

MANAGING CONFLICT IN NIGERIA

The Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme aims to support Nigerians with conflict resolution, at both the state and community level. Our work focuses on reducing violence, promoting stability and strengthening resilience so that Nigerians feel more safe and secure in their communities.

We work in North Eastern Nigeria in three focal states – Adamawa, Borno and Yobe – some of the country’s most conflict-affected regions.

Our work focuses on the following areas:

- Conflict management, reconciliation and stability in communities
- The role of women in peace-building
- Support to women and girls affected by violence
- The reintegration of young people displaced by conflict
- Support to policy makers through research and policy dialogue

The four-year programme (2017-21) is funded by the European Union and implemented by the British Council.



Training of wives of traditional rulers and female title holders in Gwoza Emirate. Source: Mustapha Shettima

KEY ACTIVITIES

This newsletter highlights the key activities undertaken by the programme in April-May 2019.

Summary of key activities include:

Conflict management, reconciliation and stability in communities:

- Annual perception survey shows growing confidence in conflict management institutions
- 160 wives of traditional rulers trained in Borno and Yobe States
- Improved coordination between traditional rulers and formal justice institutions in Ganye

Addressing sexual and gender-based violence:

- Presidential Committee on North East Initiatives donates ambulances to Sexual Assault Referral Centres in Borno and Yobe

Economic empowerment initiatives:

- 150 female youth beneficiaries exhibit products
- Civilian Joint Task Force empowerment project enables female beneficiaries to earn incomes

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, RECONCILIATION AND STABILITY

Annual perception survey demonstrates growing confidence in conflict management institutions

The MCN Programme’s annual perception survey (APS) has recorded improved confidence in conflict management institutions in target states between 2017 and 2018. The survey, conducted by an independent polling organisation, provides data used to track progress on the programme’s outcomes and impact.

In the latest survey performed in December 2018, respondents were asked if they were aware of conflict / response mechanisms that were working in their communities. Eighty-two (82%) of respondents across the three programme states said that they were aware of organisations / agencies providing those services (up from 67% in 2017).



FACTS & FIGURES:

Traditional Justice System

Traditional rulers trained

1,404

Cases handled

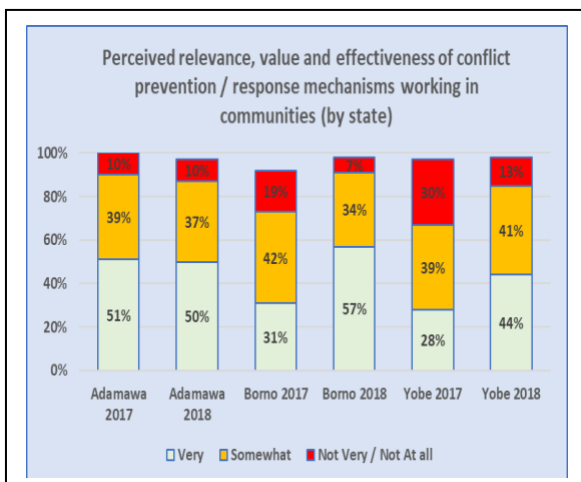
1,409

Success rate of resolution

88%

The respondents were then asked to judge the relevance, value and effectiveness of the conflict prevention / response mechanisms that they were aware were working in their communities.

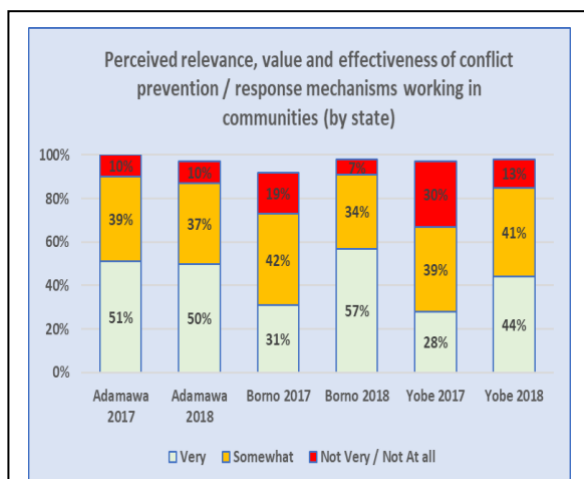
The chart below summarises the findings from the surveys conducted in 2017 and 2018 in the programme's three focal states: Adamawa, Borno and Yobe.



Summary of findings:

- Over half the respondents (51%) think the mechanisms are very relevant, valuable and effective (significantly up from 36% in 2017).
- Fewer than one in ten respondents (9%) think they are not very or not at all relevant, valuable and effective (down from 19% in 2017).
- There was little difference between the views of men and women in 2018, but both show significant gains from 2017.

The next chart below shows the same results, disaggregated by the three States – Adamawa, Borno and Yobe.



Summary of findings:

- Borno State respondents are most satisfied with the conflict prevention and response mechanisms with well over half (57%) saying they were very relevant, valuable and effective and just 7% saying they were not at all. These are significantly better results than 2017.
- Adamawa also performed well (50% of respondents giving the most positive answer, although marginally down from 51% in 2017).
- Forty-four (44%) of Yobe respondents consider the mechanisms to be very relevant, valuable and effective which is a healthy increase from the 28% in 2017.
- The comparative data from the control states revealed that 46% thought that their local mechanisms were very relevant, valuable and effective (52% in 2017). Only 10% thinking they were not very or not at all relevant.

Interesting to note is that respondents were somewhat satisfied with the performance of conflict management institutions and at the same time they felt less secure. This experience is understandable in the context of the communities in the region and should be seen in a comparative context. Although more attacks were witnessed in 2018, the insurgents were not able to hold their territory as they had previously. Both state and non-state actors, including the community peace and safety partnerships (CPSP) and traditional rulers who have benefited from the programme's capacity building initiatives have become more active in resolving disputes and addressing security and safety concerns. This is also likely to have contributed to improvements in the satisfaction by female respondents (up from 32% in 2017 to 49% 2018), as programme supported initiatives have promoted gender mainstreaming and the participation of women.

160 wives of traditional rulers trained in Borno and Yobe States

The MCN Programme supported the training of 160 wives of traditional rulers and female traditional title holders in Borno and Yobe States. The beneficiaries were drawn from the Dikwa and Gwoza emirates in Borno and Bade, and the Pataskum emirates in Yobe State.

The workshops focused on the following topics: Nigeria's justice system, human rights, alternative dispute resolution, and family law. Participants expressed optimism that the skills acquired would enable them to continue to support stability in their communities.

'Although dispute resolution has been our area of focus, these new skills will help promote peace in our localities.'

Hajiya Mairo Ishaku, Nana of Gwoza, Borno State

Improved coordination between traditional rulers and formal justice institutions in Ganye, Adamawa State

A key programme objective is to improve the coordination between traditional and formal justice institutions. Traditional rulers have been trained on all aspects of the justice system and provided the opportunity to interact with formal security and justice operators. The aim is to identify issues affecting their effective coordination and develop appropriate responses. Monitoring sessions were organised to better understand if the skills acquired have been applied since the training. Findings suggest there is some improvement in coordination.

The improved knowledge about the difference between civil and criminal matters and the appropriate authorities with jurisdiction has not only enabled traditional rulers to better abide by the law, but also to exercise control over community members who may take the laws into their own hands.

For example, the Emir (Alhaji Umaru Adamu Sanda, Gangwari Ganye) stopped youths from lynching six suspected kidnappers they had arrested. The youths wanted to kill the kidnappers due to their loss of confidence in the formal authorities to deal with the situation. They alleged some of the kidnappers had been released by police authorities after previous arrests. The Emir averted the extra-judicial killings by sensitising the youths on the need to allow formal authorities to discharge their functions and securing commitment from the State Commissioner of Police that the suspects would be prosecuted.

‘I approached the court on several occasions to persuade the judge to allow me to reconcile the parties and he allowed me; thereafter the parties were amicably reunited, and they respected me a lot.’

Aliyu Ahmed, Village head, Gojoli, Ganye, Adamawa State

‘The number of disputes taken to police stations has reduced. This is due to the enhancement of disputes resolved by the traditional rulers. We at the police station have seen the results of this training and we are happy about that.’

Aliyu Mamuda, Divisional Traffic Officer, Nigeria Police Force, Ganye, Adamawa State

ADDRESSING SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Presidential Committee on North East Initiatives donates ambulances to SARCs

MCN initiatives aimed at mobilising awareness and interest among diverse stakeholders to combat sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) have continued to yield positive results. In line with their strategic plans, the Steering Committees of the Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) have continued to promote the benefits of the SARCs, engage community stakeholders, and encourage their replication.

An early result is the donation of two ambulances to the SARC Centres in Damaturu and Yola by the Presidential Committee on North East Initiatives (PCNI). The ambulances will help the SARCs provide a more effective response to SGBV by transporting survivors to the centres.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

150 beneficiaries of youth empowerment programme exhibit their new skills and products

The Initiative for the Development of the Needy, Orphans, Less Privileged and Widows (INOL) is implementing an empowerment programme that targets 150 female youths in Damaturu, Fika and Fune LGAs in Yobe State and helps them to learn new skills. As part of the initiative, an exhibition was organised to showcase their products, including dresses, pomades, soaps and spaghetti - mostly made with locally sourced materials. Feedback indicates that participants were pleased with the products, which positively highlighted the future prospects of the young girls to sell their goods in local markets.

Economic empowerment programme enables female CJTF members to earn incomes

The empowerment programme for the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) is helping members generate incomes to support their livelihoods. Here is a spotlight on some of the beneficiaries:

Bintu Mohammed

Bintu, a mother of four children (three girls and one boy), was enlisted in sector 9 of the CJTF at 24. She did so after insurgents entered her home at the Bulumkutu Ward of Maiduguri Metropolis and shot dead her husband and the eldest of her two male children. The incident happened five years ago.

Bintu joined the CJTF with a mission. It was not necessarily for vengeance by killing insurgents, but to ensure security at worship places, other public places and gatherings, as well as in the neighbourhoods in the community. She helps to screen females seeking access to places for IEDs, especially at the El-Kanemi College of Islamic Theology. She used to cater for the children with gifts of cash and food items often shared with them by their male counterparts.

Bintu has recently benefited from three months of training in tailoring and fashion design delivered by the Herwa Community Development Initiative (HCDI), with support from MCN. With her newfound skills, Bintu is better able to provide for her family.

‘I now earn between N1,200-1,500 daily working as a seamstress. With my savings, I have registered for my National Diploma in Civil Engineering at Ramat Polytechnic. I now hope to sponsor myself for a degree in Civil Engineering.’

Bintu Muhammed, Maiduguri

Zainab Saleh

Zainab, a mother of six (four boys and two girls) enlisted in Sector 9 of the CJTF following the killing of her husband by insurgents. She helps in searching women and girls accessing worship and other public places and gatherings for IEDs and had helped to intercept and arrest a suicide bomber who had an IED strapped to her chest.

Zainab has recently benefited from three months of training in tailoring and fashion design delivered by HCIDI, with support from MCN. Even before acquiring the required equipment to establish her own business, she now earns enough by using one of the two sewing machines owned by a neighbour to sew for mothers and other ladies in her neighbourhood. She earns a minimum of N500 daily, assisting the neighbour in cutting and preparing pieces of cloth for sewing.

‘From my earnings, I now feed my family well and pay for my children’s school fees. Nobody knows my problems now.’

Zainab Saleh, Maiduguri

Fatima Abubakar Sadiq

Fatima Abubakar Sadiq is 27 years old. She is a mother of four children (3 boys and a girl). She has a diploma in Islamic Studies from the Mohammed Goni College of Legal and Islamic Studies (MOCOLIS) in Maiduguri.

When her spouse was killed by insurgents, she enlisted in the CJTF with the aim to help secure her community. At the height of the insurgency, she often participated in military/CJTF operations in local communities outside Maiduguri and earned some money to assist her parents and in-laws to care for her children. As peace was gradually restored in Maiduguri, Fatima was left without any source of income to support her family.

She recently benefited from three months of training in hair dressing delivered by HCIDI, with support from MCN.

‘I am already gainfully self-employed. I practice my trade at home, washing and dressing hair and doing pedicures. I now do a lot of good things for myself and my children.’

Fatima Abubakar Sadiq, Maiduguri

Hajara Abdulmumin

Hajara enlisted into Sector 6 of the CJTF at the Umarari Ward. She was seriously concerned about the rampant killings of people by the insurgents in Maiduguri Metropolis.

She could not resist the urge to join other youths to protect society from further killings and abuse by the insurgents. Like other female CJTF members, she is engaged in screening female worshippers for IEDs before they were allowed access to places of worship, like mosques. She also supported her parents to care for her family by plaiting hair.

Hajara has a National Diploma in Electrical Engineering from the Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri. The empowerment programme, supported by MCN, has enabled Hajara to realise her goal of becoming an electrical engineer. The three-month training programme enabled her to use electrical instruments that she could not access during her diploma training. With Hajara’s new skills, she now contributes to the family income.

‘Would you believe it if I tell you that I have already bought Sallah clothes for myself and my younger sibling? I was not able to do so last year. I am already saving for my mother’s clothes.’

Hajara Abdulmumin, Maiduguri

PROGRESS AGAINST EU INDICATORS

Indicator	Target 2021	Achieved at 30 April 2019	Comment
Number of staff from government institutions and internal security forces trained	1210	4,591	Activity Years 2-4
Number of people participating in conflict prevention and peace building activities	2860	11,755	Activity Years 1-4
Total number of community beneficiaries	2,278,580	1,272,095	Activity Years 2-4

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Youth peace initiatives in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Training of scribes of traditional rulers on record keeping system for the traditional justice system
- Validation workshops for development of code of conduct for traditional rulers
- Meetings and initiatives in community peace and safety partnership in target LGAs
- Coordination meetings of voluntary policing sector groups
- Meetings of the community accountability forums in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Advocacy initiatives of SARC Steering Committees in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Operations of family support units in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Community peacebuilding initiatives by women associations and youth groups in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states

ONGOING CHALLENGES

- Continued unrest in the North East and the impact to travel and work outside state capitals
- Capacity of civil society organisations and state institutions
- The political environment as political mobilizations start ahead of the 2019 elections
- Continuing challenges around health issues
- Potential for a period of industrial unrest and strikes

Find out more

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