure for a lifetime.*

Cuddling her baby, Perpetua Udechukwu is all smiles and eager to show off her good breastfeeding techniques. “My baby Chinoramnso is now four months old. I have breastfed her exclusively, without water or other fluids, since she was born,” said Udechukwu.

Breastfeeding can bring unparalleled joy and connection between a mother and her child. Yet many women also experience challenges, frustration, and even sometimes pain around the act of breastfeeding. As we celebrate World Breastfeeding Week, mothers like Udechukwu in Enugu State, Nigeria are sharing their experiences.

“Since Chinoramnso was born, she has not fallen sick – I know this is in great part due to the breastfeeding. I will continue breastfeeding her until she is 2 years old,” said Udechukwu.

“As a busy trader, I am grateful I have my mother and husband, who are always supporting and helping out with household chores, while I concentrate on breastfeeding my child exclusively,” she said.

“I chose to exclusively breastfeed my baby due to the numerous health benefits I know it has. I also breastfed my two older children exclusively and saw the rich health benefits it had.”

“I considered stopping breastfeeding because of the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown, social distancing and negative stories. But I did not stop, due to my previous positive experience with breastfeeding – and I am glad I didn’t,” Udechukwu said.

Dr. George Ugwu, Executive Secretary of the Enugu State Primary Health Care Development Agency said, “Breastfeeding is key to newborn survival. Children who are exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life are 14 times more likely to survive than non-breastfed children. Breastfeeding also improves a child’s quality of life by supporting cognitive development and health – ultimately helping advance a child’s prospects in life.”

“During the antenatal clinic days at the health center, we teach mothers how to exclusively breastfeed and explain the numerous health benefits of exclusive breastfeeding to the child and mother, which include giving the child immunity at birth. It is also a way of



*Perpetua Udechukwu with her baby*

family planning for mothers who wish to space their children naturally,” said Sunday Ogbodo, health center nutrition focal person in Aninri LGA.

“Through support from UNICEF and Ministry of Health in Enugu State, breastfeeding support groups were established to follow-up with nursing mothers, ensuring that optimal breastfeeding continues at home, even when the new mothers are discharged from the clinic,” Ogbodo said.

In Nigeria today, where 1 in 8 children do not reach their 5th birthday and 3 in 10 children are stunted, optimal breastfeeding practices are known to reduce neonatal and child morbidity and mortality rates and reduce stunting. Optimal nutrition provided by breastfeeding, along with nurturing care and stimulation, strengthens a child’s brain development with positive impacts that endure for a lifetime.

“Breastfeeding continues to be a proven foundation for a healthy start in life. Soon after birth and thereafter, exclusive breastfeeding helps prevent stunting, which affects millions of children in Nigeria. UNICEF and partners will continue to advocate for a shared responsibility to encourage and safeguard breastfeeding practices,” said Hanifa Namusoke, Nutrition Manager at UNICEF Nigeria.

## Young People In Nigeria Advocate That Leaders Reimagine Youth Skills

*Young people in Nigeria are calling on leaders and the government to set up structures and put policies in place to reduce the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on young people and build back better.*

“I became consistent with building my make-up skills during the COVID-19 lockdown. I picked up my tools and started exploring instead of idling away,” says 24-year-old Jane.

“My make-up videos went viral, got the attention of people and international media. Today, I train people who have passion for the kind of make-up that I do and earn pretty good income from my skill,” says Jane.

Young people have continued to demonstrate resilience at this challenging time as they weather through the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic. Just like Janet, many of them leveraged the COVID-19 lockdown to build new skills and master existing ones but not without challenges.

Report by ILO found that globally, youth employment fell 8.7 per cent in 2020, compared with 3.7 per cent for adults, with the most pronounced fall seen in middle-income countries. The consequences of this disruption to the early labour market experiences of youth could last for years.

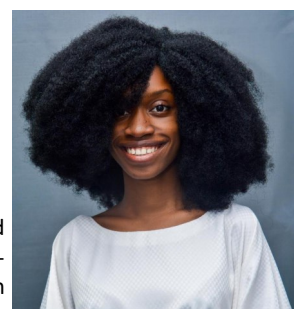
Young people in Nigeria are calling on leaders and the government to set up structures and put policies in place to reduce the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on young people and build back better.

“There is a wide gap in preparing youth for the future of work.

I strongly advocate that the government and every important leader help make internet accessible to young people and sponsor several digital courses that can enhance the employability of young people,” says Ezekiel Aina, a young policy advocate. Ezekiel echoes the opinions expressed by young people in a recent poll conducted by U-Reports Nigeria with about one hundred thousand youth between age 14 - 24.

In the poll, 48% of the respondents noted that their greatest fear as a Nigerian youth is unemployment, 30% are of the opinion that digital skills is an important skill to acquire. Another 44% believes that creating more avenues to build skills is the important thing that can be done to improve the situation of young people in Nigeria.

24-year-old Osumareton, a content creator and digital expert sums her most desperate need as we reimagine youth skills. “If I could ask for just one thing on a day like this when we celebrate World Youth Skills Day, it will be to have constant power supply. Youth just want to have electricity.”



*Tuth Osumareton, Egbe Youth*

## Three Winners Emerged At UN National IP Essay Competition

On Thursday, July 29, 2021, three winners and 15 finalists of the 2021 World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) National Intellectual Property (IP) Essay Competition were announced at a webinar organized by the WIPO Nigeria Office, and which focused on Effective Communication in Writing. The keynote address was provided by Mr. Tolu Ogunlesi, a Nigerian Journalist and Special Assistant on Digital and New Media to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.E. Muhammadu Buhari.

The winners' announcements were made by Ambassador Tunde Mustapha (Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations in Geneva, who was also a member of the Panel of Judges) and Ms. Susan Chioma Omeh (overall winner of the maiden edition of the Competition).

Ms. Oyinkansola Komolafe, a third year law student of the University of Ibadan emerged as the overall competition winner, while Ms. Chimdiebere Anya-Awa, a fourth year law student from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Ms. Honour Dahunsi, a third year law student from the Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, both shared the first runner-up spot.

In reflecting on their competition experiences, Ms. Komolafe, the overall winner, pointed out that the research process for her winning essay was one that "really tickled her analytical skills and exposed [her] to the limitless prospects that exist in the field of IP". For Ms. Anya-Awa, who shared the first runner up position and was singled out for commendation by the Members of the Panel of Judges for the originality and creativity demonstrated in her essay, she remains convinced that so much can be achieved by SMEs if they are only aware of the IP assets they hold.

Ms. Dahunsi explained that the WIPD 2021 essay competition afforded her a big opportunity to research and collate ideas on how IP rights can play significant roles for SME's which will, in turn, lead to economic recovery In Nigeria.

Ms. Komolafe's essay will be published in a forthcoming edition of the WIPO Magazine, while she will receive a WIPO scholarship to participate in the blended Advanced International Certificate Course on IP Asset Management (AICC) in South Korea. Ms. Anya-Awa and Ms. Dahunsi will receive WIPO scholarships to participate in the WIPO Summer School in South Africa. In addition, all winners and finalists received WIPO certificates of achievement signed by the Director General, scholarships to undertake any WIPO DL course of their choice, an IP-based internship opportunity with one of Nigeria's leading law firms/government agency or an Innovation Leadership Fellowship, and an invitation to participate in a WIPO sponsored IP Study Tour.



*Oyinkansola Komolafe, University of Ibadan (winner)*

The second edition of the WIPO National IP Essay Competition was launched by the WIPO Nigeria Office on April 19, 2021, as part of efforts to commemorate the 2021 World IP Day in Nigeria, themed "IP and SMEs: Taking your ideas to market". With a key objective of promoting research and learning in the field of IP, the competition was open to all students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Students were required to submit an essay of 1500 words addressing the theme "Intellectual Property, SMEs and Economic Recovery in Nigeria". By the final submission deadline day of May 27, 2021, the WIPO Nigeria Office received a total of 143 entries, drawn from 29 tertiary institutions and 19 distinct disciplines.



*Chimdiebere Anya-Awa, University of Nigeria (first runner up).*



*Honour Dahunsi, Adekunle Ajasin University (first runner up)*

# PHOTO NEWS



## Captions, from left to right in a clockwise direction

1. *L - R: Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs, H.E. Princess Adejoke Orelope-Adefulire; UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed; Miss Tamilore Fatogbe and a dignitary watch an audio-visual content at the First digital museum in Nigeria, "Discovery Digital Museum" Abuja. 5 July.*
2. *A group photograph of Kano State Governor, Alhaji Umar Ganduje (Middle) and some young people at the launch of Generation Unlimited in Nigeria. 29 July.*
3. *FAO Representative in Nigeria and to ECOWAS, Mr. Fred Kafeero (Right), presents some FAO-branded souvenirs to the Deputy Governor of Ondo State, HE Lucky Orire Aiyedatiwa, at the FAO Country Office in Abuja. 27 July.*

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