Peace and Democratic Governance

U.S., Donors Express ‘Alarm’ Over November Gubernatorial Elections

Despite sustained support by the international donor community with USAID in a leading role over the last two decades, the November 16 gubernatorial elections in Kogi and Bayelsa states indicated serious challenges remain to Nigerian democracy since the restoration of civilian rule in 1999. In both states, observers and civil society organizations reported multiple cases of violence, vote buying, ballot box snatching, and voter intimidation before and during the elections. Although USAID-supported Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth & Advancement (YIAGA) – an elections civil society watchdog – reported that the credibility of the process in both states was severely compromised, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) declared candidates from the ruling All People’s Congress (APC) winners in both polls, decisions the opposition People’s Democratic Party (PDP) says it will contest. The United States signed onto a multi-donor statement expressing “alarm” about the proceedings. In the runup to the polls, USAID supported peace rallies in each state where all parties signed peace pledges, and the U.S. Embassy issued a statement urging peaceful and transparent elections. Domestic observers reported this poll was more peaceful but turnout at some polling units was low, suggesting further voter intimidation.

Health, Population, and Nutrition

Critical Health Indicators Have Stagnated, New Survey Shows

The USAID-supported 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), publicly launched on November 5, shows that critical indicators such as a under-five
mortality rate of 132 deaths per 1,000 live births – one out of eight children under five – have stagnated since the last survey in 2013. Similarly, more than one in three children remains stunted, more so in the country’s North, underscoring a large geographic disparity between north and south. More positively, two thirds of pregnant women received antenatal care over the reporting period, and 40 percent of deliveries were assisted by a skilled provider, both slight increases nationally. Other positive results included vaccinations (31 percent of children received the basic package - up from 13 percent in 2013), and 29 percent of children exclusively breastfed, up from 17 percent. More than 31 percent of children sick with diarrhea were treated with zinc, up from just 2.3 percent. USAID provided $8 million of the survey’s $13 million price tag.

USAID Flags off Millions of Bed Nets for Ebonyi State Under PMI
On November 7, Deputy Director Katie Donohoe represented the U.S. government at a ceremony marking a donation through the President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) of 1.75 million bed nets in Nigeria’s Ebonyi state as part of a national campaign to provide enough nets for every Nigerian to be protected from the disease every night. This activity will benefit all 3.1 million residents of Ebonyi, providing at a minimum one net for every two people within each household. Sleeping under nets puts a vital barrier between people and malarial mosquitoes, most importantly from dusk to dawn, and is one of the best ways to prevent malaria. In addition to the nets, valued at $4.9 million, PMI also provided an additional $1.1 million for logistics in partnership with the Ebonyi government, which led the planning and distribution.

Campaign to Inoculate 28 Million Children Against Measles in North
With USAID support the Nigerian government has launched a large-scale campaign to vaccinate children in 19 northern states as part of the effort to boost the immunity of children against measles and meningitis. Measles remains a major cause of death among young children globally, despite the availability of a safe and effective vaccine. Launched in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), the GAVI Alliance, and Nigeria’s National Primary Health Care Development Agency, the Expanded

NO MORE MEASLES: USAID supported the WHO campaign to inoculate children in 19 northern states against measles and meningitis.
Program on Immunization (EPI) expects to reach 28 million children with vaccines.

**Education**

**Yobe Becomes Third State to Adopt USAID-Developed Reading Materials**

Yobe has become the third state in Nigeria to adopt USAID-developed materials as their methodology for early grade reading. Yobe is leveraging these teaching and learning materials to expand evidence-based reading instruction to 81,000 children in primary grades 1-3. Through its Northern Education Initiative Plus (NEI Plus) activity, USAID provided technical assistance to Yobe and six other states to develop their work plans for the school year. This enabled Yobe to access the World Bank and Universal Basic Education Commission’s Better Education Service Delivery to All (BESDA) initiative to fund the printing of these USAID-developed books. Other NEI Plus beneficiary states, including Bauchi and Sokoto, are using the same technical assistance to expand the *Mu Karanta!* (Let’s Read!) initiative to children in all of the states’ local government areas (LGA) this year.

**Humanitarian Assistance**

**OFDA Trains 60 Federal and State Emergency Response Officials**

Starting on November 3, a USDA/U.S. Forest Service team, on behalf of the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), conducted two, five-day trainings for 60 national and state disaster response officials on emergency management and coordination. Conducted in Abuja, the trainings were aimed at improving the operational capacity of the officials when confronted with natural and man-made disasters such civil conflict, floods, and building collapses, among others. The U.S. facilitators expect these multi-year, cumulative capacity building trainings will result in a trained cadre of disaster coordinators and instructors who can both pass new skills and techniques to additional staff, and assist the National Emergency Management Agency and state-level emergency management agencies (SEMA),
to efficiently coordinate disaster assistance across Nigeria.

**New Awards**

**Heartland Alliance to Implement New $20 Million HIV Control Activity**

On October 28, USAID awarded the Heartland Alliance a five-year, $20 million Key Population Community HIV Services Action and Response activity. Known as KP-CARE 1, the activity will increase demand for and access to comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment, and care services and interventions for key populations. KP-CARE 1 will develop tailored innovative social behavior change communication resources to reach its target audience. KP CARE 1 will augment existing USAID HIV care and treatment efforts to advance Nigeria’s pathway to epidemic control. KP-CARE 1 will operate in Lagos, Akwa Ibom, and Cross River states. Heartland Alliance has worked in Nigeria since 2009 with a large-scale effort to bring HIV/AIDS prevention services to some of the country’s most stigmatized groups.

**Mercy Corps to Implement New Five-Year Rural Resilience Activity**

USAID awarded Mercy Corps International a five-year, $30 million Cooperative Agreement to implement the new Feed the Future Nigeria Rural Resilience activity. This initiative will be implemented in the Northeast with the goal of sustainably moving people out of chronic vulnerability and poverty through expanded economic opportunities. The activity seeks to strengthen resilience capacities at household, community, and market-systems levels with the aim to ensure greater sustainability of poverty reduction and economic recovery efforts. USAID will layer market-led approaches with complementary investments from other teams in humanitarian assistance, peace building, social cohesion, infrastructure, and basic services to ensure that broad-based economic recovery results are achieved among targeted geographies and populations. It will stimulate market systems growth and expand economic opportunities while building capacities of conflict-affected populations to proactively participate in economic activities. Feed the Future helps improve agricultural production and processing, expands access to financing, and boosts marketing capabilities. Through Feed the Future, USAID has assisted more than 1.3 million farmers and their families since 2015.

*Rural Resilience: Mercy Corps will implement the new five-year poverty reduction activity.*

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