



Promoting Women's Engagement in Peace and Security in Northern Nigeria

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Dear Partners,

We are delighted to present the inaugural quarterly newsletter for the UN Women Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Programme, 'Promoting Women's Engagement in Peace and Security in Northern Nigeria'. The Programme is funded by the European Union and supports the federal and state ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development in three states in northern Nigeria (Adamawa, Plateau and Gombe), and selected constituted local government areas (LGAs) with the objectives of strengthening women's leadership, advancing gender equality and improving protection for women and children in conflict settings.

The Issue 1 newsletter highlights key Programme activities from July to September 2016 and showcases some of the results attained throughout the year.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE 2016: UN WOMEN HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN PEACE AND SECURITY



Cross-section of participants at the peace lecture on the International Day of Peace 2016. Photo: UN Women.

UN Women commemorated the International Day of Peace—themed ‘Sustainable Development Goals: Building Blocks for Peace’—on 21 September with an accordingly themed peace lecture at the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) in Abuja. The lecture was held in collaboration with partners including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and Young Youth Network for Good Leadership (YYNGL). Secondary school and university students were in attendance, as were

representatives of security agencies, development agencies, and the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prominent traditional leaders, namely, the Ooni of Ife, His Royal Majesty Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, and Eze Kalu KaluOgbo of Abiriba also attended.

At the event, the Women, Peace and Security Programme Manager, Njeri Karuru, highlighted the strong links between peace and development, stressing that peace is crucial to attaining sustainable development.

“Armed conflict is a great impediment to economic and social development and conflict

tends to reverse development. The impact, both during and after the conflict, affects women and men differently”, said Njeri. “It is this difference that we seek to combat at UN Women. We recognise that women are more often characterised as the victims of conflict and violence. Yet, they are important agents of peace. And they have been largely left out when it comes to decision-making at all levels on issues of peace and security.”

She stated further that UN Women through the European Union-funded Programme on Women, Peace and Security is working on strengthening the engagement of women in peace and security in northern Nigeria. “We see this as a key building block in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals”, she noted.

Subsequently, a lecture titled *‘Sustainable Development Goals as Building Blocks for Peace’* was presented by Prof. Oka Obono from the University of Ibadan. Prof. Oshita Oshita, Director-General of IPCR, also stressed that the constant failure to prioritise peace initiatives in

national planning and budgeting exposes the country to great risk.

At the end of the peace lecture, the chairman of the event, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi, joined other traditional leaders and guests to perform the release of white doves, symbolic of peace.



Traditional rulers and guests during the release of the doves. Photo: UN Women.

Other UN Women activities that marked the week of the International Day of Peace included a press briefing, a novelty match, radio and TV talk shows, radio jingles and a peace walk.

EMIR INCLUDES 40 WOMEN IN KALTUNGO KINGDOM TRADITIONAL COUNCIL



A few female title holders with the Emir of Kaltungo during a UN Women visit. Photo: UN Women

The Nigerian traditional system—like many other structures in the country—is patriarchal in nature and often excludes women from decision-making positions. In most parts of the country, women are not included in peace negotiations and are generally rarely given the opportunity to participate in governance. This situation is exacerbated by the violent conflicts that have reverberated through the various regions, especially the north. The above said, one kingdom stands out in the Sahel grassland area of Gombe State. An important role model, the Kaltungo Kingdom engages women as peace builders and community leaders, visibly represented in the traditional council led by the Emir, His Royal Highness, the Mai of Kaltungo, Alhaji Sale Mohammed.

The UN Women team paid a visit to the Emir on 17 August, during which he gave insights on the inclusion of women in his traditional council.

The creation of a women council within the Kaltungo traditional council was aimed at promoting the involvement of women in the development of the Kingdom. The traditional council recognises that women are formal educators, social agents, peace makers, and dispute settlers in the family and the community. As one of the first leaders in northern Nigeria, the Mai of Kaltungo has realised that if women are fully mobilised and effectively organised, they can contribute immensely to the development of the society.

During the UN Women visit, the Emir said, “We have a lot of conflicts between tribal groups, and when I started solving the problems using only men, I realised that there was a need to engage women. They have a soft approach to tackling problems that helps resolve conflicts effectively, especially when communities are fighting over farmlands.”

As of September, Kaltungo Kingdom has at least 40 women who hold traditional titles—one of whom is also an active member of the Women Peace Mentors selected under the Northern Nigeria Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Programme. Additionally, there is a pool of highly educated women from Kaltungo Kingdom who serve the government of Nigeria in public offices.

The WPS Programme has been working with the Kaltungo community to strengthen women's role in conflict prevention, resolution and

peacebuilding. The sustained efforts will help establish a conducive environment for implementation and monitoring of gender equality commitments in Nigeria. The Kaltungo Kingdom's case is used by UN Women and partners as a best practice that can be replicated in other parts of the state and country at large. In particular, it demonstrates that culture is dynamic, and women's inclusion in strategic positions is a smart approach for good governance, inclusiveness and the attainment of sustainable peace and development.

GOMBE STATE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS AND UN WOMEN CONDUCT CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON GENDER, PEACE AND RELATED ISSUES IN GOMBE STATE



Cross-section of participants at the capacity building workshop in Gombe State. Photo: UN Women.

The UN Women Northern Nigeria Women Peace and Security (WPS) Programme organised a three-day capacity building workshop on gender and related issues in collaboration with the Gombe State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MWASD) on 16-18 August. The workshop had 33 participants comprising traditional rulers, women mentors, representatives of the state MWASD, representatives of religious bodies, the Office of the Wife of the state governor, the state Ministry of Justice and the media. The focus of the workshop was to advance strategic advocacy on ending gender-based violence as well as the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill (GEO) in Gombe State.

At the workshop, the WPS Gender Technical Advisor for Adamawa State, Titus Orngu, presented an overview of the Northern Nigeria WPS Programme, highlighting the necessity of engaging women in peace building processes. He also mentioned that the volatile security situation, inaccessible areas, and high needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Nigeria are some of the key challenges of the programme.

The lead facilitator, a lawyer and gender advocate, Akin Omoware, gave an introductory presentation on discrimination against women and related terms. He stated that discrimination is not peculiar to Africa or Nigeria but occurs in all parts of the world. He emphasised that “having different identities is not the problem,

treating people differently based on those differences is where the problem lies”.

The co-facilitator, Kaneng Rwang-Pam, addressed the participants on ‘Understanding gender and gender-related terms.’ According to her presentation, perceptions of gender are not only deeply rooted but also vary widely within and between cultures, and change over time.



A few workshop participants. Photo: UN Women.

The workshop featured technical sessions during which participants were divided into

groups. The group work inter alia included a stakeholders mapping and an analysis of where key officers and their involvement were needed. Participants also engaged in a role-playing exercise on the legislative process to better understand how to strategise and lobby for women’s rights.

Finally, Mr. Omoware presented an overview of the GEO Bill in Nigeria and participants were divided into four sub-committees: Advocacy, Media, Legal and Mobilisation. These subcommittees developed and presented work plans for September to October. Some of the strategies agreed upon included engaging with key stakeholders, the identification and promotion of supporters of the Bill, training, sensitisation and high-level advocacy. These processes are expected to foster the passage of the GEO Bill into law in Gombe State.

PLATEAU STATE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS AND UN WOMEN ORGANIZE ORIENTATION WORKSHOP ON UNSCR 1325 FOR WOMEN PEACE MENTORS IN PLATEAU STATE



Women mentoring sessions at the orientation meeting in Jos, Plateau State. Photo: UN Women.

The UN Women Northern Nigeria Women Peace and Security (WPS) Programme initiated the Women Peace Mentor (WPM) Project to support inter-community dialogue and mediation, advocacy and sensitisation initiatives, through women. More specifically, the WPM Project aims to empower women at the grassroots level through mentoring by women leaders with substantial skills and experience in peace building and conflict resolution. These women leaders were identified across four target local government areas in Plateau State: Wase, Riyom, Mangu and Jos North. In addition, lead women peace mentors were selected from the larger group of women to provide strategic direction, overall guidance, mentoring and capacity building for women and young girls to be actively engaged in the mechanism of the state's peace and security architecture.

The lead women peace mentors who had earlier attended a UN Women orientation meeting and capacity building workshop in Abuja stepped-down the training to the community women peace mentors at a one-day planning and orientation meeting in Jos, Plateau State on 15 July. A total of 51 participants including the women leaders, grassroots women, representatives of the Plateau State Commissioner of Women Affairs, the state Commissioner of Police, and the media attended.

The purpose of the meeting was to strengthen the capacity of grassroots women for effective and efficient community-based peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives, including a good understanding on UNSCR 1325 and the WPS Programme.

The commitment of the lead women peace mentors for women's empowerment and gender equality led to the achievement of positive outcomes such as the development of LGA specific work plans; the harmonisation of the work plans from the four LGAs by lead women mentors and planning of next activities, as well as the presentation and adoption of Terms of Reference (ToR) for the 45 women peace mentors in the state.

Participants at the meeting also agreed on an action plan to advance the activities of the WPM Project. Proposed initiatives included advocacy visits to traditional and religious leaders; training and capacity building for women and girls on peace, security, leadership and gender based violence; and mentoring sessions with women and young girls in target communities and LGAs.

STAKEHOLDERS REVIEW THE PLATEAU STATE ACTION PLAN ON UNSCR 1325



Cross-section of participants at the Stakeholders' Review Meeting on the Plateau State Action Plan. Photo: UN Women.

In 2015, the Plateau State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MWASD) developed and launched the state's action plan on UNSCR 1325, making Plateau one of the few states that has adopted the plan to-date. The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Plan was also integrated into the state government's

strategic action plan, demonstrating government's commitment to implementation.

Additionally, the first local government action plan on UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria has been developed by Wase local government area (LGA) in Plateau State. Wase is one of the target LGAs for the Northern Nigeria WPS Programme.

The state MWASD is making effort to replicate this in other LGAs, hence, a state committee for the development of an LGA framework on UNSCR 1325 has been set up. UN Women is providing support to the government in this process, with special emphasis on the popularisation and full implementation of the plans at all levels.

An additional step in the development of Plateau State's action plan for the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan, a Stakeholder Consultative and Review Meeting was organised on 18 August at Silk Hotel, Jos. The meeting aimed at reviewing UNSCR 1325 in line with emerging issues and was attended by 57 participants. These included civil society organisations, traditional leaders, the media, the academia, development partners, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), security agencies and the judiciary.

At the meeting, Dr Chris Kwaja, a lecturer at the Centre for Conflict Management and Peace Studies, gave a presentation on 'Defining New Pathways on Women, Peace and Security'. Some of the notable points of his presentation were:

- The approach to counter-terrorism in Nigeria should ensure women and girls play visible roles.
- There is a need to develop and adopt stronger protection and support mechanisms for women and girls who are targets of violent extremist groups.
- It is important to build research and policy related capacities with specific

reference to the design of early warning systems in monitoring the design and propagation of messages that are linked to radicalisation and violent extremism.

- It is necessary to take advantage of the existing social media platforms to amplify and elevate the voices of women and girls in the current discourse on violent extremism and the conflict between farmers and pastoralists.

The workshop also included technical sessions in which participants were divided into groups. Some of the outcomes of the group work presented were a resolution to ensure people at the grassroots are better sensitised through the traditional and religious institutions on the harmful effects of violence and some cultural practices against women and girls; a charge to journalists to be more proactive in amplifying messages against gender-based violence; and a call on youth groups to be more involved in protecting women and girls in their communities.

Participants at the meeting also agreed that the recommendations from the review meeting should be further harmonised with the findings from the ongoing review of the state peace architecture, and that a gender and human rights perspective should be incorporated into the report. These work plans and reviews are geared towards promoting the participation of women and girls in formal and informal peace building processes, in line with the established framework of the women, peace and security architecture in Plateau State.

KANO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL EMBRACES THE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY CAUSE



Some UN Women staff during a courtesy visit to the Emir of Kano. Photo: UN Women.

“The important and strategic positioning of the role of women in any family or society—be it political, social or economic—is tied to development. Yet women are the most victimised in times of conflict ... our traditional institutions, cultures and religions in any part of the country respect and protect the integrity of women”, said Alhaji Abbas Sanusi, the Galadiman of Kano and Senior Councillor of Kano Emirate Council, during a courtesy call made to the Emir of Kano on 13 July, at the ancient and historic Palace of Kano.

Traditional and religious leaders play an important role in peace –making and –building in Nigeria; they are often the first point of contact for community members in times of conflict and are generally regarded highly in Nigeria. The purpose of the visit was for UN Women to seek the support of the Emir, His Royal Highness Muhammadu Sanusi II (born: Sanusi Lamido Sanusi), in raising the voice on women’s rights in Nigeria especially in relation to conflict and women’s political participation. “UN Women commends the emirate for fighting violence against women, and its commitment to promoting peace in Nigeria,” said the Acting Country Representative of UN Women, Adjaratou Fatou-Ndiaye.

In the same vein, UN Women’s Programme Manager for the EU-funded Women Peace and Security (WPS) Programme, Njeri Karuru, pointed out that women’s participation in peace building and decision

making processes are affected by cultural constraints. “We are thus using advocacy through the sensitisation of community and traditional leaders and local women mentors, in collaboration with the federal and state ministries of Women Affairs and Social Development (MWASD), to build the confidence of women,” she said.

The Galadiman of Kano commended the UN Women delegation for the visit, assuring the delegation that the Emirate would render its support and advise whenever needed. He also noted that the Emirate was in the process of establishing a programme for women’s development. The UN Women team included a WPS Programme Associate, Nneka Egbuna, an Assistant Director from the FMWASD, Egbe Okpewuru, and was accompanied by the Aishatu Aminu, Country Director of New Faces New Voices (NFNV), a non-governmental organisation working for the economic empowerment and mentoring of women—founded by Graca Machel, former first lady of South Africa.

ADAMAWA STATE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS AND UN WOMEN CONDUCT GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY ON UNSCR 1325 IN ADAMAWA STATE



Participants at the advocacy meetings on UNSCR 1325 in Adamawa State. Photo: UN Women.

A series of advocacy and consultative meetings with key stakeholders from 16 communities in Adamawa State were held to support mainstreaming components of UNSCR 1325 at the grassroots level from 7-15 August. The consultative meetings were expedient for a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 at community level. These meetings were also conducted to increase stakeholder's awareness and support for the Northern Nigeria Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Programme.

The advocacy and consultative meetings took place in four local government areas (LGAs) in Adamawa State, namely Numan, Mubi-South, Maiha, and Yola North. The meetings had in attendance over 226 participants comprising traditional title holders, farmers' association, religious leaders, women mentors, women associations, and security personnel, among others.

At the consultative meetings, the Permanent Secretary of the Adamawa State Ministry of Women Affairs, Hajia Maisaratu Bello, stressed the need for more women to be included in decision-making and peace-building for community development; and that children—especially girls—should be enrolled in school. In any exceptional circumstances where girls are out of school, they should be given opportunities to enhance their skills in productive and enterprising initiatives.

At the end of the consultative meetings, responses received from the stakeholders indicated increased awareness on the benefits of engaging women in peace and security in Adamawa State. The responses also revealed that there was an enhanced sensitisation and knowledge about UNSCR 1325, and an improved interest in collaboration at the LGA and state levels for a conducive atmosphere for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

PROGRAMME STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PROVIDE STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE NORTHERN NIGERIA WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY PROGRAMME



Cross section of stakeholders at the Programme Steering Committee Meeting in Abuja. Photo: UN Women.

A national Programme Steering Committee (PSC) meeting for the Northern Nigeria Women, Peace and Security Programme was held at the Federal Ministry of Budget & National Planning (MBNP) in Abuja on 2 August. The meeting had in attendance 30 stakeholders drawn from 13 organisations, including government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), UN Women Civil Society Advisory Group, civil society organisations (CSOs), security agencies, development partners, and UN Women.

The meeting was chaired by the Permanent Secretary at the MBNP, Fatima Nana Mede. In

her opening address, she expressed appreciation to all the stakeholders and partners who have continued to provide support for the people of Nigeria. She charged every member of the committee to work towards promoting peace and stability in the nation.

The PSC meeting included presentations by UN Women Programme Manager, Njeri Karuru, UN Women Deputy Programme Manager, Peter Mancha, and the UNICEF Child Protection Manager, Anil Raghuvanshi. It also included interactions by participants, who gave feedback on the activities conducted during the inception

phase and the second year of the EU-funded Northern Nigeria Women, Peace and Security Programme's implementation.

Committee members moreover provided strategic direction and programmatic

recommendations as they reviewed the Programme's progress reports, work plans and other aspects of the programme. The work plans for the third year of the Programme were carefully reviewed and approved by the PSC.

ENGAGING THE UN WOMEN MEDIA NETWORK FOR PEACE AND GENDER PRACTITIONERS IN MEDIA



UN Women Deputy Programme Manager, WPS, Mr Peter Mancha, addressing members of the UN Women Media Network in Gombe State. Photo: UN Women.

The UN Women WPS Media Network called '*Nigeria Association of Peace and Gender Practitioners in Media*', was established in 2014 and its members have been actively engaged in raising public awareness on UNSCR 1325 and related issues, at all levels in the target states: Adamawa, Plateau, and Gombe—as well as Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). This has been demonstrated by members of the Association through continuous initiation of public enlightenment programmes at national and state levels. These included regular hosting of TV/radio enlightenment programmes, social media and online publications, newspaper articles, reporting incidences of gender-based violence, and advocacy to stakeholders at state and local government levels. UN Women's staff and partners have been featured on live

discussion programmes on a periodic basis by members of the Association. Also, the membership and scope of the Association has over time increased from 51 to 133, with new members from Borno, Yobe and Bauchi States.

On the 28 July, a planning and review meeting was held at the Emerald Royal Hill Hotel in Gombe State. At the meeting, the UN Women Deputy Programme Manager, Peter Mancha, gave the media practitioners an overview of the Northern Nigeria Women, Peace and Security Programme. The meeting also created a platform for the exchange of good practices, success stories, challenges and lessons learnt among the media practitioners, drawn from Adamawa, Plateau, Gombe, Abuja, Bauchi, Yobe and Borno states. The members expressed

great enthusiasm as they shared their success stories. These included periodic publication of news on the Northern Nigeria WPS Programme in newspapers and online, radio discussions and enlightenment programmes, as well as special news on various aspects of UNSCR 1325.

At the planning and review meeting, six state coordinators for the *Nigeria Association of Peace and Gender Practitioners in Media* were elected, namely: Kate Aliyuda (ATV, Adamawa), Wika Gofwen (PRTVC, Plateau), Alhassan Yahya (Gombe Media Corporation), Joel Duku (The Nation, Yobe), Hamza Suleiman (News Agency of Nigeria, Borno), Hajiya Halima Ibrahim

(Bauchi State TV). The coordinator for Abuja, Jide Atta, was elected at a subsequent meeting.

Work plans were developed for each state and presented to all participants. Training needs and topics for the media practitioners were suggested during the meeting, with inputs and value addition by members of the Association.

The state coordinators will guide and coordinate all activities of the association in their respective states, and also ensure that activities on the work plans developed are carried out with support from UN Women.

PHOTO NEWS



Traditional leaders at the capacity building workshop on gender related issues in Gombe State. Photo:UN Women.



A female chief addressing other women at the palace of the Emir of Kaltungo in Gombe State. Photo: UN Women.



Interactive session at the stakeholders meeting for the review of the Plateau State action plan on UNSCR 1325. Photo: UN Women.



Widows celebrating at the commemoration of the 2016 International Day of Peace in Adamawa State. Photo: UN Women.



L-R: Dr Grace Awodu, Deputy Director, Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution; Njeri Karuru, UN Women WPS Programme Manager; Kimberly Nwachukwu and her co-anchor, Nigeria Info FM; after a talk show to commemorate the International Day of Peace in Abuja. Photo: UN Women.

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