

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 peacebuilding
- 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.



Representatives of farmers and herders sign peace agreement in Gujba. Source: MCN

KEY ACTIVITIES

This newsletter highlights the key activities undertaken by the programme in October to November 2019.

Summary of key activities include:

Conflict management, reconciliation and stability in communities:

- Community peace and safety partnership prevents clash between farmers and herders
- Community peace and safety partnership helps combat insurgency and other security threats
- Code of conduct developed for traditional rulers
- Herders and farmers sign peace agreement

Addressing sexual and gender-based violence:

- Community peace and safety partnerships take action to stop rape
- Stakeholders commend SARC initiative in Adamawa
- 15 Adamawa women associations receive capacity building support for peace initiatives

Economic empowerment initiatives:

- 800 women and young girls to benefit from empowerment programmes

Promoting policy for peace and security:

- Stakeholders validate gender assessment report in three states
- Adamawa and Borno stakeholders validate study on community resilience and peacebuilding
- Research on options for non-violent resolution of insurgency in North East
- Progress on the implementation of National Livestock Transformation Plan

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, RECONCILIATION AND STABILITY

Community peace and safety partnership prevents clash between farmers and herders

In response to growing tensions between farmers and herders in Gujba, the Community Peace and Safety Partnership (CPSP) in Gujba LGA in Yobe State has initiated a sustainable approach

FACTS & FIGURES:

Community Peace and Safety Partnerships (October 2019)

Issues discussed

577

Actions taken

567

Issues resolved

148

to farming and grazing that addresses the conflict that arises from the competition for land and water among farmers and herders.

The intervention followed a report presented at the CPSP meeting in July 2019 about the likelihood of violent conflict between farmers and herders in the upcoming harvest season. Members agreed to engage the Gujba Emirate Council and Gujba Local Government Council to summon the leadership of the Gujba Miyetti Allah Association representing herders and Gujba Farmers Association to discuss measures to protect farmlands and livestock and avert violent conflict.

The verbal agreements reached by the parties did not yield the desired results. Incidences were reported in Bunu Yadi and other communities over the encroachment of livestock onto farmland before crops had been harvested in September 2019.

The CPSP platform was monitoring the implementation of the agreements and agreed to approach the Emirate Council and Local Government Council to re-engage the leaders of the farmers and herders involved in the conflict. A decision was made to put the agreement in writing. Both parties met on 27 November 2019 and signed the agreement.

Terms of the agreement include: herders allowing crops along grazing routes to mature before re-demarcation of grazing routes; re-demarcation of all grazing routes in the LGA to prevent future encroachments and conflicts; and recourse to constituted authority to resolve disputes. The decision of the Emirate Council and Local Government Council to provide alternative grazing and waterpoint for the herders pending the re-demarcation contributed to stabilisation and reduction of tensions. No disputes have been reported in the area since the signing of the agreement.

CPSP helps combat insurgency and other security threats

The Community Peace and Safety Partnership (CPSP) in Gujba LGA of Yobe State has initiated action to support counter-insurgency operations and address other security threats in their locality. In October, members of the platform reported that some food vendors from Bunigari were supplying large quantities of food to Azare and Gashua communities. It was suspected that the food was being taken to insurgents that were camping near the communities. It was agreed that security agencies should undertake further investigations on the matter.

The security agencies confirmed the allegation and took measures to stop the food vendors from taking food to the locations. In November, participants at the CPSP meeting confirmed that the security threat has been addressed and the activities of the food vendors have now ceased.

The Gujba CPSP also worked to stop the rising cases of kidnapping in Bunu Yadi. The intervention led to enhanced cooperation between the members of the public and security

agencies. The police representative on the CPSP reported that efforts of security agencies to combat kidnapping were hampered by the reluctance of family and friends of victims to provide information out of fear that kidnappers could take drastic action leading to the death of the victims.

The Gujba CPSP also worked to improve road safety. Following the report of reckless driving by commercial car drivers and tricycle operators (Keke NAPEP), the CPSP agreed to engage the local branches of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and Amalgamated Commercial Motorcycle Owners and Riders Association of Nigeria (ACOMORAN) to sensitize their members on the importance of safe driving. The CPSP met with leaders of the two unions who agreed to talk to members about road safety and to mount road signs in different locations on the Bunu Yadi Biu Road. Following these actions, feedback received at the CPSP meeting indicated an improvement in road safety.

‘We are grateful to the Gujba CPSP for drawing our attention to the issue of food supply to the insurgent group. With this type of cooperation from the community, we will cripple the activities of insurgent groups.’

Mohammed Yakubu, Department of State Services, Bunu Yadi, Gujba LGA, Yobe State

‘With the rapid response of security agents to concerns raised by the community at the CPSP, threats like kidnapping are being addressed. We have a better working relationship with the security agencies.’

Mohammed Yusuf Ali, Gujba Emirate Council, Bunu Yadi, Gujba LGA, Yobe State

Code of conduct for traditional rulers developed

MCN supported the development of a code of conduct for traditional rulers in the three states. The code of conduct is expected to enhance professionalism, due process and accountability among traditional rulers in the performance of their duties. This would help restore public trust and confidence in the traditional justice system, thereby contributing to the peace and security in communities.

Stakeholders welcomed the code of conduct for the traditional rulers, which they believe will help to check the excesses and abuse of power by some traditional rulers. Perceptions of corruption among traditional rulers have undermined the credibility and effectiveness of the traditional justice system.

‘The code of conduct will guide the behaviour, conduct and actions of traditional rulers. It will help preserve the long-cherished institution from being tarnished.’

His Eminence, Alhaji Dr Abubakar Ibn Umar Garbai Al-Amin Al-Kanami CFR, the Shehu of Borno

Herders and farmers sign peace agreement

An accord was signed on 28 November 2019 in Bole (Yola South LGA, Adamawa State) to mark the peaceful resolution of conflicts between farmers and herders in the community. This followed close to a year’s engagement with the stakeholders in the community in dialogue facilitated by the Murmushi Peoples Development Association with MCN support.



Bole community celebrates the peace agreement. Source: MCN

‘Now when issues arise between farmers and herders, we refer to the peace agreement. Both parties are happy with the judgement because they signed the agreement.’

‘Most of the cases are settled out of court, which means that there is no ill will. Cases are settled on time and both parties continue to live in peace.’

Mohammed Yahya, Secretary, Village head, Bole Community, Yola South LGA, Adamawa State

‘The people in charge of resolving the case are not outsiders. They are people we know and see every day. They speak our language. They understand us and we understand them. This makes it easier for us to tell them our problems instead of going to the police.’

Adodu Wakili, Herder, Bole Community, Yola South LGA, Adamawa State

ADDRESSING SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Community peace and safety partnerships take action to stop rape

The community peace and safety partnerships (CPSP) are working to address the rising incidence of rape cases in communities in North East Nigeria. The CPSPs in Gulani and Gujba LGAs, Yobe State agreed to engage traditional rulers and

other stakeholders, including the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Steering Committee, to break the culture of silence and improve the rate of reporting, investigation and prosecution of sexual offenders. As a result, traditional rulers and religious leaders have commenced sensitization in their communities to encourage families to report cases of SGBV and inform the people about the legal and religious sanctions against offenders.

In Gulani, the CPSP successfully engaged the SARC Steering Committee and the International Federation of Female Lawyers (FIDA) Yobe State Chapter to organise a roundtable discussion on addressing SGBV. The roundtable attracted traditional rulers, religious leaders and security agents. The following resolutions were made:

- All stakeholders should embark on public sensitization to ensure the people know what constitutes SGBV and what to do when they suspect it has happened;
- Reported cases of SGBV should be publicised to enable the public to know the perpetrator, facilitate progress on prosecution, and help to deter other potential offenders;
- More awareness should be raised about existing media programmes on SGBV to enhance audience participation;
- Traditional rulers and religious leaders should sensitize members of their communities on the dangers of drug abuse and work with security agents to rid their communities of places where drug users use as safe havens; and
- Government and international development and humanitarian agencies should work to address poverty which makes people vulnerable to rape and abuse.

Since the event, feedback from stakeholders indicate that community leaders and religious leaders have commenced public sensitization in their communities.

Stakeholders commend SARC initiative in Adamawa

Stakeholders have commended MCN for the establishment and support of the Adamawa Hope Centre in providing care for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The Centre has provided medical and psychosocial care to 215 SGBV survivors (by end of November 2019).

Pathfinder International complemented MCN support to the Adamawa Hope Centre (from February to September 2019) by supporting sensitization activities, providing allowances to SARC staff, and two laptop computers for the centre.

At the Pathfinder project’s close-out ceremony held in Yola on 27 November 2019, stakeholders commended the initiative. The cross-support is evidence of success of the MCN supported initiative to broaden support for the Adamawa Hope Centre.

‘We wish to express our gratitude to MCN for creating the platform that enabled us to implement the project. Without MCN pioneering the venture, we would not have come to Adamawa State to address sexual and gender-based violence.’

Olaitan Martins, Pathfinder International, Yola

15 women associations in Adamawa receive capacity building support for peace initiatives

The MCN Programme is supporting 15 community-based women associations in Mubi North, Mubi South and Yola North LGAs of Adamawa State to implement peace initiatives. The Global Peace Development (GPD) and Centre for Health and Development in Africa (CHEDA) will implement the initiative and trained representatives from the associations.

The women were trained on advocacy and project design. They were encouraged to submit project ideas to address their immediate community security and safety related concerns.

Following the training, GDP and CHEDA organised a proposal review workshop, where the concepts from the women associations were reviewed and approved.

The initiatives focus on four main activity areas: addressing sexual and gender-based violence; addressing young gang violence; stemming drug abuse; and promoting skill acquisition.

Selected associations will receive a grant to implement their activities over a three-month period. GDP and CHEDA will provide mentorship to the associations and organise forums for the women to share their results and lessons learned.

'I enjoyed the training and learned a lot about the role women can play in contributing to peace in their homes, communities, and Nigeria.'

Hajiya Uwani Mijidadi, Women Alliance, Gela, Mubi South LGA

'This training workshop is very timely. It has exposed us to the potential we have as women and given us a clearer understanding of our roles in conflict management and peacebuilding.'

Naomi John, Talafi Women Association, Jambutu, Yola North LGA

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

800 women and young girls to benefit from empowerment programmes

Following rising concerns about the unstable socio-economic conditions of families in communities affected by the insurgency, the Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme has extended its economic empowerment initiative to women and young girls in three target states: Borno, Yobe and Adamawa.

Eight hundred (800) women and girls will benefit from the programme in 15 LGAs in Borno, four LGAs in Yobe, and two LGAs in Adamawa.

The project in Borno State targets 300 women who have become widows as a result of the insurgency. Under the Widow Empowerment Initiative, which is being implemented by Community Engagement and Social Development Initiative (CESDI), the beneficiaries will be trained on management of small-scale business. They will be grouped into 30 savings and loan groups to enable them to pool business start-up funds and save from income generating activities. The savings and loans

groups will also be sensitized and supported to undertake peace and security activities in their communities.

CESDI is also implementing the initiative for 300 women and young girls in Yobe State. Beneficiaries will be trained on small scale businesses and clustered into 15 savings and loans groups. In addition to helping members access savings and credit, the groups will provide platforms for members to participate in peace and security enhancing activities of their choices.

In Adamawa State, the Women Youth Empowerment for Advancement and Health Initiative (WYEAHI) selected and trained 200 women from Gombi and Michika LGAs on savings and loans methodology and peacebuilding. Beneficiaries will be provided with start-up capital for their businesses and receive mentoring support.

'The training helped to highlight some misconceptions about women, such as being lazy, inferior and having their place only in the kitchen. Women now know their worth and are better prepared to exercise their potential for economic wellbeing and peace.'

Stephanie Adindu, Project Officer, WYEAHI, Michika

'The capacity building had a great effect on the women. Before the training, the women recorded a 65% knowledge of the topics to be discussed. After the training, there was a 30% increase.'

Francis Busari, WYEAHI, Michika

PROMOTING POLICY FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

Stakeholders validate gender assessment report in three states

The Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme commissioned a study to assess progress on gender and peacebuilding.

The study was conducted in July to August 2019 and monitored progress from the baseline assessment conducted in 2017-18. Research methods included key informant interviews and focus groups discussions.

Stakeholders gathered in Damaturu, Maiduguri and Yola on 7, 10 and 11 October 2019 to validate the findings. The results revealed that there was some continuity and changes in the impact of the insurgency on women, men, young persons and persons with disability since 2017.

- Women and children were significantly impacted upon by the insurgency and remained the most displaced segment of the population.
- The condition of women and girls remained precarious in displaced persons camps and host communities due to inadequate supplies, persistence of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and lack of livelihood opportunities.
- Another major finding was the impact of insurgency and how it is impacting on masculinities, especially with reversal of gender roles as women become main income earners for families.
- The study also found that inequality, discrimination and marginalisation that contributed to the onset of violence have

persisted and undermine initiatives for seeking lasting solution. For example, in Northern Adamawa State, an ethnic group that joined the insurgent group because its members historically faced social exclusion, is still socially excluded.

- Counter-insurgency and peacebuilding interventions have not effectively targeted persons with disability who have been affected by the insurgency.

The assessment proposed targeted recommendations for the federal government, state governments, security agencies, international NGOs, and MCN.

Adamawa and Borno stakeholders validate study on community resilience and peacebuilding

The Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme organised workshops in Maiduguri and Yola for stakeholders to review a draft study on community resilience and peacebuilding initiatives in the North East. The study was conducted by Nextier Security, Peace and Development group. Participants included community leaders, women and youth leaders, civil society activists, development practitioners, and government officials.

The workshops held on 28 and 30 November in Maiduguri and Yola identified gains and gaps in existing initiatives to promote community resilience and enhance peace and security in the region. Feedback provided at the workshops will be incorporated in a final report to be disseminated in February 2020.

MCN supports research for options for non-violent resolution of insurgency in the North East

The Managing Conflict in Nigeria (MCN) Programme supported the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) to research options for the non-violent resolution to the insurgency in North East Nigeria. The research follows concerns among stakeholders over the prolonged conflict and the persistence of violence two years after the government declared victory over the insurgent groups.

The workshop was held on 24 October 2019 in Abuja to discuss the inception methodology. Key researchers and stakeholders in the region discussed the objectives, methods, and potential risks of the research project. Participants agreed the research was important, particularly as new governments assume duty in the three states worst affected by the insurgency.

The key research questions were summarised as follows:

- What is the state of the conflict in each state?
- What are the positions of the government, non-state armed groups, religious and community leaders, on dialogue and reconciliation as options for resolution?
- What actors are best positioned to promote dialogue and reconciliation?
- What is the best way to approach these key actors?
- What are the competing demands of the major actors in the violent conflict and how feasible are the demands?
- What actors and which approaches should be engaged in non-violent resolution initiatives?

The research will focus on Adamawa, Borno and Yobe – the worst affected states - and Kano - where the insurgency was contained. Findings will be disseminated in February 2020 and will be shared with relevant government and non-governmental actors with mandates and capability for resolution.

Progress on implementation of National Livestock Transformation Plan

The Nigerian government has recorded more progress with the implementation of the National Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP) - prepared with technical assistance from the MCN Programme. The NLTP is the guiding policy document for the government response to perennial farmer-herder conflicts in the country. It proposes a new approach to the management of livestock that will encourage herders to settle in ranches and grazing areas.

Although there were initial misgivings about the plan over fears of acquisition of land by government for resettlement of herders, several state governments have indicated interest in accepting and implementing the policy. Furthermore, the governments of Adamawa, Nasarawa and Plateau states have demarcated and developed land for the settlement of livestock.

The governments of Benue and Niger states have started collaborating with private sector investors to promote a livestock project by developing ranches where livestock and persons involved in farming will access all required facilities.

The plan is also attracting the attention of international development partners. The Tony Blair Foundation has committed support for the Project for Agriculture Coordination and Execution (PACE) in the office of the Vice President, which is leading on implementation of the NLTP.

PROGRESS AGAINST EU INDICATORS

| Indicator | Target 2021 | Achieved at 31 Oct19 | Comment |
|---|-------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Number of staff from government institutions and internal security forces trained | 1210 | 6,644 | Activity Years 2-4 |
| Number of people participating in conflict prevention and peace building activities | 2860 | 21,634 | Activity Years 1-4 |
| Total number of community beneficiaries | 2,278,580 | 1,857,175 | Activity Years 2-4 |

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Dissemination of study on gender and peacebuilding in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe
- Community reconciliation Initiatives in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe
- Youth peace initiatives in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe
- 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 protracted transition since the 2019 elections
- Continuing challenges around health issues

Find out more

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