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## NEWSLETTER

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# Managing Conflict in Nigeria

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

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

Our work focuses on the following areas:

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

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

### Key activities

This newsletter highlights the key activities undertaken by the programme in August and September 2018. Summary of key activities include:

#### Community Peace and Safety Partnerships:

- Mafa CPSP provides support for IDPs
- Geidam CPSP action leads to disbandment of an illegal vigilante group

#### Conflict management:

- Reintroduction of *Jangali* contributes to reduction in cattle rustling
- Dialogue initiative on farmer / herder conflict in Yola South
- Policy dialogue on the role of traditional rulers and community policing

#### Sexual and gender based violence:

- Yobe SARC facilitates conviction of rapist
- Police officers trained on SGBV

#### Youth engagement:

- Youth groups empowered to prevent violence



An IDP Camp, Borno State  
Source: Daily Post

## Conflict management, reconciliation and stability in communities

### Community Peace and Safety Partnerships accelerate their activities

By the end of September 2018, Community Peace and Safety Partnerships (CPSPs) were active in **31 local government areas** across the three states. The groups meet monthly and comprise of key local stakeholders from government, the security sector, traditional rulers, religious groups, academics, community groups, women and youth groups and the media.

CPSPs consider issues that are threatening the safety and security of their communities and propose and implement actions to respond to them peacefully. Key concerns include the plight of displaced persons, the threat from insurgents, perennial farmer / herder conflicts, sexual and gender-based violence, drug abuse and the lack of economic opportunities for young people as well as local safety issues including road safety. Some of the activities and results achieved by CPSPs are reported in this issue.

#### FACTS & FIGURES: Community Peace and Safety Partnerships

Number of issues discussed: 353  
Actions taken: 276  
Results achieved: 64

Implemented by the British Council



### Mafa CPSP advocates for increased food supplies to IDP camp

The CPSP in Mafa LGA (Borno State) has successfully advocated for an increase in food supplies for internally displaced persons (IDPs). This action followed reports that IDPs, including children, in Muna Custom House were facing severe food shortages that negatively affected their wellbeing. The situation posed a threat to safety and security as IDPs scrambled for any food that became available.

Representatives from the CPSP visited the Secretary of Mafa LGA to present the matter. It was then taken to the Borno State Commissioner for Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Resettlement who reached out to

the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to take action.

Feedback from IDPs indicates that NEMA has responded and increased the supply of relief materials to the camp.

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'The food given to us has given me the strength to travel to the farm (far away from the camp) and work'

**Abatcha Zara, Muna Custom House, IDP Camp**

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An IDP camp in North East Nigeria  
Source: Daily Post

### Geidam CPSP action leads to disbandment of illegal vigilante group

Action led by the CPSP in Geidam (Yobe State) has resulted in the disbandment of an illegal vigilante group, which operated under the guise of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in the area. The group mounted check-points, interrogated innocent road users and extorted money from members of the public, often under the influence of drugs. There were also fears that the group may be linked to the insurgents, who could be using them to infiltrate the area. However, the group claimed it was operating legally because the government and military authorities in the area were aware of their operations.

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'The CPSP platform has gradually proven itself to be a very important avenue for community protection. If this initiative is well utilized, many problems arising from the community will be taken care before it goes out of hand.'

The local government and other security outfits will effectively work with the CPSP, as this will complement their respective efforts of achieving a relatively peaceful society.'

**Idi Mulima Mato, Chairperson, Geidam LGA**

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The CPSP met with the local council chairperson to find out more about the legality of the existence and operations of the group. The chairperson denied knowledge of the group and promised to investigate further. The Army Brigade Commander was engaged and discovered that the group was not registered or recognised by any constituted authority, despite wearing uniforms and carrying identify cards endorsed by the local council chairperson. Most members of the group did not know how the group was created or how it was funded; they were recruited by the leader who provided them with uniforms and gadgets. Having established that the group was operating illegally, the military disbanded the group and handed over the leader to the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps for prosecution.

The role of the CPSP in the successful disbanding of the group has increased trust and confidence in the CPSP, which is regarded as an effective early warning and response mechanism.

### Reintroduction of Jangali contributes to a reduction in cattle rustling in Gubio, Borno State

Rising incidences of cattle rustling in Gubio (Borno State) have become a source of concern to residents as it affects livelihoods and undermines community security. Proceeds from rustling were reportedly being channelled to insurgent groups and organised criminal networks. The problem had become so severe that cattle owners had resorted to the practice of sleeping with livestock in their rooms, which was also posing a threat to their health.

The issue was raised with the Gubio CPSP who decided to educate community members and cattle dealers on only buying and selling livestock from known traders. The key element of the initiative was to advocate for a return to the traditional practice of requiring verification by the Ward and Village Heads when buying / selling cattle.



Cattle farm in Northern Nigeria  
Source: The Guardian

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'With the introduction of this new clearance process and Jangali (tax receipt), there are fewer incidences of cattle theft now'

**Bulama Bukar Debirama  
Vice Chairman CJTF Gubio**

'Jangali has become the powerful tool that has minimised theft of livestock'

**Wakil Ali, Gubio Cattle Marketers**

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The practice involves registering the livestock with Ward Heads and paying cattle tax known as *Jangali*. Under this traditional system, the Ward Head keeps records of the livestock owned by each household and any increase or decrease must be reported to the Ward Head. This practice promotes transparency and prevents theft of livestock.

The CPSP presented the proposal to reintroduce the *Jangali* to the acting chairperson of the Gubio Local Government Council who welcomed the idea. He directed that a clearance form be introduced to verify ownership of livestock. The form verifies the selling and buying of livestock and accompanies livestock that is being transported to another location.

The coordinated response facilitated by the Gubio CPSP has led to the following outcomes:

- Gubio local government authority (LGA) has reintroduced the *Jangali* tax.
- The LGA developed the clearance form used to verify ownership of livestock, which is now being used by buyers and sellers of livestock.
- Sensitisation initiatives aimed at making residents more vigilant and to report suspicions to law enforcement agencies led to the arrest of the leader of a suspected rustling gang.
- Feedback from cattle owners indicates that rustling has reduced.

### Dialogue and mediation on farmer/herder conflict in Adamawa State

A dialogue and mediation programme has been established for farmers and herders in the Bole communities of the Yola South LGA. The programme addresses a key concern for these communities, who are facing an increase in conflict from instances of encroachment by herders on local farms. Tension in communities is on the rise due to the destruction of crops close to the harvest season. Consultations were held with key community stakeholders to secure the consent of the parties involved in the conflict to commence mediation. The intervention aims to prevent these large-scale incidents of violence that have resulted in fatalities elsewhere in the state.

### Supporting policy dialogue for traditional rulers on community policing

The programme supported the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) to organise a roundtable for traditional rulers and their role in community policing. Over 105 participants attended the event in Jos, including traditional rulers, senior security officers, senior government officials, civil society, and the media.

The event addressed key issues that government institutions face in tackling security challenges. Issues discussed include: downgrading and poor resourcing of traditional ruling institutions, poor relations between community and security agencies, non-implementation of previous recommendations on security management, poor funding of security agencies, the abolition of *jangali* tax, and the introduction of the Land Use Act.



Traditional rulers from six geo-political zones  
Credit: Lopera Studios

The event culminated with a joint communique issued to highlight the key policy recommendations and practice changes necessary for effective community policing. Notable recommendations include: strengthening the role of traditional rulers in community policing through improved recognition as part of the country's security architecture, reintroduction of *jangali* tax administered by traditional rulers, and review of the Land Use Act to recognise the role of traditional rulers in mediating access to and control of land; and improved funding, training and equipping of the police.

## Youth engagement

### Youth groups engaged to promote peace and security

Youth groups supported by the European Union commenced peacebuilding initiatives in Jere and Maiduguri Metropolitan Council. The initiative is aimed at engaging young men and women affected by violence to promote peace and security.

In August 2018, a youth workshop was organised by the University of Maiduguri Muslim Women's Association (UMMWA). Forty-eight boys and twelve girls participated in the event, including leaders of 10 youth groups selected from communities at risk of violence.

The focus of the workshop was to raise awareness about programme objectives, which draw on global and national policy documents (such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 on youth, peace and security; the Nigerian National Security Strategy and the National Action Plan on Countering Violent Extremism – key policies that all emphasise youth participation in peacebuilding. The young people were also trained on how to design and implement programmes in a results-oriented and conflict sensitive manner.



Youth groups at the peace and security training  
Credit: Kaka Adam Makinta



Since the workshop, some youth groups have already started implementing their own peace initiatives. In Bulabulin Ngarannam, MMC, "Peace Guys" (one of the trained groups) organised a community sensitisation event on preventing electoral violence. The leader of the group, which has a history of involvement in violence in the community, was approached by a politician to remove the posters of his political opponent at night - a practice commonly used by politicians to intimidate political opposition. The youth leader refused because he knew the action would likely trigger violence as the aggrieved political opponent would also mobilise another youth group to retaliate.

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'This is a good initiative and I am pleased that you have brought this before us. We will do everything within our capacity to inform other Bulamas and ward leaders to ensure that no politician uses any youth for poster removing.'

**Bulama Abakar Mele**  
**Ward Head, Bulabulin Ngaranna**

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To combat this challenge, Peace Guys organised an event for youth groups and community leaders to take a stand against thuggery and political violence. This resulted in a resolution by the youths to eschew political violence. Furthermore, they demanded that each political aspirant seeking their votes sign a commitment of projects they plan to complete while in office.

Based on the success of the event and engagement from their traditional ruler, Peace Guys rolled out the sensitisation event to six more youth groups in the community. The activities have led to an increased awareness amongst youths of their civic rights and duties.

## Sexual and gender based violence

**Sexual assault referral centre facilitates rape conviction in Yobe**  
 Initiatives to address sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) gained momentum with the conviction of a teacher who had raped a female student. The teacher from a public secondary school in Fune LGA of Yobe State was sentenced to 15 years in prison by Damaturu Magistrates Court for the offence. At the time of the assault, the police referred the victim to the Yobe Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) for forensic medical examination and treatment. The SARC produced a medical report that was used in the prosecution, facilitated provision of *pro bono* legal representation for the victim, and encouraged the victim's parents to resist pressure for a cover-up.

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'I am not an indigene of Yobe State. I and my husband are not rich. But when this incident happened to my daughter, the police, hospital and judiciary handled our case wonderfully.

We are very happy and impressed with the judgement. This judgment will surely put a stop to this ugly practice and I believe it will serve as a lesson to others'

**Mother of survivor**

'I feel happy with the way the lawyer and the judiciary handled the case of our daughter.

If not for their intervention and that of the doctor, we would not have had the means to follow up the case up to the point of sentencing the perpetrator who is from well to do family.

We now feel free and happy about the judgement.'

**Step father of survivor**

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### Police officers trained on sexual and gender-based violence

The programme continued to support the Nigeria Police Force to address SGBV cases with the establishment of 12 Family Support Units (FSUs) in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states. FSUs are being established in four police units in each state to serve as centres for SGBV case referral and management. In September, a workshop was held for 20 police officers who will work in FSUs in Adamawa State. The participants learned about different approaches to investigating and prosecuting SGBV cases, how to interpret forensic medical reports, and how to manage the secondary trauma as a result of SGBV. They also learned about the key aspects of human, child and gender rights. An additional forty police officers will be trained in Borno and Yobe states in October.



Police officers in the SGBV training  
 Credit: Abdulkadir Bello

## Progress against EU indicators

Indicator	Target 2021	Achieved at 30 Sept 2018	Comment
Number of staff from governmental institutions and internal security forces trained	1210	169	Activity Years 2-4
Number of people participating in conflict prevention and peace building activities	2860	3160	Activity Years 1-4
<b>Total number of community beneficiaries</b>	<b>2,278,580</b>	<b>378,315</b>	<b>Activity Years 2-4</b>

## Upcoming activity (Oct-Nov 2018)

- CPSP meetings and initiatives in local government areas (LGAs) in all states
- Training of CPSP facilitators and conveners in Borno and Yobe states
- Meetings of Community Accountability Forums in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Commencement of dialogue and mediation sessions in Borno and Adamawa states
- Training of community groups and civil society organisations on conflict management
- Training of media practitioners on conflict sensitive communications and election reporting
- Equipping Family Support Units in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Training of police officers on FSUs in Borno and Yobe states
- Training of SARC Steering Committee members in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Community peacebuilding initiatives by women associations and youth groups in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
- Commencement of youth empowerment and community reconciliation project in Yobe state
- Dissemination of research studies in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states

## Ongoing challenges

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

## Find out more

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