NIGERIAN WATER STORIES

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FAO, Eni and the Lake Chad Crisis.
How a public-private partnership to help improve access to water can mitigate a trans-border climate and security crisis

Scan to watch the video-documentary on the impact of the Access to Water project, developed by FAO and Eni in Nigeria, through the stories of its beneficiaries.

STEP BY STEP

Claudio Descalzi, Eni's CEO

The management of the water crisis is becoming a global emergency according to a recent UN report. Water scarcity is expected to continue to worsen: by 2050, around 52 percent of the world's population could find itself living in regions subject to water stress.

Faced with these findings, we need to unite and coordinate efforts to guarantee fair and universal access to water, on the path towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Eni have done just that in Nigeria, implementing a project to improve the conditions of access to water for various communities in the area of the capital Abuja and in the North-East of the country, involving the construction of wells powered by photovoltaic systems for domestic and agricultural use. This three-year collaboration has been a virtuous example of the partnership between the public and private sectors and demonstrates the importance of sharing resources and expertise. It also shows the necessity of engaging local communities in this important stage of the path of transformation that we want and must pursue.

This publication gathers together images and stories of the joint efforts of FAO and Eni in Nigeria, illustrating the success of the initiative through the faces and smiles of the people who live in the places where our actions made a difference.

Where there is water, there is human and environmental development, economic growth and health. This is a small step along the path that Eni has traced to create value for all its stakeholders, through the concrete commitment towards development in the countries in which it is a "guest." This commitment starts with the promotion of efficient and sustainable access to energy resources for all, but it aims towards wider social and economic progress.

The challenge is great, but the goal can be reached by walking together, step by step. And I am proud of this step achieved by Eni and FAO.

LAKE CHAD'S VICIOUS CIRCLE

Socio-economic grievances, exposure to climate change and conflicts are factors that feed into each other, perpetuating the Country's crisis.

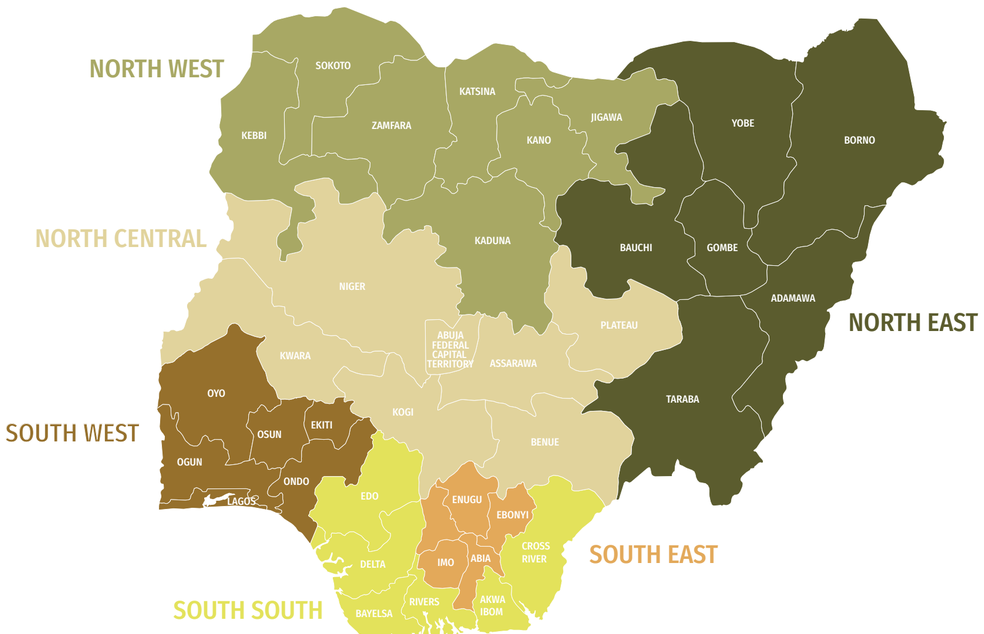
Maddalena Procopio, Sub-Saharan Africa Political Analyses Desk, Public Affairs, Eni

Nigeria's heterogeneity – in terms of ethnicity, religion, cultural traditions and wealth spread – has been both a blessing and a curse for the country since its independence from the United Kingdom in 1960. It has made Africa's largest economy and most populous country (200 million+ people) influential over the continent and beyond, thanks to its literature, film, fashion industry, influential diasporas, as well as economic and diplomatic leadership.

But such diversity has also given rise to a multiplicity of conflicts that continue, today, to dot the country: from farmers-herders clashes over land use in central Nigeria, to the militant insurgency in the southern oil-rich Niger Delta, from terrorism in the North East and banditry in the North West, to political protests nation-wide and a piracy capable of striking even outside Nigerian waters. While identity and unequal access to resources have played a central role in fuelling tensions, so have perceptions of elite misconduct that often have disconnected the State from the people.

The northern strip of the country, over the past ten years, has witnessed a particularly significant surge of violence. The North East – which comprises the Lake Chad region – has seen the rise of Islamic extremism towards the end of the 2000s, first by the hand of Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS), commonly known as Boko Haram, and, since 2016, also by the Islamic State in West African Province (ISWAP). The North West, more recently, has experienced the mushrooming of banditry with widespread criminal gangs rustling cattle, ransacking villages and feeding into criminal trade networks. This boiling scenario has spilled over neighbouring countries and has become

Nigeria's 6 geopolitical zones and 36 States



Source: Eni

intertwined with broader regional insecurity threats from the Sahelian belt.

The North East stands out for the complexity of its crisis, a by-product of long-standing political instability, social inequality and underlying poverty, exacerbated, over the years, by devastating climate change effects and the rise of terrorism, which decimated the lives and livelihoods of civilians, displaced millions and amplified pre-existing challenges, fundamentally altering life in the region.

Despite efforts by the government and the international community to address the conflicts and alleviate humanitarian distress, the preponderance of a military approach – vis-à-vis a holistic developmental one that addresses the root causes – has borne little fruit in terms of preventing further escalation of violence, with North East Nigeria, in particular, heading towards an ever-worsening crisis – which Covid-19 did all but placate, combining a public health crisis with a food crisis, straining the capacity of the State and civilians alike.

An area of long-standing exclusion and poverty

The North of Nigeria has historically been an area remotely connected to the economic centre of the country in the South, despite being the most populous (accounting for 40% of the electorate).

North–South tensions became prominent during the colonial period as a result of the alleged favouritism of the British towards the North (less rebellious than the South) and were exacerbated in the run-up to independence as southern politicians raised concerns that the North's numerical superiority would lead to southern marginalization. These tensions continued into the postcolonial period.

Forty years (1960-1999) of coups, war and military dictatorship reflected seemingly incompatible cultural and religious differences between the mostly Muslim North (dominated by ethnic Hausa-Fulani) and the mostly Christian South (where the ethnic Ibo and Yoruba are prevalent), as well as unequal levels of access to resources, with the oil-rich South more exposed to development and investment than the North.

The search for a unified system of governance eventually led to the introduction of a 'Zoning System'

in the mid-1990s, an informal political practice aimed at guaranteeing equal access to power (and resources), through the rotation of the Executive between the North and the South (which comprise three geopolitical zones each).

The North East, however, has continued to be characterized by limited representation in national politics (no President has ever come from the area), as well as underinvestment in economic infrastructure, basic social service provision and governance. Weak economic productivity (largely based on subsistence agriculture), low human capital development due to limited education, health and water/sanitation services, and historically limited state presence and institutional capacity, led over the years to endemic poverty and chronic unemployment, especially among the youths. Widespread alienation and marginalization, and perceptions of injustice, turned popular discontent into loss of state legitimacy eventually leading to the substitution of state functions by other groups.

Exacerbated by climate change effects...

Environmental degradation also took its toll on an already vulnerable context. As a consequence of climate change, the Sahara Desert is observed to be expanding to all directions rendering most arable land unusable and water unavailable, making northern Nigeria the most climate sensitive region in the country. Given that most of the rural population is employed in the agriculture sector, even minor climate deteriorations have caused devastating socioeconomic consequences, i.e. food insecurity, poverty, competition for resources over land and water, often between different occupational groups, such as herders and farmers.

The North East, in particular, faces the double challenge of the Sahara Desert encroachment and the Lake Chad basin shrinking that deprives over 30 million people living around the lake of freshwater for drinking, sanitation and economic activities (fishing, agriculture etc.). Lake Chad was once the world's sixth largest inland water body but, since the 1960s, it has shrunk by over 90% due to climate change and manmade ecological damage (namely deforestation and land degradation).

As a consequence of climate change, the Sahara Desert is observed to be expanding to all directions rendering most arable land unusable and water unavailable.

This has directly impacted on the lives and livelihoods of local populations, often leading them to either migrate (internally or internationally) and/or to seek alternative sources of income – increasing the attractiveness of the financial incentives offered by criminal groups. According to the 2020 Global Terrorism Index report, countries of the Lake Chad region (Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon share borders within the water body) are among the ten least peaceful countries in Africa.

Provided fertile ground for the rise of terrorism...

It is against this multifaceted scenario that Boko Haram has emerged and operates, both as an effect and a cause of grievance. Some analysts point to religious and ethnic drivers for group formation, while others argue that the group emerged as a result of the precarious socio-economic context of this region. Loosely translated from the region's Hausa language as 'Western education is forbidden', the group traces its formation back to the early 2000s, when Muhammad Yusuf, a charismatic spiritual leader advocating a strict interpretation and implementation of Islamic law, started speaking openly against corruption and police violence, with many locals soon becoming sympathetic to his cause against the establishment.

The group turned into a violent insurgency at the end of the 2000s in the wake of a Nigerian military's crackdown and Yusuf's killing while in police custody. Soon after, armed confrontations, initially between the group (now led by Abubakar Shekau) and the government, escalated into a broad campaign of violence against the state and civilians at large (both Christian and Muslim), and by 2014 the group had considerably gained territory (both in North East Nigeria – especially in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States – and in neighbouring countries) in an attempt to establish a caliphate, displacing millions of people.

In 2016, the group split into two hostile factions with a 'dissident' group loyal to Abubakar Shekau (JAS

– Boko Haram) and the 'mainstream' faction affiliated to IS (ISWAP). Since March 2020, the mainstream faction's targeting of civilians has increased while it had been previously characterized by targeting military and government objectives.

Despite government efforts both at the national and local levels, shifts in military approach with intermittent success in curbing the Islamist threat, and actions to provide investments in humanitarian and development assistance, governing the North East remains deeply challenging.

Regionally, though the management of both climate and terrorist crises is central to stability, the States directly involved (Nigeria, Chad, Niger and Cameroon) have struggled to collectively manage the situation amid conflicting national interests and regional cooperation rationales. The existence of a regional political union and military force – the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) – also supported by international partners (such as the European Union, France, the US), have not made it easier to successfully fight insecurity in the region, which is continually under pressure also by the terrorist and crime dynamics proper of the Sahelian belt.

Internationally, since the kidnapping of 276 mostly Christian female students from a school in Chibok (Borno State) in 2014, humanitarian and security assistance increased substantially. However, while the region is a priority for stabilisation efforts for various international actors, to date, shortcomings in effective coordination have led to limited results in de-escalating violence.

Internally Displaced Persons: population of concern

KEY FIGURES

2,088,124

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs)

in the Northeastern states of Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Taraba, Bauchi and Gombe: 92% due to insurgency, 7% communal clashes and 1% natural disaster. 1,893,375 of the IDPs are in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states. Source: DTM - RXXXII Jun 2020.

578,119

internally displaced persons of which 274,275 in the Northwestern states of Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna, Sokoto and Kano while the remaining 303,844 are in the Northcentral states of Benue, Plateau and Nassarawa. Source: DTM -NCNW RIII Dec 2019.

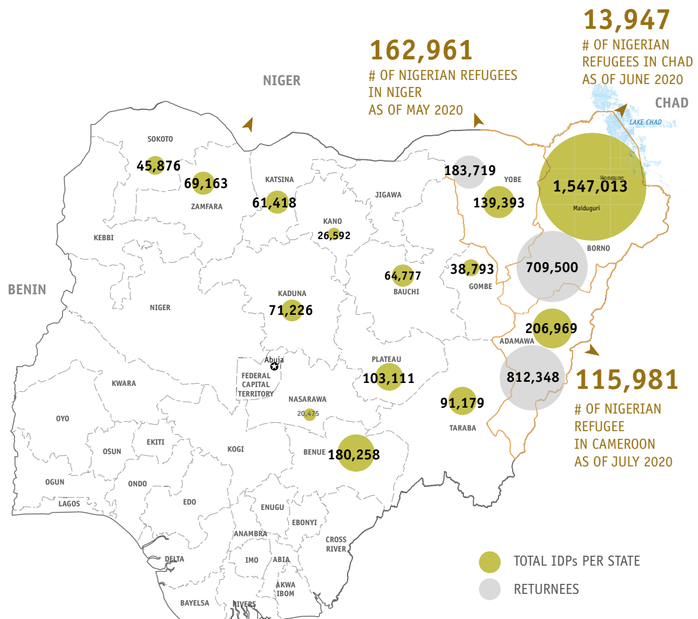
1,705,567

RETURNEES

Returnee figures are cumulative since 2015, out of which 21% (133,000) are former refugees who returned spontaneously with some passing through IDP situation (DTMRXXXII). Since beginning of 2019 UNHCR has registered 27,508 spontaneous refugee returns.

292,889

NIGERIAN REFUGEES REGISTERED IN CAMEROON, CHAD, AND NIGER



Source: elaboration on UNHCR data, October 2020

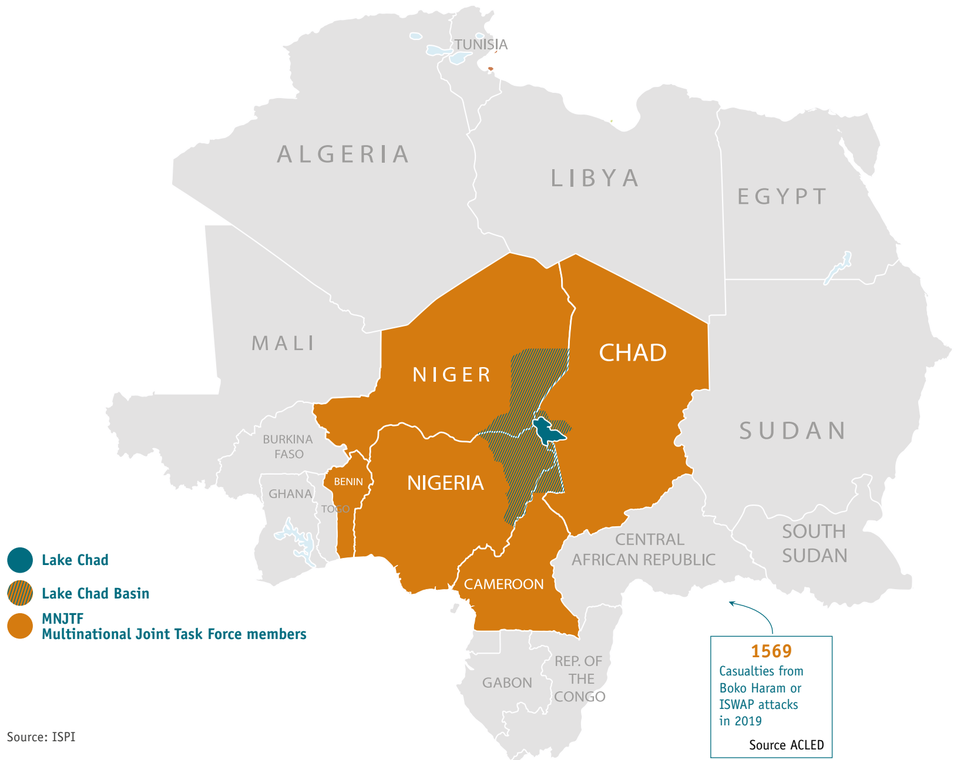
...which in turn amplified pre-existing challenges

The strong emphasis on a military and security approach was only partly matched by multidimensional interventions aimed at tackling the interplay of various root causes of instability (i.e. deficits in state governance, socio-economic marginalisation dynamics, climate change effects, violence).

A self-enforcing feedback loop came into being, between increased livelihood insecurity, climate change vulnerability, conflict. Conflict is decreasing the resilience of communities, making them more vulnerable to climate change, which at the same time is further undermining livelihoods, eroding social cohesion and increasing tensions and conflicts at all levels, exacerbating the competition for ever-scarcer natural resources.

If not broken, this vicious circle threatens to perpetuate the current crisis and take the region further down the path of conflict.

The Lake Chad Basin instability



Source: ISPI

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

When business meets development. FAO and Eni together, towards a new leadership that can match the efforts of all stakeholders.

Alberto Piatti, Head of Sustainable Development, Eni

The challenges we face today, as evidenced by the Covid-19 emergency, are increasingly global. Six years after the Paris Agreement, climate change has become even more central to the international discourse. It is one of several developmental challenges confronting many countries around the world, others include hunger, water shortages, political instability and irregular migration.

According to an Oxfam report released just before the World Economic Forum in Davos, the top 1% of the world's population in 2019 own more than double the net wealth of the rest.

Global demographic trends indicate that world population - now 7.7 billion - will reach 9 billion by 2040. Of that number, Africa alone will account for 2.5 billion by 2050, effectively doubling in size, while Europe - currently experiencing stalled growth - will be in decline.

Around the world, in the 2018/2019 school year, 258 million children between the ages of 6 and 17 were out of school. Data from the latest academic year does not show a different trend. Indeed, the pandemic has caused the largest disruption to education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion students in more than 190 countries, increasing the risk of school dropouts, with the most severe impact currently being seen in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is estimated that one in ten of the world's inhabitants - 785 million people - still do not have access to safe drinking water.

770 million people in the world do not have access to electricity (75% of them in Sub-Saharan Africa), and about 2.6 billion people cook with biomass, a cooking material that is hazardous to health. Forest

degradation, sometimes leading to deforestation, is another serious consequence of unsustainable firewood harvesting.

The world population is growing, the demand for energy is growing, but so too are inequalities around the world. These realities signal a need to transform the way we live, work and collaborate. They also signal a need to change the economic and development models we use. While this is a rhetoric that is often used, to realize it in practice – to succeed in re-focusing efforts on the needs and requirements of our communities, while respecting the planet – we must develop better systems for coordinating the efforts of everyone involved in, affected by, and working on a developmental problem.

Eni's cooperation programs

Eni is an integrated energy company that is looking to the long-term. It has embarked on an irreversible path to becoming a leading company in the production and sale of decarbonized energy products. The distinctive element of our cooperation model in the 66 countries in which we operate, most of which are non-OECD, is the implementation of the "Dual Flag" strategy. This strategy requires the proactive involvement of communities in the process of drawing up Local Development Programmes (LDP). We achieve this by continuously interacting with local institutions and stakeholders to identify the interventions necessary to meet the needs of communities. In implementation, these development strategies are further strengthened by our utilization of public-private partnerships, typically entered into with globally recognised local players. This allows us to combine our economic resources with the know-how and experience present in local partners. In this way, we are able to contribute, even more effectively, to improving the quality of life in communities, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Today, the concept of Sustainability, particularly when applied to our sector, implies a just transition. This is a transition, away from carbon and towards renewable sources, that is socially equitable, giving everyone access to energy while preserving the environment. Realizing these ideals will require us to

Today, the concept of Sustainability implies a just transition: a transition towards renewable sources, that is socially equitable, giving everyone access to energy while preserving the environment.

open our eyes and walk in step with all those who feel equally responsible for human development around the world, in the consciousness that development is the new name for peace.

Over the years, the importance of business as a partner in development has as such been recognized by several events on the international stage, including the establishment in 2000 of the United Nations Global Compact, the conclusions of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development sponsored by the United Nations in 2015 in Addis Ababa, and the creation of an SDG dedicated to "Partnerships for the Goals" (SDG 17) in the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Community development is the priority

However, partnering with people and communities for development is a foundational value at Eni. It has been a part of Eni's DNA from the very beginning.

Eni implements a Business Model that aims to create long-term value for stakeholders. Its commitment is not only to exporting, but also to enhancing the countries' resources, for instance, by allocating gas production to the local market to promote access to electricity. Eni promotes a wide range of socio-economic initiatives aimed at developmental objectives, some of which are improving access to off-grid and clean cooking energy sources, economic diversification and land protection (including conservation and sustainable management of forests), education and training, access to water and sanitation, support for health services/systems, and improving the health status of vulnerable groups.

These initiatives are integral to Eni's core business, being embedded in contractual obligations signed with the countries where Eni operates. Designed to address those socio-economic ills identified through internationally recognized methodological approaches that, in tandem with the Human Development Index, systematically map the root causes of poverty and under-development – these initiatives contribute, effectively, to the public interest.

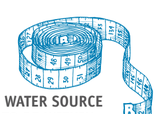
In this sense, these initiatives are in line with several global conventions, including the Paris Agree-

ment; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda (from which our Corporate Mission, launched during Climate Week 2019, takes inspiration); the National Development Plans; and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) (also reaffirmed in the Eni Declaration for the Respect of Human Rights approved by the Eni Board of Directors in December 2018).

Today, the unpredictable and rapid spread of the pandemic has shaken up the whole world, destabilising health, social and economic systems. However, at the same time, these events have also demonstrated to everyone that, in response to major challenges, we must join forces and act together. We must build collaborative networks that include all the diverse stakeholders involved in the affected area of interest - from International Organisations to development banks, from national institutions to the private sector, from universities to research centres, from cooperative bodies to civil society organisations (including faith-based ones), everyone who is in contact with the territory, the issues, and the primary needs of the people.

The human right to water

BETWEEN
50 & 100
LITERS OF WATER PER PERSON PER DAY ARE NEEDED TO ENSURE MOST BASIC NEEDS



THE WATER SOURCE HAS TO BE WITHIN
1,000
METERS FROM HOME

WATER COST SHOULD NOT EXCEED
3% OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

COLLECTION TIME SHOULD NOT EXCEED
30 MINUTES

Source: UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication (UNW-DPAC)

FAO and Eni: a new form of collaboration

In this perspective, the Access to Water Project, implemented by Eni in collaboration with FAO in Nigeria, is a positive example for several reasons.

Firstly, in line with the achievement of SDG 6 "Clean Water and Sanitation", the project facilitates improved access to water. This benefit is described in greater detail in this volume. Secondly, the project intervenes beyond Eni's operational areas, where private sector development projects usually take place, to respond to the crisis in north-eastern Nigeria. Thirdly, the project has allowed FAO and Eni to pool their respective skills, and create a project, and a model, that can be replicated in other countries and continents.

It is, therefore, a concrete example of the new forms of collaboration envisaged by the Addis Ababa Conference, collaborations that no longer limit the private sector to the role of financier, but involve it at the forefront, alongside other development stakeholders, of contributing to development.

Many of the partnerships currently being developed by Eni with International institutions, development organizations and civil society groups are consistent with this vision. These include partnerships with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the World Bank Group. There is also the sponsorship by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) of the Musée du Cercle Africain in Pointe-Noire, Congo (a project promoted by Eni), as well as Eni's participation in the first Biennial in Luanda, Angola - a pan-African forum for peace.

These collaborations reflect what we, at Eni, mean by the need, especially in the post-Covid era, for a new leadership capable of bringing all genuine and committed stakeholders in a given area together to implement a development agenda broad enough to reconcile the need for profit with the need for sustainable development across the world. The road is long, but the journey has begun.

FAO'S RESPONSE STRATEGY TO THE LAKE CHAD BASIN CRISIS

Revitalizing livelihoods and ecosystems to mitigate the impact of the crisis in the affected communities in North-East States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa in Nigeria.

Fred Kafeero, Representative to Nigeria and to ECOWAS, FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The Lake Chad basin covers about 8 percent of the size of the African continent and spans eight countries, including Chad, Cameroun, Niger and Nigeria. It is home to over 49 million people with close to 90 percent of them depending on agriculture (agriculture, fisheries, and livestock) for their livelihood. Before the crisis, the area was a food-production hub, with local markets supplying produce to all four countries. The region's farming systems are labour intensive (fishing, livestock, flood-recession agriculture, hunting and gathering), that generate significant direct and indirect employment (processing, trade, craft and transport) to the surrounding communities.

The armed insurgency in northeastern Nigeria has spilled over to areas of neighboring Sahelian countries in the Lake Chad Basin, specifically Cameroon, Chad and the Niger. The violence has hampered access to agricultural lands and assets, creating massive humanitarian needs in an area already characterized by food insecurity, poverty and environmental degradation. The situation has led to unprecedented levels

of population displacement and prolonged disruption of agricultural, livestock and fishing activities, with devastating effects on food security and livelihoods.

As at June 2019, an estimated 17.4 million people lived in areas affected by Boko Haram violence across the four countries. Of these, 2.5 million people are currently displaced and more than 10 million need assistance to meet basic protection and humanitarian needs. During the June 2020 Cadre Harmonisé (CH) update, the results indicated that about 5.2 million people would be food insecure in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states in Nigeria. The prolonged conflict has exacerbated the rampant food insecurity and malnutrition prevailing in these crisis-affected areas, worsening the food security and nutrition situation of both displaced and host communities, eroding household assets, production and food systems, social services and natural resources. This development has adversely affected the economic, social and cultural environment of the area. To address the far-reaching impacts of the crisis and to build resilient livelihoods through a multidisciplinary perspective, strengthening agriculture-based livelihoods represents a unique entry point for FAO to foster socio-economic relief and growth.

FAO's response

To address these challenges, FAO in March 2017 developed a Response Strategy to address the Lake Chad Basin Crisis for the period between 2017 and 2019. The objective of the strategy was to contribute to improving the food security and nutrition situation and to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable host communities and displaced populations (IDPs, refugees and returnees) in the crisis-affected areas in Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria (over 3 million people estimated to have been affected).

One of the outputs of the strategy was to strengthen the capacities of local institutions for the management of productive resources, as well as the promotion of sustainable management and use of land, pasture and water resources at community level.

Since 2015, FAO has been a key partner to the Government of Nigeria in the efforts to restore agriculture-based livelihoods in northeast Nigeria. In collaboration with other partners, FAO has been implementing a wide range of livelihood programmes in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe States. FAO's emergency response in the 3 States aims at, but is not limited to, improving food security, boosting household nutrition, and enhancing income generation to strengthen the resilience of conflict affected households. FAO's intervention targets vulnerable households, primarily internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities with programmes, including inputs for rain fed and irrigated crop farming during the dry season, strengthen agriculture extension services, livestock restocking, training on sustainable aquaculture and provision of starter kits, safe access to fuel energy, micro-gardening (tools and inputs), agri-business kits and irrigation kits.

Under the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan for Nigeria, FAO targeted 1.35 million people through the distribution of fast-maturing, nutrient-rich cereal and pulse seeds, fertilizer, assistance in seed multiplication, post-harvest storage, vegetable and fruit production, food processing and rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure.

Between 2017 and 2020, FAO reached about 500,000 households in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa State, with inputs comprising of seeds, cereals, pulse, and vegetables to cultivate during rainy season farming. For the dry season programmes, FAO reached about 63,410 households in Borno with assorted vegetable and rice. For the current 2020/2021 dry season, FAO is targeting 14,250 households in Borno out of 24,830 households across the three States. These interventions have significantly resulted to increased productivity and yields that have enabled more food availability in the area. In addition, FAO distributed efficient wood cooking stoves to women households which has contributed to the reduction of women going long distances to look for firewood.

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The partnership with Eni Nigeria

In 2018, FAO signed a partnership initiative with NAOC, Eni's subsidiary in Nigeria, to implement the

access to water project -fostering access to safe and clean water. The objective of this project is to contribute to the humanitarian interventions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in North-East Nigeria, one of the geographical areas affected by internal insurgency and the Lake Chad crisis. After three years of implementation, more than 67,000 people comprising of the internally displace persons (IDPs) and their host communities now have access to safe water for their livelihood and small-scale agricultural activities (micro gardening).

Within the framework of FAO livestock restocking campaign, about 20,000 households between 2016 and 2019, received over 60,000 animals including bulls, goats and poultry in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) States. In the 2020 programming cycle, FAO plans to reach 11,900 households in the BAY States with 111,400 animals (bulls, goats, improved pullets, and Noilier chicks).

FAO distributes goats primarily to women, with each woman getting three female and one male goats, allowing the beneficiary to grow her herd independently. The herd serves as a productive asset base for women, who from time to time put up a goat for sale to address urgent needs, such as school fees, or investment in alternative livelihoods. FAO's poultry intervention has been pivotal in improving the access to eggs within rural communities in the state. Eggs are a key source of nutrients essential for the growth of children. The women beneficiaries are also able to earn income from the sales of the eggs.

FAO Nigeria is committed to ensuring meaningful, effective, and informed participation of stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of FAO programmes and projects. FAO Nigeria will enhance transparency, two-way communication and information provision, and enable fair and representative participation of all sections of the affected populations, including the most vulnerable and marginalized. Therefore, FAO will engage the entire implementation chain of its strategy, from the state Ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources to the local government area chairs, UN agencies, NGOs and returning farmers.

FROM ACCESS TO WATER TO THE SDGs

Thanks to the synergy between public and private sectors, 22 wells have been built for the communities most affected by the Lake Chad crisis and by the violence of Boko Haram. Over 67,000 people reached.

Serena Sabino, Content Production unit, External Communication direction, Eni

Emily lives in the village of Tudun Wada-Bazza in Adamawa State, North-Eastern Nigeria. Until recently, she was forced to walk 15 kilometers every day to collect water for herself and her family. Every day, after walking for four hours, she filled her bucket in a polluted river and brought it back home balanced on her head. For a year now, Emily's life has changed. "Now we have water near the front door," she says smiling. In 2019, thanks to a joint project by FAO and Eni, a well powered by photovoltaic panels was built in her village, which provides about 3000 people with clean water for domestic use and irrigation every day. Water has also arrived in Chibok, a town in the state of Borno from which, in 2014, a commando of the terrorist organization Boko Haram kidnapped 276 students. Goni, who lost his father and two brothers at the hands of Boko Haram, is now working as a volunteer at the water plant.

The collaboration between FAO and Eni in Nigeria began three years ago, when the federal government asked the Oil&Gas companies operating in the country to support it in dealing with the serious humanitarian crisis in the North East. A crisis that is rooted in the inexorable impoverishment of the area caused by the progressive desertification of Lake Chad, which has always been a source of livelihood for the population. Over the last 60 years, its surface area has been reduced by 90 percent due to climate change and population growth, with serious consequences for fishing, livestock and agriculture. The instability caused by the Boko Haram insurrection, which has been sowing death in the North East for over 10 years, and the numerous other ongoing conflicts, further aggravate the already difficult situation

Lake Chad in 1972

In the early 1970s, Lake Chad had an area of more than 26,000 square kilometers (the fourth largest in Africa) and its shoreline had an elevation of about 286 meters above sea level.

Credit: NASA

Lake Chad in 2018

Lake Chad was once the world's sixth largest inland water body but, since the 1960s, it has shrunk by over 90% due to climate change and manmade ecological damage (namely deforestation and land degradation).

Credit: NASA

for inhabitants in the region. In the past four years, around two million people have been forced to flee their homes to seek refuge from violence in other areas of the region or in the Federal Capital Abuja, often being left without essential goods.

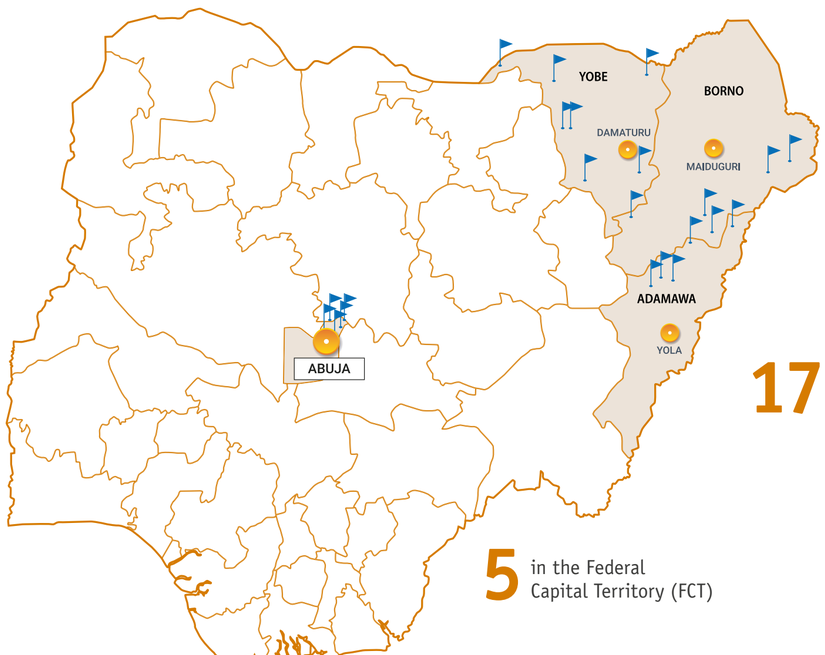
"The biggest challenge we are facing at the moment is that, as a result of the insurrection, people are moving in search of a safer place, often settling in areas already occupied by other communities with which they compete for scarce resources, generating further conflicts," explains Fred Kafeero, FAO Representative in Nigeria and at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Meeting the needs of internally displaced persons and the hosting communities

The project implemented by FAO and Eni in the North East is helping to meet the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the communities that host them by providing them with access to clean water, through the construction of water systems powered by photovoltaic systems: by using renewable energy sources, the wells guarantee a constant flow of water throughout the day, while safeguarding the environment. A green project in which the wells have a storage capacity of between 25 and 50 cubic meters and are equipped with reverse osmosis purification systems. Their depth varies between 100 and 130 meters, depending on the structure of the ground in which they were excavated. In order to ensure the ease of supply for the population, an average of two or three water collection points were built at each intervention site, equipped with up to twenty-four faucets. The project also provides water collection points for irrigation and drinking water for livestock. During the implementation of the project, local authorities helped to train and raise awareness among internally displaced persons and members of host communities about the management of water resources and practices aimed at ensuring its long-term sustainability.

Map of the Wells

The wells are equipped with water purification systems, up to a maximum of **24 faucets** for the supply and a storage capacity of between **25,000** and **50,000 liters.** The map shows the distribution of the wells across the territory of Nigeria.



17 in the North-East of the country (5 in the Borno State, 5 in the Adamawa State and 7 in the Yobe State)

5 in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

A positive outcome: 22 water systems for 67,000 people

Three years since the collaboration agreement between FAO and Eni was signed to promote joint initiatives in Nigeria in 2018 twenty-two water systems have been installed: five in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), where many internally displaced people find refuge, and seventeen in the North East (five in the Borno State, five in the Adamawa State, and seven in the Yobe State, the ones most affected by the Boko Haram insurrection and the severe water crisis). As a result, over 67,000 people today have access to drinking water for their household activities and for small-scale agricultural activities (micro-gardening), which are the main source of livelihood for many IDPs and members of host communities.

In the last two years, in the areas surrounding the wells built in the North East, about 4,000 people have started and strengthened their micro-gardening activities, using seeds distributed by FAO. Emily also has a micro-plot of land, where she has planted "sorrel, spinach, okra and beans to be eaten in the dry season." She sells part of the harvest at the market and with the proceeds she buys "soap and clothes for the children, as well as the ingredients to prepare the soup." Yau, a small farmer from Maijala, in the State of Yobe, is able to feed his cows thanks to the more abundant harvests obtained with the new irrigation systems, which allow him to cultivate even during the dry season. These are important results, because the interventions envisaged by the project, underlines Dike Chukwumerije of the Public Affairs Department of Eni's subsidiary in Nigeria, "must not be limited to mitigating the effects of the humanitarian crisis, but must help people reconstruct their lives, supporting their ability to provide for themselves."

In addition to economic activities, the availability of clean water also has a significant impact on the health and safety of communities, as it improves the hygiene conditions of the villages and substantially reduces the incidence of waterborne diseases, especially in children. As there is no need to make long daily journeys on foot to collect water, the risk of the population suffering violent attacks or stepping on mines also decreases.

The collaboration between FAO and Eni is a successful example of a public-private partnership (PPP) implemented at local level: each of the two parties has put its experience and know-how at the service of the project. The United Nations agency identified the intervention areas in collaboration with local authorities and provided its technical support in the selected areas, also facilitating training in the use and maintenance of the plants to ensure long-term sustainability. Eni drilled the wells and equipped them with photovoltaic systems. This synergy is the main reason why it was possible to achieve important results in a particularly difficult area of intervention due to the presence of armed conflicts. PPPs are an essential tool for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations Agenda for 2030, so much so that they represent a Goal in themselves (number 17). The access to water initiative in Nigeria supports many of the SDGs, but is mostly focused on five fundamental ones: 1, to defeat poverty everywhere and in all its forms; 2, to defeat hunger; 6, to ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; 13, to take urgent measures to combat climate change and its consequences and 17, to strengthen the means of implementation and relaunch the global partnership for sustainable development.

There is undoubtedly still a long way to go to fully achieve these goals, in Nigeria as well as across the rest of the planet, but this project has affected the lives of many people, who, thanks to water, have been given the chance to rebuild a future. "Before, when there was no water, we suffered a lot," says Emily, "but now that we have it close to home, we can drink fresh water, do our laundry, and children's health has improved a lot. This well has helped us, it has really changed our lives".

Thanks to the synergy between Eni and FAO it was possible to achieve important results in a particularly difficult area of intervention.

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

For more information on Eni's projects to enhance access to water see:
https://eni.com/en-IT/operations/access-water-resources-nigeria.html

SHOTS OF LIFE

Children from the Maijala, Machina, community in Yobe State collect water from one of the taps of the water system built in their village. Yobe is one of the states covered by the FAO/Eni project for access to water in Nigeria. The other areas of interventions are: the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Borno State, and Adamawa State

The Tudun Wada Bazza, Michika,
community well in
Adamawa State
was built in 2019 and provides
around 3000 people with clean water
for domestic use and irrigation.
The two collection points, with
12 taps each, have become
the center of village life.
The photos show views of everyday
life: a boy washing his motorbike,
another doing the laundry
and children filling their cans.

First established as a settlement of migrants looking for work in the big city, in recent years Waru, in the Federal Capital Territory, south of Abuja, has been home to over 4,000 people, many of whom have fled from Boko Haram. The well, which came into operation on November 15, 2018, is in the heart of the community and has 18 taps positioned in the settlement to ensure maximum ease of access.

Borehole Powered
by Photovoltaic System
provided to
November 2018

HAPPY
FAMILY

Borehole Powered
by Photovoltaic System

The water well has also had unexpected effects on the community. Powered by solar energy, it is equipped with electrical sockets that locals can use to recharge their mobile phones. It is also well lit even at night - a real rarity in IDP camps. In Waru, the well has quickly turned into a safe meeting point.

The Access to Water project also includes water distribution points to irrigate small gardens and provide drinking water for livestock. In the photo, herds of cattle drink at the collection point reserved for animals in the community of Maijala, Machina, Yobe State.

Workers at work in the area destined to become the distribution point for supplying drinking water to animals in Potiskum, Yobe State.

Scan to watch Emily's story

Emily Ademola

"This well has truly changed our lives. Before they dug the well, we had to walk about 15 km to find water."

Emily Joseph Ademola lives in the community of Tudun Wada Bazza, Michika, Adamawa State. She lived and worked in Lagos State but returned to Michika in April 2020 following federal government measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. Since she moved to Michika, Emily, who made a living selling food in Lagos, has run a micro vegetable garden. She uses proceeds from the sale of her crops to support her family.

To start a micro-garden, *"you need to get an agricultural plot, prepare the land, plant the seeds in the damp earth and then start watering"*, explains Emily, who has planted *"sorrel, spinach, okra and beans in her small garden to eat in the dry season."*

To water the plants in the garden, *"we used to go to the river, collect water and carry it on our heads for miles. Now we have a well close to home."*

Ever since water from the well arrived in her community, Emily has been able to do household chores such as washing or doing laundry in the comfort of her home.

"We suffered a lot in the past: we went searching for water far away. We are lucky to have a well nearby, which allows us to plant sorrel and provide water for our animals, do the laundry and store water in containers to drink later."

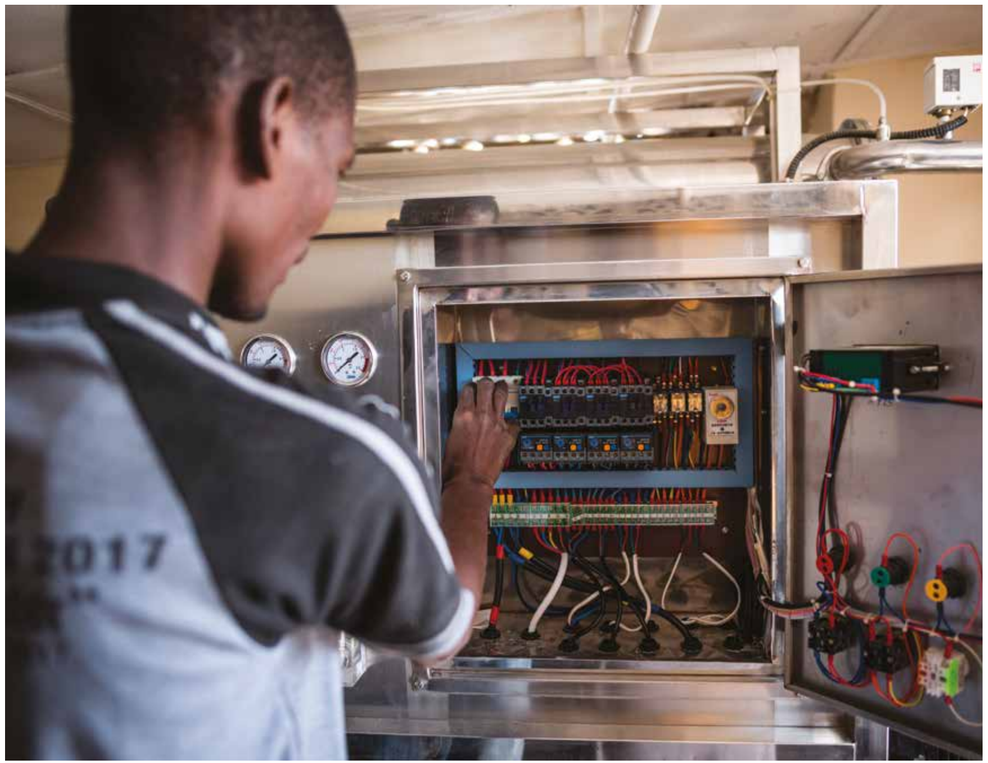
Scan to watch Goni's story

Goni Shariff

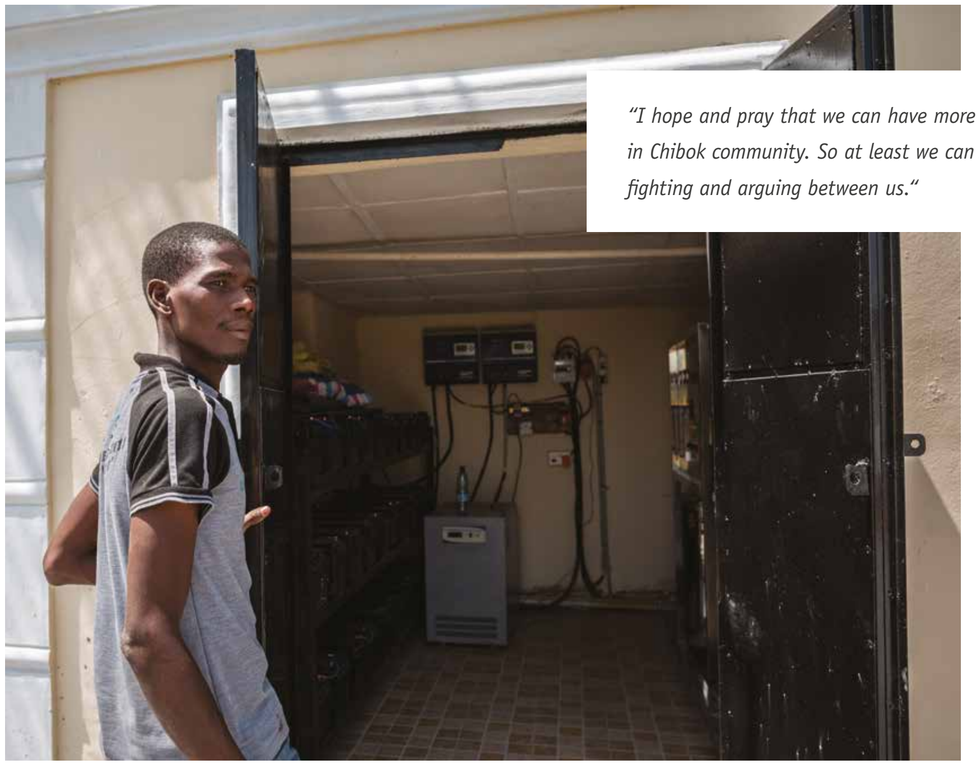
"Boko Haram are killing people here in Chibok, Boko Haram are bombing, Boko Haram are shooting, there's a lot of chaos."

Goni Shariff works as a volunteer at the solar-powered water plant in Chibok, Borno State. He has been overseeing the facility since 2018. Goni left Lagos in 2017 and returned to his hometown of Chibok after learning of his father's murder by the Boko Haram insurgents. He also lost two of his brothers to Boko Haaram. Goni checks the correct operation of the water system on a daily basis and alerts contractors and community leaders when problems arise.

Goni has helped build the small building that houses the reverse osmosis water purification system (left) and the inverter battery that powers the pump (right). The photo shows Goni checking two pieces of equipment.



Goni, his wife Aisha and their youngest daughter pose for a family portrait at home in Chibok. Outside there are children playing.



"I hope and pray that we can have more wells in Chibok community. So at least we can stop fighting and arguing between us."

Scan to watch Yau's story

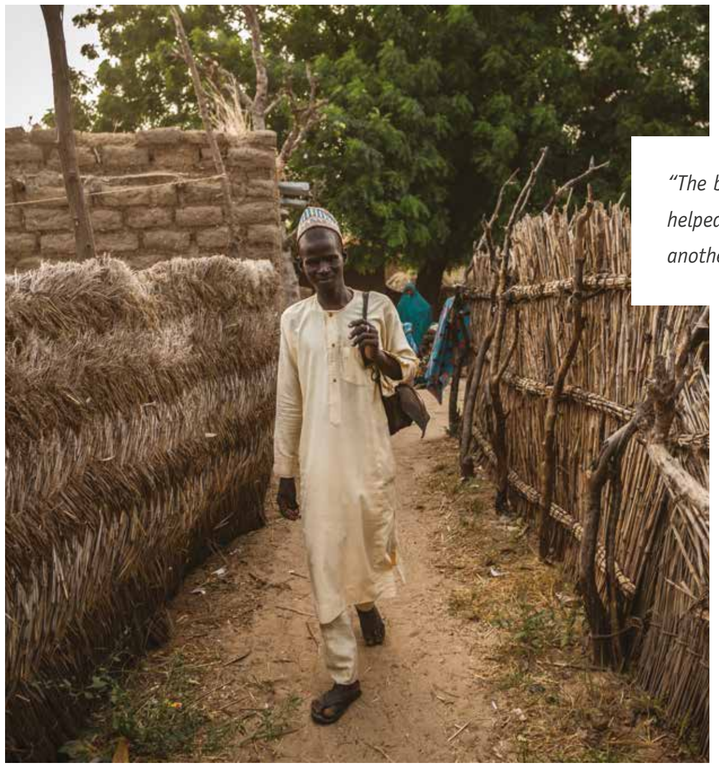
Yau Abdul Karim

"Solar power has helped cheer up my community and improved our safety."

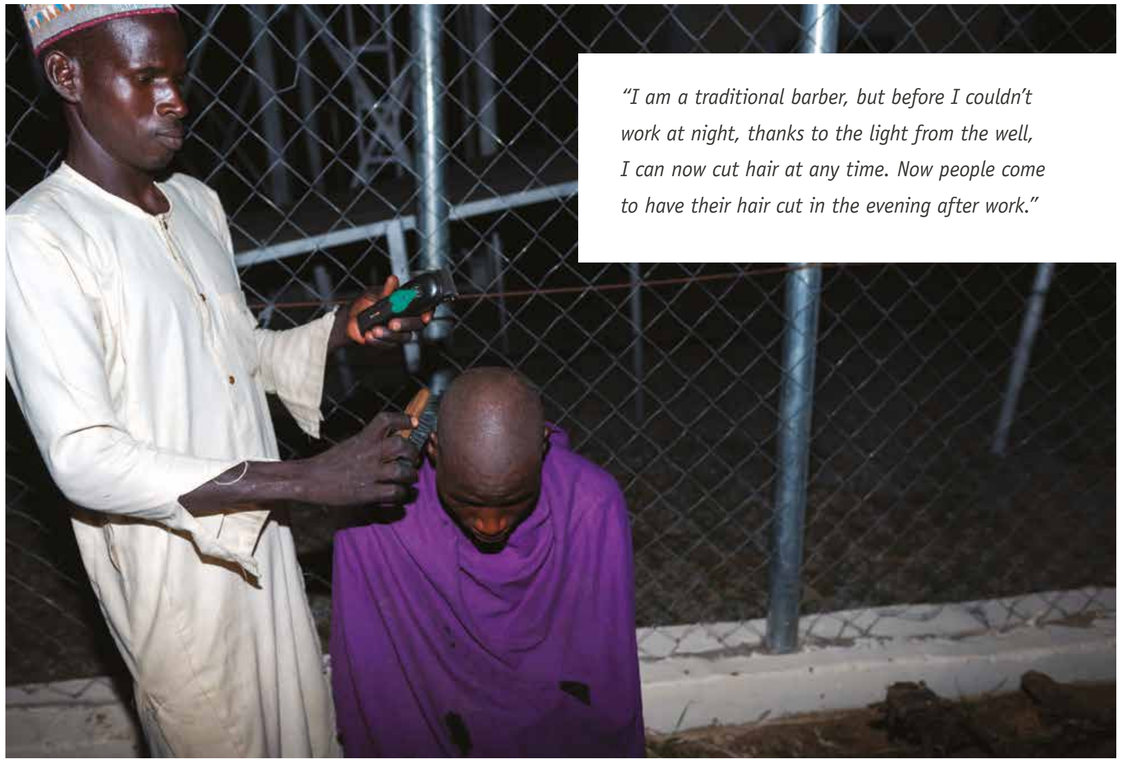
Yau Abdul Karim lives in Maijala, Machina, Yobe State, with his two wives and six children. He is a farmer, rancher and barber. Access to water has significantly improved his living and working conditions: "Before the well was built, we didn't grow anything in the dry season. We thought that irrigation was only possible in river areas. Now our lives have changed 100% compared to before. This year's was plentiful, we ate and sold it, our life has changed."

"Raising animals is much easier today than it was a few months ago because we now have plenty of water and a lot of feed thanks to our crops."

Abdul Karim has around 50 cows and 100 poltry animals. In addition to powering the water system, having solar power allows the community to carry out many activities that were hindered by the lack of lighting before the wells were built.



"The building of the borehole has helped us, we would love to see another project and be part of it."



"I am a traditional barber, but before I couldn't work at night, thanks to the light from the well, I can now cut hair at any time. Now people come to have their hair cut in the evening after work."

The visual artists

The shots of Etinosa Yvonne and Ricardo Franco, and the stories filmed by Nyasha Kadandara tell, through visual art, the lived life of Emily, Goni, Yau and their communities, affected by terrorism and the Lake Chad crisis. Images and testimonies tell a story of extreme difficulties, but of hope also.

Nyasha Kadandara

© Mark Thiessen, National Geographic

Nyasha is an award-winning pan-African director and cinematographer who tells stories that traverse the continent and reflect alternative voices. She is a graduate of Columbia Journalism School. In 2015, her first film "Through the Fire" won the Audience Choice Award for a short documentary at Atlanta Docufest. Her short documentary "Queens & Knights" won first prize at the 2016 NBC Sports film contest Cptr'd and premiered at South by SouthWest. In 2019, she wrote, filmed and produced "Sex and the Sugar Daddy", which was a finalist for the One World Media Awards in the Popular Feature and Digital Media categories. Nyasha's latest work includes "'Le Lac" a virtual reality documentary which looks at the effects of climate change and the Boko Haram insurgency around Lake Chad. "Le Lac" won the Digital Narrative Award at Sheffield Doc/Fest in 2019 and is currently on the festival circuit. And, her investigative documentary "Imported for my Body" was shortlisted for the Amnesty Media Awards in 2020 and selected for the Human Rights Watch Festival in Kenya. Mostly recently Nyasha served as a juror for World Press Photo's digital storytelling contest and has been selected to participate in 2021's Berlinale Talents.

Etinosa Yvonne

© Mark Thiessen, National Geographic

A self-taught documentary photographer and visual artist born and brought up in Nigeria, Etinosa Yvonne works with various art forms including photos and videos. She currently resides in Abuja, Nigeria. The primary focus of her work is on exploring and expressing themes related to the human condition and social injustice. Her multimedia project "It's All In My Head"has received grants from Women Photograph, National Geographic in partnership with Lagos Photo and Access Bank Art X. She recently collaborated with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on a digital storytelling series on sexual and reproductive health, highlighting the stories of 16 girls and women; this project is an extension of her ongoing project, "It's All In My Head". Her works have been exhibited internationally and many of works have been featured in several international publications. Etinosa is one of six talents selected for the 2020 cycle of the World Press Photo 6*6 Africa talent.

Pages: Cover, 26, 39-41, 49-75.

Ricardo Franco

© Ricardo Franco Photographer

Born in the Alentejo region in Portugal, in August 1980, Ricardo Franco learned the art of photography by himself. Between 2003 and 2004 he lived in Guinea-Bissau, documenting his work as a volunteer teacher in the interior of the country. Back in Portugal he worked in schools and underprivileged neighbourhoods, where his interest in documentary awakened. In 2007 he moved to Macau, where he began to ally his career as a teacher with photojournalism, reporting in several Asian countries. In 2009 Ricardo moved to Mozambique, a country he adopted. It was there that he decided to abandon his teaching to dedicate himself entirely to photography. In recent years, in addition to continuing to collaborate with the press, he extended his experience to institutional communication and social responsibility projects in South Africa, Nigeria, Angola, Swaziland, Congo Brazzaville, Ghana and Mozambique.

Pages: 43-47.

NIGERIAN WATER STORIES
Published by Eni

Printed in April 2021
Tipografia Facciotti, Rome - Italy

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

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