USAID ADMINISTRATOR VISITS NIGERIA: From August 22-24, USAID Administrator Mark Green visited Nigeria and met with religious leaders to better understand interfaith peace building efforts and validate the critical role interfaith leaders play in mitigating violence in their communities. These conflicts, often caused by disputes over access and distribution of resources are exacerbated by rapid population growth, urbanization, and climate change, among other factors. He also met with the Vice President of Nigeria Yemi Osinbajo to discuss these ongoing humanitarian and development issues. The following day, Administrator Green visited Igu township, north of Abuja, where he commended local leaders for building upon USAID assistance to help maintain peace, stability, and religious tolerance in their communities. He also exchanged ideas and lessons learned with women micro-entrepreneurs, youth leaders, and smallholder farmers, who benefited from the Feed the Future Nigeria Livelihoods Project. The five-year program helped vulnerable families diversify their income sources and produce foodstuffs that improved nutrition in the region. Finally, Administrator Green met with regional stakeholders to discuss USAID’s support for conflict resolution and other peaceful mitigation strategies, as it relates to farmer-pastoralist conflict in Nigeria’s Middle Belt. Throughout his visit, Administrator Green emphasized USAID’s commitment to partnering with the Government and people of Nigeria as they advance towards a self-reliant future. In his meeting with the Vice President, Administrator Green reiterated the U.S. government’s commitment to working collaboratively with the Nigerian government to advance shared objectives, and highlighted the United States’ substantial humanitarian assistance for Nigeria’s conflict-stricken regions in the northeast. Vice President Osinbajo expressed gratitude for the United States' commitment, and noted that he looked forward to partnering more closely on education and renewable energy. Administrator Green commended Vice President Osinbajo for promoting compulsory education in Nigeria for both boys and girls, saying that education is vital to curbing extremism.
**Feed the Future**

**FOOD SECURITY/HUMANTARIAN ASSISTANCE VISIT:** At the end of July, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for Food security Greg Collins and Director of the Office of Food for Peace Clyde “Trey” Hicks visited Nigeria to help launch a Global Food Security Strategy and sign a Declaration of Partnership with Nigeria to outline roles and responsibilities to implement the strategy. Ahead of the launch the delegation, led by Mission Director Stephen M. Haykin, traveled to the northern city Sokoto, where they briefed Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal and famed traditional leader Muhammadu Sa’ad Abubakar the Sultan of Sokoto – as well as state agriculture officials – on Feed the Future’s resilience and integrated programming that links development and humanitarian assistance activities. They also visited beneficiaries of the Feed the Future Livelihoods activity, which helped more than 50,000 of the most vulnerable households in the state to increase agricultural production, diversify incomes, and improve nutrition, as well as providing livelihoods planning skills and basic education for unschooled adults. Collins and Hicks noted that Nigeria is on the front lines of the nexus between humanitarian assistance and development, working to adapt models of successful interventions in Nigeria’s north and middle belt to other parts of the country. “Together we will work to transition from humanitarian to development assistance toward Nigeria’s ultimate goal of not needing assistance from the United States or any other donor,” Collins said. “As a long-time friend and partner of Nigeria, USAID is honored to play a role in forging a path to prosperity for all Nigerians. We all agree that a key element of that path is inclusive, transparent governance, which can build trust in market systems and incentivize private sector investments.” Collins also hosted a wide-ranging roundtable for USAID’s implementing partners.

**DECLARATION OF PARTNERSHIP:** As part of the visit, on July 19 U.S. and Nigerian officials convened to sign a declaration of partnership that launched a five-year Feed the Future Nigeria Country Plan under the Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS) to increase investments in food security, build greater resilience, and improve household nutrition in the country. Building on Nigeria’s priorities for food security and nutrition at both the national and state levels, the Joint Country Plan provides a blueprint to accelerate agriculture-led economic growth, strengthen resilience among people and systems, and support a more well-nourished population, especially women and children. The Plan will develop five of the government’s prioritized agricultural value chains with the strongest potential for increased productivity including; aquaculture, cowpeas, maize, rice, and soybeans. This partnership builds on the successes of Feed the Future’s $165 million investment since
2015. Following the launch, attended by U.S. Chargé d’affaires Kathleen FitzGibbon, USAID staged an exhibition where 45 private sector vendors in agro-processing, agro-technology, nutrition services, and agricultural consulting services highlighted their products. The Joint Country Plan focuses on Benue, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Kaduna, Kebbi, and Niger states, as well as the four northeastern states of Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe. Nigeria was represented at the event by Ernest A. Umahaha, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Budget & National Planning, who said “It is our belief that this initiative will reduce hunger, malnutrition and poverty among the Nigerian people.”

**AGRIBUSINESS LAUNCH:** On August 6, U.S. Ambassador W. Stuart Symington presided over the launch of a key component of the new GFSS strategy, the Feed the Future Nigeria Agribusiness Investment activity. Over the next five years, this activity will support more than 5,000 small and medium enterprises, expanding opportunities for agribusiness borrowers and lenders. The $15.7 million program, implemented by Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA), will also boost growth of existing private sector agribusinesses and work with suppliers, financiers, investors, service providers and producer organizations in the rice, maize, soybean, aquaculture, and cowpea value chains. Guests of honor included the governors of Cross River and Kebbi states as well as private sector executives and members of the agribusiness community. The activity aims to facilitate $200 million in new lending and $100 million in new investment across the five crops in seven designated states including Kaduna, Niger, Kebbi, Benue, Delta, and Ebonyi, and Cross River.

**Power Africa**

**OFF-GRID ACCESS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES:** Power Africa, the U.S. government’s initiative to help improve access to electricity across the continent, is helping Nigeria to access innovative private sector financing that will provide clean, safe, affordable and reliable electricity to market places, shopping centers, and industrial facilities across Nigeria. Fully funded by the private sector, a new Energizing Economies Initiative (EEI) by Nigeria’s Rural Electrification Agency (REA) will support rapid deployment of off-grid electricity solutions that aim to provide electricity access to over 80,000 retail shops, empower 340,000 micro, small and medium size enterprises, and create over 2,500 jobs while serving at least 18 million Nigerians. USAID’s flagship Power Africa intervention, the Nigeria Power Sector Support Program (NPSP), worked with the REA and the Central Bank of Nigeria to develop
innovative financing solutions that resulted in over $1.5 million of local lending into EEI, increasing Nigeria’s capacity to self-finance development objectives. To establish the financing scheme, Power Africa provided technical support to Nigeria’s REA, which is already transforming businesses in Sabon Gari market, Ariara market, Sura shopping complex and other “economic clusters” with sustainable, clean and affordable power supply resulting in increasing economic activities, spurring business growth, fostering job creation and enhancing the business experience.

**Health, Population, and Nutrition**

**BASIC HEALTH CARE FUND IN FCT:** On August 7, USAID Deputy Mission Director Katie Donohoe represented USAID at the launch of the Basic Health Care Provision Fund in Nigeria’s Federal Capital Territory. The new fund, known as Huwe (‘life’ in Nigeria’s Ebira language), promises to help reverse the lagging health indices in the territory and improve overall access to public healthcare facilities while reducing access barriers for the most vulnerable. Through the Fund, residents will benefit from the financial protection afforded under Nigeria’s Universal Health Coverage plan. USAID has played a key role by supporting the design and rollout of the fund in focus states over the past several years. The rollout in FCT is the sixth nationwide, following Osun, Niger, Abia, and Delta states. The plan stems from passage of the National Health Act in 2014. In 2018, the federal government allocated $71 million to fund the initiative nationally, representing 1 percent of the federal government’s Consolidated Revenue Fund.

**ISO CERTIFICATION FOR NAFDAC LAB:** On July 31, USAID Mission Director Stephen M. Haykin presented Dr. Mashood Lawal, Director Food and Drug Services for the Federal Ministry of Health, with an International Standards Organization (ISO) certificate of accreditation to the National Agency for Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) laboratory in Lagos. USAID’s collaboration with NAFDAC also served to launch a pharmaceutical manufacturing “roadmap” that will avail Nigeria with the capacity to improve the quality of medicines it produces, and help it ensure local medicines are developed in accordance with internationally accepted standards. The NAFDAC laboratory in Lagos, responsible for testing the quality of vaccines and other related medical products in Nigeria, is the fifth laboratory to be certified by ISO compliant – an independent international standard bearer – for quality assurance. USAID support to NAFDAC has included developing quality assurance processes for laboratories, calibration of equipment, procurement of basic equipment and reagents, support for proficiency testing and auditing, and staff capacity. Nigeria is among 35 countries that receive USAID assistance to safeguard the quality of medicines, especially to treat malaria, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis.
**REDUCED MATERNAL MORTALITY IN CROSS RIVER:** Over the last five years, the USAID Saving Mothers’ Giving Life (SMGL) activity contributed to a 66 percent reduction in maternal mortality in SMGL-supported facilities in Cross River State. Likewise, newborn mortality plummeted by 47 percent. Implemented in 108 public facilities funded by USAID and 30 private for-profit facilities funded by Merck pharmaceuticals, the activity also saw a 32 percent increase in clinic-based deliveries. Utilizing an integrated health systems approach, SMGL addressed three primary delays associated with maternal and newborn health: delay in seeking services, delay in reaching care, and delay in receiving high-quality care at health facilities. A key feature of the activity was a highly successful community-driven system to transport mothers in emergency situations to a clinic or hospital so they can receive the urgent and sometimes lifesaving care they needed. The $16.6 million multi-country activity, implemented in Nigeria by Pathfinder International, well surpassed its initial targets of reducing maternal and child mortality from between 25 and 35 percent. Activity methodology was presented to Nigeria’s National Council for Health with the aim of duplicating the activity’s success in other states.

**Feature: Saving Mothers, Giving Life**

**NO TROUBLE WITH TRIPLETs:** For Cletus, a security guard from the village of Mkpani in Cross River state, joy that his wife Antonia was pregnant for the fourth time was tempered with fear when he spoke to the doctor after her first antenatal visit: she was expecting triplets. Eight months later, Antonia safely gave birth at the village Primary Health Center under the care of Sister Clementina, a village midwife. As is often the case with triplets, the two girls and a boy were all healthy but underweight, the largest weighing not quite four pounds and the smallest a little more than two. Sister Clementina, who was trained under the USAID-supported Saving Mothers, Giving Life (SMGL), told Cletus the babies needed to spend time in an incubator at the local hospital, but he was afraid the potential cost would be too big a burden and refused on behalf of the family. Clementina had heard such refusals in the past, and did her best to prepare Antonia to get through the babies’ critical first weeks of life at home under the circumstances. She counseled them to keep the home warm and clean, wash hands frequently, have the other children handle the babies as little as possible, and apply antiseptic gel to the umbilical cords. She taught Antonia to keep the babies warm with the kangaroo mother care technique, and how to express breast milk. With three babies, she said, her own milk supply needed to be
augmented with breast milk substitute. When Cletus couldn’t afford that either, Clementina turned to the Mkpani Ward Health Development Committee, which, like her training, was made possible by USAID under the SMGL activity. Supported by community donations from the private sector, the committee was able to finance the breast milk substitute and a supply of extra-small diapers for the tiny newborns, which Clementina brought with her on her twice-weekly visits for the first six weeks. As the family settled into a room, Clementina brought up another important subject. Now with six young children, they must consider family planning. Once assured the intervention would cause no permanent changes in Antonia, Cletus agreed that she should receive a long acting reversible contraceptive implant, which, unless removed, will prevent another pregnancy for five years.

CO-CREATION WORKSHOP: From August 20-22, USAID convened 11 interested organizations to join USAID and partner government agencies as well as and other donors to participate in a workshop aimed at designing a new Adolescent Health activity in Nigeria. The interested organizations responded to a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) to participate in this innovative new approach to activity design undertaken for the first time ever at USAID/Nigeria. Over three days, participants brainstormed innovative ideas on how to address health and development challenges faced by poor, out-of-school adolescents in urban areas, among the country’s most vulnerable populations. These adolescents face a high level of reproductive health risks and greater exposure to gender-based violence. This process is expected to eventually result in one or more innovative projects to help address these critical issues.

Education

SUPPORT FOR EARLY GRADE READING: From August 19-23, USAID supported the Nigeria Center for Reading Research and Development at Bayero University of Kano (BUK) as it hosted Nigeria’s groundbreaking conference on children’s books and state-of-the-art teaching methodologies for early grade reading. The conference attracted more than 800 participants from all over Nigeria including publishers, federal and state government education officials, colleges of education, universities, teachers, and many others. The Center arose out of USAID’s Northern Education Initiative (NEI) Plus activity in Bauchi and Sokoto, working in collaboration with Florida State University (FSU)’s Center for Reading Research. USAID, FSU, and BUK are engaged in a three-year partnership to establish the Center, including sending six BUK faculty members (two per semester) to Florida for intensive mentoring and coaching in teaching methodologies and world-class research practices.

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