



What we do in Nigeria

- We're helping to improve health systems in northern Nigeria to delivery maternal, newborn, and child health services
- We're working to revive routine immunisation in northern Nigeria
- We're helping 4,320 children through support for protection and peace committees
- We're getting 12,400 children back to school and providing them with clean water



More people live in Nigeria than in any other country in Africa – 140 million. An influential political player, it has huge potential for development. Although Nigerians have again been able to elect their government after many years of military rule, people still find it hard to hold their politicians to account and corruption remains a big problem. Although it is one of the world's largest oil producers, Nigeria's oil income amounts to just 24p per person per day. Children and young people make up 60% of the population. Maternal, newborn, and child mortality rates in Northern Nigeria are unacceptably high. **One in five children dies before their fifth birthday.** Many don't have enough to eat and can't get treatment when they are ill. Some 40% of children miss out on school and have to work to survive. Nearly 2 million children have lost one or both parents to an AIDS-related disease.

Save the Children in Nigeria

We set up a small programme in 2001. We focused on getting children actively involved in influencing the decisions that affect their lives. By developing quality projects driven by children and building up a small – but strong and active – network of partner organisations, we've shown that positive changes can be made. Today we work in seven federal states – Zamfara, Yobe, Jigawa, Katsina, Kano, Bauchi and Kaduna – providing support to basic healthcare systems and protecting children from abuse and exploitation. There are an estimated 9.7 million children and young people under the age of 18 in our project areas.

Key areas of work

We're helping to restore healthcare services

In recent years, the Nigerian government has spent less on healthcare per person than almost any other government in Africa. The situation is worst in the rural north. Clinics are in bad repair, they lack even basic equipment and drugs and there aren't enough qualified staff to work in them. In some districts fewer than 1% of children are immunised. Polio, measles and diphtheria can kill or leave children permanently disabled.

With funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Norwegian government, we strengthen health systems and support maternal and child health in 4 northern states: Zamfara, Yobe, Jigawa, and Katsina. At the core of our approach is improving governance to increase commitment and resource allocation for Primary Health Care and supporting maternal and child health service delivery - addressing the bottlenecks that impact directly on these services.

We're also part of a consortium carrying out a big five-year programme to support immunisation services in the same four states in northern Nigeria. The primary healthcare system is weak and we've had to train health workers and provide support to logistical capacity to store and transport the vaccines. This programme seeks to use re-establishing routine immunisation as a way to improve people's access to other primary healthcare services. Another key aim is to strengthen the voice of communities to demand quality health services. In late 2007 we held strategic planning exercises in all four states to cover the next three to five years, using information from baseline surveys we carried out. This enabled states to identify and prioritise what services government and non-governmental partners should be providing.

We're protecting children from harm

Child labour is widespread and many children have to earn money to support their families. It's estimated that some 15 million children are working in agriculture, as domestic servants, hawkers, beggars or trafficked through the sex industry. These children are extremely vulnerable to abuse, violence and exploitation. Many of them are out of school and without access to basic health and social protection services.

We've set up and continue to support child protection and peace committees (CPPCs) in 36 communities in Bauchi, Kaduna and Kano, benefiting 4,320 children. The CPPCs target children whose lives are affected by HIV and AIDS, exploitation, extreme poverty, family violence and neglect, and discrimination. They liaise with local government agencies and private sector service providers to try and improve provision of basic services, and to provide support through local resources for the most vulnerable children and families.

We've set up a small social fund to help 1,440 of the most vulnerable families and children and we've helped the CPPCs promote their peace-building work through local radio and

television stations. Messages were aired and followed up with phone-in discussions. This has raised the CPPCs' profile and informed more people about how to protect children.

In the next year we'll continue to support the CPPCs, helping them build relationships with local government, NGOs and the private sector so that they can influence key decision-makers over provision of basic services for children. Some CPPCs have already been successful in raising money and in-kind donations locally. In future we'll provide more targeted support to orphans and other vulnerable children.

We're getting children back into school

A staggering 11 million children are out of school (62% of them girls), including 4.7 million primary school age children. Classrooms are inadequate and in poor repair, and there aren't enough textbooks and basic materials. Many teachers lack the minimum qualifications and morale is low due to poor pay and working conditions. Most schools also lack latrines and clean water sources. We're getting 12,400 children back to school and providing them with clean water by repairing classrooms and constructing boreholes in nine communities, with funding from the Jersey Overseas Aid Committee. We provided school uniforms and supplies to a small number of children who had lost them when Bauchi was flooded last year.

We're a key partner in a six-year DFID-funded programme to strengthen the government's ability to provide inclusive and quality primary education services in at least five states: Kano, Daduna, Jigawa, Kwara, and Lagos. Through this programme, started in August 2008, we will be strengthening local demand and accountability systems, and strengthening the relationships between schools and local communities through establishing school-based management committees, and ensuring that children are included in the process.

We're building relationships and influencing government policy

Last year we played a key role in developing the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children. We continue to be involved in the roll-out of the national plan, in particular strengthening government response in the states where we work. Last year, we helped to carry out nutritional assessments for children under five in parts of Katsina and Jigawa, working with government ministries and UNICEF. This has helped us build good working relationships so that we can strengthen this area of work in future.



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