

FEBRUARY 2020



UNITED NATIONS  
NIGERIA

# NEWSLETTER



## UN75 Dialogue Intensifies as DSG Amina Muhammed Engages Young People in Nigeria



UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Muhammed (2nd left) holds a UN75 dialogue with young people in Abuja Nigeria on 11 February 2020.

Following the global launch of the UN75 initiative – the world’s biggest conversation on the future we want, by the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on 1 January 2020, the UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Muhammed, on 11 February 2020, held a UN75 dialogue with young people in Abuja Nigeria.

The dialogue, organised by the UN Information Centre (UNIC) Nigeria, in collaboration with Channels Television, involved thirty-six young people reflecting the diversity of the Nigerian nation. To spark the engagement, the Deputy Secretary-General noted that the dialogue was part of the largest, most inclusive conversation on the role of global cooperation in building a better future for all; and asked, “Overall, do you think people in 2045 will be better off, worse off or about the same as today?”

The youths acknowledged that the “United Nations is now listening more than ever before.” However, they cautioned that unless young people of today are given the space to express themselves and are involved in the process of finding solutions to issues that affected them, a better life in 2045 would be a mirage. “A new world is possible. Youths are ready. We just have to take the space,” said one of the young persons and Ms Muhammed agreed that young people have got to take the space. “Leadership is not about age. It can come from anywhere,” she added.

Prompted by the Deputy Secretary-General to picture the world in 2045, when the UN would turn 100, and state things they would want to see, the youths responded: "By 2045, we want Nigeria to have transited to renewable energy for electricity generation."; "By 2045, we should be leading and older persons listening and providing guidance."; "By 2045, youth should not only be speaking, but driving national development". *Continue on page 2...*

## HIGHLIGHTS

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Pneumonia: Two Million Children Could Die in the Next Decade P. 8

## Inclusion is Key to Achieving Agenda 2030 - Kallon



UN Nigeria Resident-Coordinator Edward Kallon engages with a coalition of persons with disabilities in Abuja

The Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the UN system in Nigeria, Mr Edward Kallon, has reiterated the importance of inclusion in programme design and implementation in the quest to achieving the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

He said this on 10 February 2020 while receiving a coalition of persons with disabilities at the UN House, Abuja. "As we begin a decade of action to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we must ensure no one is left behind." He added.



Members of a coalition of persons with disabilities at the UN House Abuja

## DSG Amina Muhammed Engages Young People in Nigeria...Continued from page

...Furthermore, they noted that by 2045, the environment should be better; climate justice should be done, with cleaner air and sustainable transportation. "The United Nations should open more windows through which young people could look into the UN." They demanded.

Summarising the 'one thing' they would like the Deputy Secretary-General to take back to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, the youths highlighted the need to amplify youth voices; promote more vigorously, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security; United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (UNSCR 2250) on Youth, Peace and Security; Climate change prevention and impact mitigation; and more awareness of the SDGs at the community level, among others.

All the youths took the UN75 the 1-minute survey before the dialogue started.



United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (middle) and young people after their UN75 dialogue in Abuja on 11 February 2020



A cross-section of young people at the United Nations Deputy-Secretary General Amina J. Mohammed's UN75 Youth Dialogue in Abuja



A cross-section of young people at the United Nations Deputy-Secretary General Amina J. Mohammed's UN75 Youth Dialogue in Abuja

## "I am Inspired by What Nigeria is Doing to Achieve SDGs" - Amina Muhammed

The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, has disclosed that she was "energised and inspired by what Nigeria is doing at federal, state and local levels to achieve the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Ms Muhammed said this while featuring on a two-hour panel discussion live programme, 'Tuesday Night Live' on the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), transmitted on 11 February 2020.

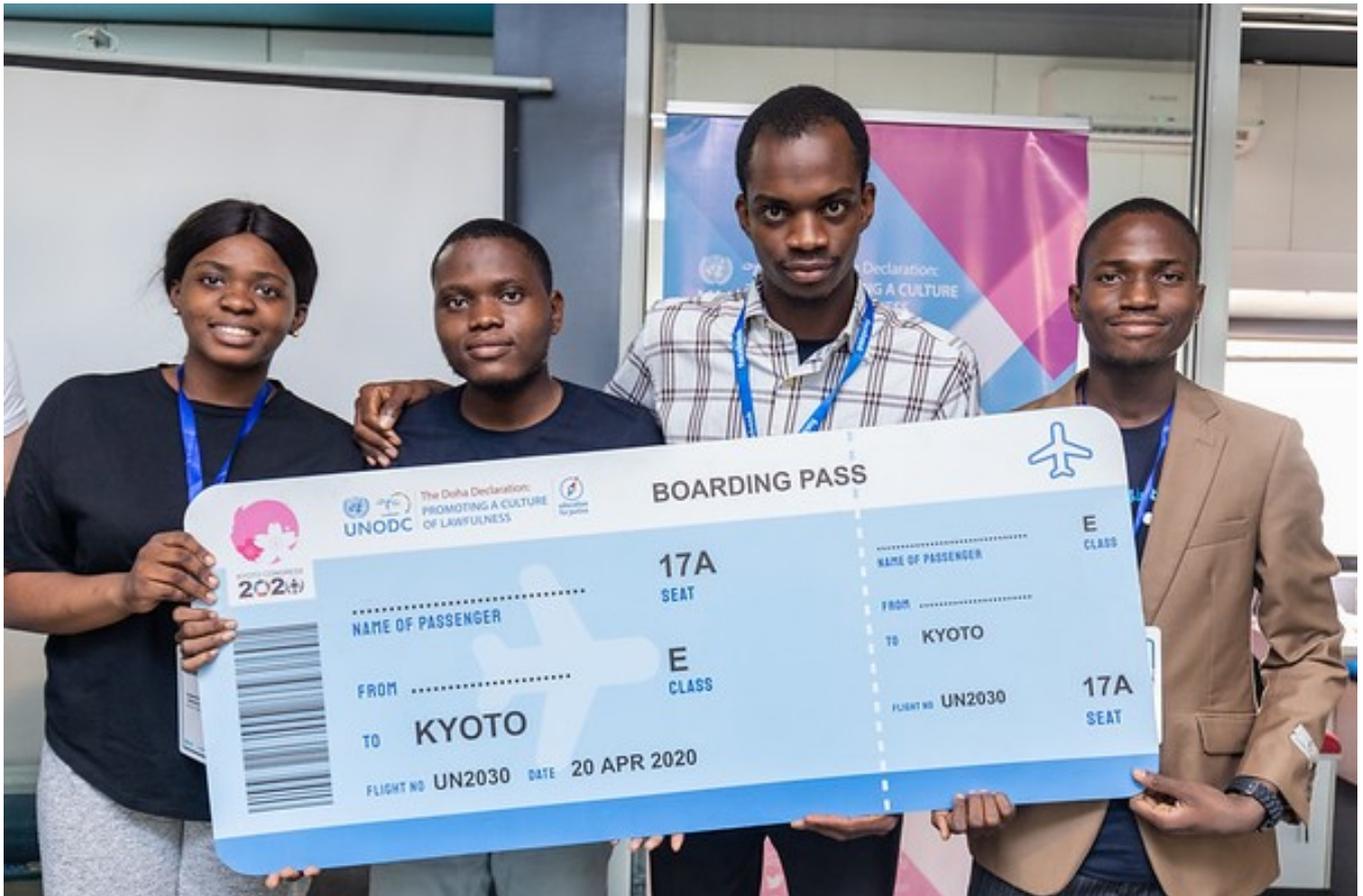
Discussing the topic: 'Sustaining the conversation on Decade of Action on SDGs', the Deputy Secretary-General noted that the pace of conversation around the Decade of Action was picking up as demonstrated by the activities of stakeholders.

With Ms Muhammed on the panel were the Governor of Edo State, Mr. Godwin Obaseki who represented the Chairman of the Governors' Forum, the Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs Zainab Ahmed and the Executive Director of Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Prof Jibrin Ibrahim.



R-L: The Anchor of 'Tuesday Night Live' on NTA, Mr Omini Oden; United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Muhammed; Governor of Edo State, Mr. Godwin Obaseki; Minister of Finance, Budget and National Planning, Mrs Zainab Ahmed and the Executive Director of Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), Prof Jibrin Ibrahim.

## Students Develop App to Trap Human Traffickers



The winners of the Hackathon, 'Team Predex' displays their prize award.

It was a tale of two marathons in one city - Lagos. One in the physical space, the other in the cyber space. While athletes of different ages and nationalities converged on the biggest megacity in Africa for the 42+ kilometer race, snaking the landscape from the National Stadium to Victoria Island; 64 young coders drawn from different universities across Nigeria had another marathon in the cocoon of Andela Epic Tower, a 21st century cutting-edge IT office space located at the heart of the city.

With support from 20 experienced mentors, the youngsters with ages ranging from 19 to 22 commenced the coding marathon at exactly 10:15 am. The university undergraduates had something in common - competing to showcase how youth can contribute through the use of technology to the implementation of Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable.

Following the successful 2019 event in Lagos, the 64 Nigerian students were brought together by Facebook, Andela and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with the aim to spark their creativity whilst pushing their coding capabilities to find technological solutions to tackle crime, uphold justice and promote the rule of law.

After two days of compelling creativity, four students of the team Predex were declared the winners. The winning project was an application that used artificial intelligence to send warning signals to users of chat applications if the conversation had indications that they might be recruited for human trafficking as well as other forms of sexual abuse. The team trained their model based on existing datasets of conversations between victims and recruiters for human trafficking or perpetrators of sexual abuse against children. As a prize, UNODC's Education for Justice (E4J) initiative will bring the team to the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime prevention and Criminal Justice, to be held in Kyoto,

Japan, from 20 to 27 April 2020, where they will have a chance to present their application.

This year's runner up was an application by the team e-Recyclers. Their project focused on developing a network aimed to inform consumers on how to legally recycle e-waste and hereby to keep it away from the domain of organized criminal groups. The application would help users to determine how and where to recycle e-waste, as well as provide incentives for the lawful recycling of e-waste, with the sponsorship of technology companies.

This activity is a part of UNODC's Education for Justice (E4J) initiative, the objective of which is to educate youth on crime, justice and rule of law issues. The Hackathon4Justice event showcases how young people can play an active and creative role in promoting the rule of law, while learning about the issues that affect them. The E4J initiative is part of the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration of UNODC.

**COVID-19 FAQs**

**How likely am I to catch COVID-19?**

The risk depends on where you are - and more specifically, whether there is a COVID-19 outbreak unfolding there.

For most people in most locations the risk of catching COVID-19 is still low. However, there are now places around the world (cities or areas) where the disease is spreading. For people living in, or visiting, these areas the risk of catching COVID-19 is higher.

COVID-19 outbreaks can be contained and transmission stopped, as has been shown in China and some other countries. Unfortunately, new outbreaks can emerge rapidly.

## Concert for Safe Migration and Social Cohesion in Nigeria Hits the Right Note



At the first-ever concert for safe migration and social cohesion in Benin City



Nigerian superstar Fireboy, on stage at the first-ever concert for safe migration and social cohesion in Benin City. Photo: Jorge Galindo/IOM

Nigeria is synonymous with musical virtuosity and innovation. The legacy of the likes of Fela Kuti is still felt today with contemporary acts such as Burna Boy, Davido and Simi achieving wide acclaim all over Africa and beyond.

Unfortunately, not all talented Nigerians get to reach such great heights. So, on 31 January, the International Organization for Migration in collaboration with the Edo State Task Force Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT) organized the first-ever concert for safe migration and social cohesion in Benin City. More than 1,100 music lovers gathered in King's Square to watch performances by Fireboy, and others including returning migrants.

Beyond entertainment, the event aimed at targeting youth who are often deceived by false information about irregular migration. This misinformation puts young Nigerians at risk of abuse and exploitation including trafficking in persons along irregular migration routes. Since 2017, IOM has assisted more than 1,810 victims of trafficking in Nigeria.

The information on risks and regular migration opportunities for Nigerians are disseminated in public spaces including markets and developed through a community-based approach whereby returnees and their families, community leaders and potential migrants craft their own messages.

"We believe this concert serves as a fun and interactive way to promote safe and informed migration practices and social cohesion between those returning home to Nigeria and their communities in Benin City," said Alex Cole, IOM Nigeria Project Officer.

The concert was part of a music-filled weekend starting with a masterclass for 25 returnees, students and independent artists. The masterclass was hosted by The Huntertones, a New York-based band whose latest album called Passport is a collection of songs inspired by their touring around the world. The various sessions offered insight into the music industry, the importance of finding and believing in one's own voice and tips on how to get exposure with limited resources.

"The masterclass was an example of how sometimes music works better than language. It was after we started jamming with the participants that we all became more open and started talking about our insecurities, our self-worth, and other issues that artists deal with," said Dan White, The Huntertones' saxophonist and bandleader. "For us, music only works when you listen first, not thinking that you have all the answers," he added before their performance on Saturday, which drew resounding praise from the crowd as they closed their set with a medley of Nigerian tunes.

Following the masterclass, two Nigerian local artists including Chidi Nnajinwa, a returnee from Edo State, got the chance to perform a song alongside the Huntertones.

"I spent seven years in Libya and now I'm using my experience

to teach my brothers and sisters about the dangers of irregular migration," said Nnajinwa, also known as Chi One. "This show is an opportunity for me to tell the world what I've been through, so others can make better choices, and I am looking for support to print more copies of my album so I can bring it to areas where young people are migrating without getting informed," he added.

The concert featured stand-up comedy and a theatre play written and directed by Lancelot Imasuen titled Dance of the Migrant which was part of an awareness-raising project that brought open-air performances to 8,403 individuals from July to September 2019.

"The Huntertones are here to not only teach music skills, but also to engage young people on a very important topic – human trafficking," said Aruna Amirthanayagam, Public Affairs Officer, US Embassy at the concert. "But it is also the responsibility of citizens to help stop trafficking. Through local programmes focused on this problem, young people are becoming increasingly aware of the dangers of trafficking, learning ways to detect and prevent it, and thereby better protect themselves," he added.

The Concert for Safe Migration and Social Cohesion is part of IOM's awareness raising activities in Nigeria and it was produced by the Aware Migrants information campaign, the Migrants as Messengers project, the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration and the GIZ-funded project 'Strengthening Assistance for Returnees and Potential Migrants and Promoting Safe Migration Practices in Communities of Origin'.

### CORONAVIRUS FAQs



**Does Nigeria have capacity to respond in the event of an outbreak?**

Nigeria has over 20 states with functional emergency operation centres, which can be activated to provide a coordinated response at the state level.

#COVID19  
#CoronavirusOutbreak



## Nigeria Humanitarian Fund Strengthens Skills of 30 Emergency Local Organisations in North-East



Training on Project monitoring and reporting for the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF), for Nigerian CSOs providing life-saving assistance in crisis-affected Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, held on 26 February 2020.

Thirty staff members of Nigerian CSOs providing life-saving assistance in crisis-affected Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states were trained on 26 February by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in project monitoring and reporting for the Nigeria Humanitarian Fund (NHF). The workshop aimed to build the skills of Nigerian organisations that play a vital role in responding to the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in the country.

“The workshop provided us with the skills needed for narrative and financial reporting, including data collection, monitoring and evaluation. It is great to partner with such a fund, as it is a window for us to provide the most urgent basic services to people most in need,” said James Tizhe Saggi, Programme Manager at the Nigerian non-governmental organisation Agaji Global Unity Foundation (AGUF), and a board member of the National Association of NGOs (NANGO), in Adamawa State. “The international community, and especially the United Nations, are extremely supportive of the national NGOs in Nigeria.”

The NHF national partner workshops, though focusing primarily on the NHF’s processes, are intended to more broadly expand their technical expertise, knowledge, and capacity.

“This was the first in a series of capacity support workshops for NHF national partners. While international NGOs can draw on the technical expertise and knowledge of a regional or headquarters office, national partners do not have access to such resources,” explained Elizabeth Whitehead, Pooled Fund Manager at OCHA Nigeria. “By including participants working on both programme and finance aspects of their organization, this workshop enabled the two technical areas to understand more clearly how their work is related.”

In 2019, the NHF prioritized strengthening and elevating engagement of national civil society organizations. A total of 41 organisations are now eligible partners for the NHF, among which 44 per cent are national NGOs. The NHF funded 19 national NGO partner projects in 2019.

“NHF is a really important source of funding for us as local organizations. It gives us the opportunity to strengthen ourselves as organisations as it allows us to include organizational develop-

ment in our budget lines, unlike some other funds,” highlighted Kingsley Okbapi, Programme Manager for Jireh Doo Foundation (JDF). “The OCHA Nigeria team managing the fund has really done a lot of work to give local organisations a chance to access funding. This has a direct and positive effect on people in need as we directly implement projects and provide assistance, being the closest to the most vulnerable people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states.”

In 2019, the NHF prioritized life-saving assistance to people arriving from areas where violent attacks regularly occur, and to internally displaced people as well as host communities. In October 2019, the NHF announced a supplementary funding allocation of US\$18.2 million to provide urgent aid in significantly under-funded areas such as water, sanitation and hygiene or protection.

Seventeen donor countries and the United Nations Foundation (UNF) have contributed \$99 million to the NHF since it became operational in May 2017. This generous support enabled \$24 million in 2017; \$36 million in 2018 and \$28.1 million in 2019 to be allocated to provide urgent and life-saving humanitarian aid to the most vulnerable people in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states.

### CORONAVIRUS FAQs

#### What is WHO doing to support the Nigerian government against the coronavirus?

WHO is supporting the government by ensuring the capacity for:



Early warning and detection



Early confirmation of cases



Early response and mitigation

#COVID19  
#CoronavirusOutbreak



## UN Launches Climate-Smart Agriculture Project for Women in Ebonyi State



UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Ms. Comfort Lamptey, speaking at the launch.

On February 14, 2020, the Climate-Smart Agribusiness Project for women in the rice value chain was launched in Abakiliki, Ebonyi state. The project is a partnership with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), The International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) with funding from Stanbic IBTC Bank. It is geared towards promoting women's economic empowerment through climate-resilient agribusiness.

Led by UN Women, the project was inaugurated by the Executive Governor of Ebonyi State, Engr. Dave Umahi who was represented by his Deputy, Dr. Eric Igwe. The governor lauded UN Women Nigeria for the initiative, adding that his administration would ensure successful delivery of the project. He described the project as a unique one that is critical in the economic empowerment of women in Ebonyi State, as well as bridging the social and economic inequality between them and their male counterparts.

The launch which took place at the Osborn La Palm Royal Resort in Abakiliki, the Ebonyi State capital, had in attendance high-

level stakeholders including the UN Women Country Representative to Nigeria and ECOWAS, Ms. Comfort Lamptey, the Executive Governor of Ebonyi State, Engr. David Umahi, who was represented by his Deputy, Barr. Kelechi Igwe; Mrs. Patience Okorie, the Representative of the Ebonyi State First Lady, Mrs. Rachel Umahi; Hon. Ogodo Nomeh, the Honourable Commissioner of Agriculture and Natural Resources; and Mrs. Mercy Chukwu, Representative of Women Rice Farmers

Others were Mr. Victor Ekeocha, Representative of the Chief Executive Director of Stanbic IBTC, Dr. Demola Sogunle; Dr Otu Osu, Representative of the Country Representative of UNIDO, Dr Bakole Jean; Mrs. Rita Okoro, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources; Mrs. Augusta Udude, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs; Mrs. Ann Aligwe, Senior Special Adviser to the Governor of Ebonyi State on Human Capital Development; and Barr. Stella Nwagu, Special Adviser to the Governor of Ebonyi State on Adult Education.

Speaking at the launch, Ms. Lamptey highlighted the enormous future gains agriculture would present in the 2030 sustainable development agenda. The CSA project will support women groups and cooperatives working in the rice value chain to overcome barriers facing women farmers and increase women farmers' agricultural productivity and economic empowerment.

In his address, the Chief Executive Director of Stanbic IBTC, Dr. Demola Sogunle represented by Mr. Victor Ekeocha, the South-East Regional Director of Stanbic IBTC Bank, thanked UN Women for the kickoff of the CSA project and expressed his excitement that the project aligned keys areas which portray the bank's values. These include Gender Equality, Sustainability and Agriculture. Mr. Sogunle stated that the bank is a firm believer that agriculture will play a major role in accelerating development in Nigeria, and expressed his optimism that the contribution of Stanbic IBTC will add immense value to the lives of the recipients and to the development of their communities.

## UN, Partners Launch Int'l Narcotics Control Board Annual Report & Precursors Report



Dignitaries display the Int'l Narcotics Control Board (INCB) Annual Report 2019 and Precursors Report 2019.

Nigeria, on 27 February 2020, joined the rest of the world to launch the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) Annual Report 2019 and Precursors Report 2019.

The report which was launched in Lagos, reveals that the earlier the onset of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis use in ages 16-19 years, the greater the likelihood of use of opiates and co-

caine in adulthood.

According to the Project Coordinator of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Ms Harsheth Virk, who presented the report, "the Report also highlights the connection between use of alcohol and tobacco and the use of psychoactive substances like cannabis, opiates and cocaine by children and adolescents."

The INCB Report therefore calls for increased focus on improving substance use prevention and treatment services for young people.

The Director General of National Agency for Foods and Drugs Control (NAFDAC), Prof. Moji Christianah Adeyeye was represented by the Agency's Director of Narcotics and Controlled Substances, Dr Musa Umar. The Keynote Speaker, the Chairman/CEO of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Col. Muhammad Mustapha Abdallah Rtd., was represented by Dr Wale Ige. The launch was hosted by NAFDAC Oshodi Lagos, with the support of UNODC Nigeria

## UN, MIL Coalition Seek a Literate Nigerian Society



Participants at the Consultative meeting

With the increasingly important role of the media in the lives of people and society, as a result of the ever-increasing technology, more attention is being drawn and devoted to the relationship between the media and society. This has no doubt attracted more interest to the imperativeness of stakeholders to develop strategies aimed at educating citizens to learn and imbibe the skills of Media and Information Literacy (MIL).

UNESCO Abuja in 2017 supported Nigeria to form a coalition, currently referred to Media and Information Literacy Coalition of Nigeria (MILCON). The aim of the Coalition is to facilitate coordination of interventions on MIL in Nigeria, promote synergy amongst stakeholders, towards advocacies on National Policies, integration of MIL into school's curriculum and promotion of MIL literacy society.

The Coalition works with national partners, the continental

platform, the Pan-African Alliance on Media & Information Literacy (PAMIL), the Global Alliance for Partnerships on Media & information Literacy (GAPMIL), Government Ministries and other relevant stakeholders to execute its mandate.

Since its inauguration in July 2017 and subsequent meetings, MILCON has rallied MIL organizations and enthusiasts to promote MIL and its importance for establishing a literacy society for all, and to promote the national development. The activities of the Coalition have helped the country to become fully integrated into the global MIL movement and provide opportunities for children, youth, students, teachers, researchers, parents, administrators as well as government and its officials to take full advantage of the benefits of MIL.

In order to position the Coalition for sustainability and enhance its membership for national integration, peace building, inter-religious and intercultural dialogue, UNESCO and MILCON called for a consultative meeting in February. Fifty-two representatives from forty-three organizations were represented at the meeting.

One of the key highlights of the meeting was the achievement of UNESCO and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), on the inclusion of the MIL into Colleges of Education Minimum Standard as part of the General courses (GES) for 100 and 200 level students of Colleges of Education.

The Coalition works with national partners, the continental

## Antiretroviral Therapy Surge Campaign Launched in Benue

The 2018 National AIDS Indicator and Impact Survey (NAIS) estimates that there are about 190,000 people living with HIV in Benue state out of which around 150,000 are on treatment. Following the strong collaboration between the state governments and implementing partners, Benue is one of the three states in Nigeria that has reached high HIV treatment saturation and approaching epidemic control. However, there are still gaps in reaching the UNAIDS targets by 2030.

As part of the initiative to close the gaps, the Antiretroviral SURGE campaign was conceptualised by PEPFAR to identify and place additional 45,000 people living with HIV on life-saving anti-retroviral therapy by September 2020 in Benue State. To reach this target, a strong collaboration among Government of Nigeria, community and religious leaders, private sector, development partners and donors is vital.

The launch of the Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) Surge took place in Benue state on 27 February 2020 in presence of His Excellency, The Executive Governor of Benue State, Chief Samuel Ortom, The Honourable Commissioner of Health and Human Services, Dr Sunday Ongbabo, Executive Secretary, BENSACA, Dr Gideon Dura; U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Kathleen FitzGibbon; UNAIDS Country Director for Nigeria, Dr Erasmus Morah; Director General of NACA, Dr Gambo Aliyu, CEO APIN Public Health Initiative, Dr Prosper Okonkwo and others.

During the launch, Governor Ortom assured of the determination of his administration to ensure that everything was done to facilitate the success of the programme in the state. He said the government was also partnering the Eunice Spring of Life Foundation, ESLF, a pet project of his wife in the fight against the menace. "We will do all that needs to be done to facilitate the programme and we will give the required attention to ensure the success of the programme," His Excellency stated.



Surge Launch: Far left: Dr Kayode Ogungbemi (Rep. NACA DG); Dr Erasmus Morah (UNAIDS Country Director Nigeria); Dr Sunday Ongbabo, (Honourable Commissioner of Health and Human services); Dr Mahesh Swaminathan (CDC Country Director); Ms Kathleen FitzGibbon, (U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission), HE Chief Samuel Ortom, (The Executive Governor of Benue).

Dr Morah commended His Excellency, the Governor and members of his team for taking the bold initiative to join forces with the development partners to accelerate the state towards epidemic control in September 2020 and end AIDS by 2030. He reassured UNAIDS commitment to give the much-needed technical assistance and called on civil societies, implementing partners and other bilateral and multi-lateral agencies and private sectors to join hand with His Excellency to fast-track the AIDS epidemic towards attaching epidemic control through the Surge programme. He also underlined that Benue as a high burden state is already implementing the Federal Ministry of Health led Fast Track initiative the national treatment and Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) Programme (NTPP) to ensure that the state is at the fore front of achieving epidemic con-

## Two Million Children in Nigeria Could Die in the Next Decade Unless More is Done to Fight Pneumonia

*Malnutrition, air pollution and lack of access to vaccines and antibiotics among the drivers of preventable deaths from pneumonia—which last year killed a child every three minutes in Nigeria*



UNICEF Nigeria/2018

**B**oosting efforts to fight pneumonia could avert over 2 million child deaths from pneumonia and other major diseases in Nigeria, new analysis has found.

The modelling by Johns Hopkins University was released at the end of January as nine leading health and children’s agencies hosted the world’s first global conference on childhood pneumonia in Barcelona.

Forecasts show that 1.4 million children under the age of five could die from pneumonia over the next decade in Nigeria, on current trends – the highest number of any country in the world and more than 20 percent of childhood deaths from pneumonia globally. However, an estimated 809,000 of these deaths would be averted by significantly scaling up services to prevent and treat pneumonia.

Researchers also found boosting pneumonia services would create an additional ‘ripple effect’, preventing 1.2 million extra child deaths from other major childhood diseases at the same time.

Interventions like improving nutrition, increasing vaccine coverage or boosting breastfeeding rates – key measures that reduce the risk of children dying from pneumonia – would also stop thousands of child deaths from diseases like diarrhea (580,000), meningitis (68,000), measles (55,000) and malaria (4,000).

By 2030, that effect would be so large that pneumonia interventions alone would avert over 2 million predicted under-five child deaths in Nigeria from all causes combined, researchers said.

Pneumonia is caused by bacteria, viruses or fungi, and leaves children fighting for breath as their lungs fill with pus and fluid. The disease is the leading killer of children in Nigeria, causing 19 percent of under-five deaths.

Most pneumonia deaths can be prevented with vaccines, and easily treated with low-cost antibiotics. But more than 40 percent of one-year-olds in Nigeria are unvaccinated, and three in four children suffering from pneumonia symptoms do not get access to medical treatment.

“We have a responsibility to do all we can to avert these deaths by pneumonia – deaths that are nearly all preventable. It will take concerted action by all players. The announcement by the Nigerian government of the world’s first-ever pneumonia control strategy – coupled with the focus globally on combating pneumonia – is a huge step forward. We now need to follow this with concrete action on the ground to address the causes and drivers of childhood pneumonia deaths in this country,” said Peter Hawkins, UNICEF Nigeria’s Country Representative.



**DECADE  
OF  
ACTION**

## Farmers, Private Sector and Returnees Join Forces to Launch Pineapple Factory, Foster Reintegration in Nigeria



Farmers, private sector and migrant returnees have joined forces to open a pineapple processing factory in Nigeria. Photo: Jorge Galindo/IOM

For centuries, ever since the opening of Atlantic Ocean trade routes many now associate with the dawn of ‘globalism’, the pineapple has served as a symbol of welcome and safe haven. Replicas of the fruit, cut from wood or stone or sculpted in clay, have been a fixture in luxury homes across the Caribbean and the American South.

It’s no less welcome, as a symbol of safety and hope in Edo State, where most Nigerian pineapples are harvested, and where almost 40 per cent of all Nigerians returning from abroad come home to.

On 20 February 2020, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) together with the state government opened a pineapple factory operated by a business cooperative, consisting of returnees and unemployed youth, and the private sector. It is part of IOM’s integrated approach to sustainable reintegration.

The new facility will employ 42 Nigerian returnees and local youth. Those employed at the factory will receive technical and vocational training under a project funded by GIZ. It’s the first community-based reintegration project to launch in Nigeria and, besides the direct hires, will indirectly benefit 250 individuals, their families, as well as farmer associations and residents of Iguobazuwa, Edo State.

“Pineapple coming from this state ends up in cities like Lagos, Port Harcourt and Kaduna,” said Efedosa Eghobamien, a private sector actor who partnered with the returnee cooperative. “But now we’ll be able to process it here under the brand name Fresh One. We will be able to produce juice and jam and we hope that by 2021 we will be able to use fully organic pineapple.”

The plant aims at involving returning migrants in income-generating activities together with their home communities, to promote inclusive local development while also reducing the socio-economic challenges.

In addition to the pineapple processing factory, another cassava factory was launched in the town of Ehor, Edo State, providing job opportunities for 25 returning migrants and youth, and indirectly benefiting 150 individuals in the community.

Last year, IOM commissioned a pineapple juice processing plant in collaboration with the Edo State government. The plant aims at involving returning migrants in income-generating activi-

ties together with their home communities, to promote inclusive local development while also reducing the socio-economic challenges.

“Better is the end of a thing than the beginning, and we hope that this project will help our community grow higher and higher,” said Michael, Chairman, Iguobazuwa Pineapple Juice Cooperative. Since April 2017, some 16,102 stranded migrants – including 1,200 victims of trafficking – have voluntarily returned to Nigeria as part of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration. Thirty-five per cent of these returnees cite better employment opportunities as their main reason for leaving.

Community-based reintegration complements the existing individual and collective reintegration modalities and addresses the structural issues of unemployment and social cohesion in the country.

“As part of promoting sustainable reintegration in our various communities, we believe that we must lend our voices to acknowledge and celebrate the positive role of the returnees here in Nigeria,” said Franz Celestin, IOM Nigeria Chief of Mission.

Prior to the opening of the factory, returnees were engaged in temporary jobs including rehabilitating community infrastructure such as local markets as well as conducting environmental cleaning. In addition to being employed, the returnees are also shareholders of the factory.

The community-based reintegration projects are implemented under the framework of the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration funded by the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.



# PHOTO NEWS



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

1. Sitting 3rd from the right: UN Resident-Coordinator Edward Kallon; United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (Middle); and other young people after UN75 dialogue with the Deputy Secretary General on 11 February 2020 in Abuja.
2. UN Resident-Coordinator Edward Kallon, on 21 February 2020, received in audience at the UN House, Nigeria's Minister for Women Affairs Dame Pauline Tallen (left) accompanied by Country Representative of UN Women in Nigeria and the ECOWAS, Ms Comfort Lamptey (right). They discussed how to accelerate SDG5 and Gender Equality in this Decade Of Action.
3. The immediate past FAO Representative, Mr Suffiyen Koroma, shows off the send-forth cake and card presented to him by FAO Nigeria Staff



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