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NorthEast Watch



Vol 1, No. 7 November, 2016

Pushing the frontiers for a **NEW** dawn

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EDITORIAL: NOW THAT PCNI HAS ARRIVED



In spite of its taking long to come, we are happy that finally the President has inaugurated the Presidential Committee on North East Initiatives (PCNI). We are also happy that the President did listen to the need for inclusion by increasing the number of representatives of females in the Committee through the addition of two civil society representatives, who are both women of integrity.

That said, we need to say that the party should be over with the inauguration and the PCNI must hit the road immediately. As a key instrument for the government efforts at rebuilding and reconstruction of the north east, it has backlog of issues that it cannot afford a time lag for commencement of its activities. Luckily, it has in addition to the Buhari Plan for the North East, the report of the programme development that it had earlier commissioned. In this sense, it has ready-made starting programing initiatives.

Nevertheless, it needs to consult the communities in a way that will place them as key architects of their own lives and not just as passive recipients of some benevolent patrimony from government. In this, it must avoid creating the tendency of appearing too patronizing to the communities or create the impression that it is part of a national cake that has to be shared without regard to strategic objectives. In this connection, it is not out of place for it to revisit its earlier plan for a National Conference on the North East. This would provide it with a

means of not only knowing what others are doing but also drive the search of collective synergy in all the efforts aimed at the north east. This, however, should not be seen as a pre-requisite for the commencement of its job, but rather be seen as part of the work process.

It is also important for the Committee to ensure transparency and accountability both in the very ways it engages with the communities and other stakeholders as well as in its management of resources that is remitted through it. The Committee will meet two sore points already on the ground: pilfering and corruption in the distribution of relief materials for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and well publicized allegations of misapplication of funds originally meant for the Committee to some frivolous projects. It must not only seek to distance itself from these but must also assures the public that such practices and actions will not be tolerated in the work of the committee. It needs to win the public confidence in this or else it will find itself with a credibility gap that will create problems in getting the trust of the people.

We in the North East Watch (NEW) have confidence in individual members of the Committee and we trust that such confidence can be transferred to the Committee by its early task of assuring the public of transparency and accountability in its work. We congratulate the members and wish them success in this urgent task of rebuilding and reconstruction of the north east. We assure the Committee of not only our critical support but also a robust engagement with it to ensure that all its programmes and projects not only delivered the desired results but are also accountably and transparently executed. We hope you are part of the instrumentality for a NEW dawn in the North East.

Presidential Committee on North East Initiative (PCNI) Takes Off

In an effort to ensure reconstruction and resettlement of the ravaged north east region, President Muhammadu Buhari has inaugurated the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI) with a 21 member team to coordinate the humanitarian needs in the north east. Inaugurating the committee at a ceremony in Presidential Villa, Buhari said, "the committee will be the apex coordinating body for all interventions in the region including those by the public, private, national and international development partners. The Committee is domiciled in the Presidency and is charged with responsibility for developing the strategy and implementation framework for rebuilding the North-East."

The composition of the committee include federal government officials, the six north east governors, national assembly members and representatives of civil organizations active in the region. Announcing the leadership of the committee before governors, ministers, national assembly members and other key officials of the government, Buhari said, "government is committed to providing effective coordination and guidance towards addressing the humanitarian crises, the resettlement and reconstruction of the North-East region. To this end, I have established the Presidential Committee on the North-East Initiative (PCNI), under the chairmanship of General T.Y. Danjuma (rtd)".

The committee is expected to facilitate the acceleration of humanitarian response on food, health and shelter in the next six months while working to coordinate and align all the partners and actors on the



humanitarian response to the Buhari Plan. In his remark, Gen. T.Y Danjuma who is the chairman of the committee said, "in line with terms of reference of the PCNI, we have developed the Buhari Plan; an implementation framework. The interventions contained in the Buhari Plan have been designed for targeted, integrated interventions by the federal and state governments, with support from international development

partners, local charities, the Nigerian and international business communities, as well as other donors. Most importantly, implementation, oversight and accountability for this Plan will be provided directly from the Presidency through the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI)." The Buhari Plan is an 800-page roadmap that was written in cooperation with key government and non-government stakeholders that outlines short-term humanitarian needs, the medium-term resettlement and reconstruction and the long-term economic development efforts. The Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative will be operational with field offices across the six states of the North East.

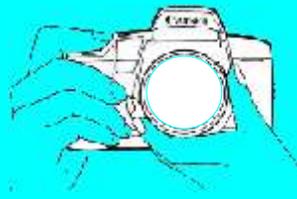


PHOTO NEWS

The northeast education and social accountability cluster has paid advocacy visits to the Speaker, Yobe state House of Assembly, Commissioners of Education and Budget and Planning. The advocacy is part of the cluster's aim of ensuring social accountability in the education sector. The advocacy team led by Dauda Muhammed Gombe of NEYIF included Kabiru Dakata (CITAD), Adamu Moh'd (NEYIF), Kudirat Kashim (Gender and Social Inclusion), Manuga Lawan (DYDA) and Moh'd Abba Isah (JONAPWD). Have a look at the visits in photos below.





Addressing the crisis in the North-East

By Jibrin Ibrahim

On Wednesday, the President inaugurated the 21-member Presidential Committee on North East Initiatives (PCNI). The Committee chaired by General T.Y.

Danjuma will be the apex coordinating body for all interventions in the region including those by the public, private, national and international development partners. The Committee is domiciled in the Presidency and is charged with responsibility for developing the strategy and implementation framework for rebuilding the North East region. The PCNI is a special purpose

vehicle with a life span of three years after which the North East Development Commission currently being debated in the National Assembly will takeover the relay.

The devastation to human lives and livelihoods by the insurgency in the North East has been terrible with over 20,000 persons killed and at least 2.4 million persons displaced. Many humanitarian intervention efforts, national and international, have worked over time to assist in coping with the task of bringing succour to the region and the interventions are becoming anarchic with different partners devising interventions and areas of work without coordination or direction. It is in this context that the PCNI would play a key role in bringing order and efficiency into the process.

The Danjuma Committee has already developed a comprehensive plan - known as the Buhari Plan - for

the restoration of peace, social and economic recovery and the development of the North East zone. The Plan sets out to reverse the devastating conditions created



President Muhammadu Buhari and General T.Y. Danjuma (rtd), the Chairman, Presidential Committee on North-East Initiatives (PCNI)

by the seven-year actions of Boko Haram. The PCNI would provide synergy, leadership and direction for the various initiatives in the zone run by governments, international development partners, charitable organisations and civil society.

The first challenge facing the committee is that of providing humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and resettlement of affected communities -

IDPs, refugees and host communities - in the North East, based on a clear action plan and time frame. Secondly, as the military concludes the process of degrading the capacity of Boko Haram to continue to inflict harm, there has to be coordination with civilian authorities in advancing the the stabilisation and peace building process. The biggest challenge the Committee would face from day-one is that of urgency. Displaced persons are already returning to their destroyed communities, some of the places have been mined and some water sources have been poisoned. Accompanying and facilitating the return process is therefore a massive effort that has to be addressed immediately

The North-East is the poorest zone in the country and our ambition as a nation has to go beyond "restoring" the zone to its previous level of poverty. The Buhari Plan must embody the vision of leap frogging the poverty of the zone with a medium-term strategy of

transforming the lives of the people for the better. Boko Haram has also set out to close access to education for the people in the zone. In this context, accelerating equal access to quality education for girls as well as boys and building social cohesion in the zone is an imperative. Promoting a civic culture that promotes peaceful co-existence must be the strategic goal of the interventions.

The Buhari Plan has placed utmost priority on resolving the challenges in the North East by first and foremost ending the war as a prelude to more effective handling of the humanitarian crisis and implementation of a co-ordinated rehabilitation and resettlement programme. It is in this context that a solid peace-building, reconciliation and de-radicalisation framework; effective reconstruction of social and physical infrastructure; and the deployment of a development strategy that applies advanced knowledge of post conflict redevelopment have been developed. The commitment of the State Governments, Private Sector, the support of International Development Partners and of local partners such as domestic Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) is very important in this regard. As the implementation process is rolled out, community engagement has to be intricately woven into the delivery of PCNI's programmes. Key stakeholders and influencers in communities must be identified and made part of the process of seeking solutions.

For the long-term recovery of the zone, the restoration of Lake Chad is an important project even if its feasibility is doubtful. With formerly extensive pasture, fertile land and rich fish stocks, Lake Chad has constituted an important economic and environmental area for the states on its borders - Chad, Nigeria, Niger and Cameroun. Climatic conditions have strongly affected Lake Chad and it has been shrinking dramatically since the 1960s. In 1963, the lake's surface area was roughly 25,000 sq. km. By 2001 it had shrunk to only 1,350 sq. km. It is important to note that changing climate patterns are responsible for only about 50 per cent of the decrease in the surface area of Lake Chad.

The rest of the reduction is due to human activities and water use. High population growth rate, the construction of dams, and the development of irrigated agriculture in the last four decades have all been contributory factors. Research carried out over the last four decades shows that the main factors in the lake's shrinkage are: significant overgrazing in the

region, resulting in the disappearance of vegetation and serious deforestation, all of which contribute to a drier climate. In addition, Lake Chad has comprised a key freshwater source for irrigation projects in many of the countries it straddles - Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroun. The solution is not therefore a simple one of refilling the lake with water. A new approach based on ecological sustainability is necessary. The changes in Lake Chad itself have had serious effects on people's livelihoods and ways of life. Not only has the shrinkage in the lake resulted in collapsed fisheries but also a lack of water locally contributes to the failure of crops, the death of livestock, and a rise in poverty levels throughout the region. The soil is also affected, becoming more saline and thereby less fertile. Water scarcity and the reduction of fish stocks ultimately give rise to food insecurity, migrations, poverty and social conflicts.

A strategy for restoring Lake Chad as far as possible is of critical importance for the Lake Chad Basin as a whole and North East Nigeria in particular. The President is committed to the idea of the Water Transfer Project from the Ubangi River in Central African Republic to Lake Chad, as a regional priority project. The project is expected to cost over \$14 billion. The idea of channelling a section of the Congo River towards Lake Chad was first proposed by Italian engineers in 1929, when grand geo-transformative projects like dams and huge canals were in vogue. Today, there is no State in the Central African Republic to even begin the process of negotiations and the river channels through Cameroon have already been dammed. The hurdles of the environmental impact assessment of both basins - Congo and Chad may also be insurmountable. Lake Chad and its tributaries form an important water reservoir in the central Sahel region. Nigeria may need to focus on what it can do. A small amount of Lake Chad's water comes from the Yobe River.

The Komadugu-Yobe River Basin is formed of various tributaries, particularly the Jama'are River which flows from the Jos Plateau and would be damned at Kafin Zaki and the Hadejia River, which flows from the area around Kano where it had already been damned at Tiga and Challawa Gorge. Lets see what we can do with our own part of the problem.

(Source: Daily Trust)

North-East Education and Social Accountability Cluster visits Yobe Speaker, Commissioners of Budget and Planning and Education

The northeast education and social accountability is a Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement (SACE) project that Center for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) anchors for the six states of the northeast region with the involvement of cluster members around the states. The clusters are formed with the goal of mobilizing all stakeholders towards rebuilding and reconstruction of the northeast with a particular focus on ensuring accountability in the education sector and the welfare of the internally displaced persons.



As part of their advocacy for more concern especially to education sector in Yobe state, Kabiru Dakata of CITAD and Dauda Muhammed Gombe of North East Youths Initiative Forum (NEYIF) paid a courtesy call on Hon. Adamu Dogo, the speaker Yobe state House of Assembly. Briefing the speaker on the visit, Dauda Muhammed congratulated him on the 25th anniversary of the state saying while it's remarkable to celebrate the journey so far, it is important to do more especially in the education sector taking into consideration the recent performance of the state in WAEC and NECO results. The speaker commends the visitors and described their concern as imperative and will receive the needed attention saying already the state has put in place measures to improve the quality of education in the state.

The cluster also paid a courtesy call on commissioners of Budget and Planning and education to equally solicit their support to ensure accountability in the education sector. Welcoming the advocacy team to the ministry, the commissioner, ministry of budget said he want a member of the cluster to be part of monitoring team of the ministry. He also said apart from making state budget allocation available, releases and audit reports will be published on their website, the cluster is always welcome to the ministry for engagement and sharing relevant information, he added.

The advocacy team again paid similar visit to the state Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) where permanent secretary Mohd Nguru, Director Monitoring and Evaluation Lawal Modu alongside other staff received them. Mohd Nguru said the board will consider the findings of the research on Yobe state education sector conducted last year and commissioned by CITAD, he demanded that the cluster sustain it's efforts aimed at addressing problems in the education sector. Responding on the issue, Kabiru Dakata assured the board of a plan to continue engaging them, share information, build the capacity of their monitoring team and increase awareness of the public on their role in promoting accountability.



North-East: The Way Forward (ii)

"Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If, however, they are left on society's margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies." - Kofi Annan

Having seen the wanton destruction done in the north east, the youths of the region should understand that the situation has put a wider burden on them for a number of reasons. One, it is expected that they will now be more patriotic by embracing every initiative, programme or policy that will ensure the safety, social and economic well-being of the region. They should of course make individual efforts to engage in self-reliant activities, participate in the revival and reconstruction of the region in every way possible. Doing that is not only good for themselves but to all categories of people in the region. The region used to be a commercial base for trading a lot of commodities that offer means of living to thousands.

Two, it is also expected that they must have seen and learnt lessons from the conflict that turned their region into an aid and humanitarian receiving ground, sad as it sounds, with combined efforts which the youths should be part of everything will be history. The hundreds of thousands of people in need of humanitarian aid and the number of infrastructures destroyed which includes schools, markets, hospitals etc should be a signal to the youths that the region will demand a lot from them to heal the wounds it suffered.

The key points in Mr. Annan's quote in the opening of this piece are: empowerment, innovation, development and peace. Northeast requires all of them, here federal, state, local governments and development partners should encourage and support the youths to be innovative, empower them, engage them in peace and development issues.

Send comments or contributions to hamza4ib@gmail.com or text to +2348039467382

• Dan Auta •

Dan Auta, I say I et's go home...
what are you thi nki ng?



I am onl y wonderi ng how l arge
UNITED NATIONS' farml and i s

Sufyan'16



FG to Tackle Malnutrition in the North-East

The Minister of Health, Isaac Adewole has said the federal government has approved N4 billion to provide health and tackle malnutrition in the northeastern part of the country. Hundreds have died in the past months from severe malnutrition in the Internally Displaced Persons' camps. Mr. Adewole made the disclosure in Maiduguri during a zonal roundtable for officials of states primary health care development agencies (PHCDA), ahead the flagging off of Saving One Million lives Program for Results (SOML-P4R) programme.

The SOML-P4R is an initiative of the Federal Government, as part of its effort to improve maternal and child healthcare through a result-based partnership with states' ministries of health.

He said the federal government had set up a presidential task force for the northeast, to be headed by the Minister of Budget and National Planning, Udo Udoma, to address critical areas of need in the sub-region. The focal areas are water, environment, health and nutrition.



"In six months, we want to restore sanity in these four sectors," said the health minister. "I want to tell you that each sector is chaired by a minister. I chair the sub-committee on health and our budget has been approved for the northeast. That budget will entail spending of N4 billion on health and nutrition in the northeast with emphasis on Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states.

He however warned the benefitting states not to convert the SOML-P4R funds into their various states' budget for health. Rather, he said, they should see it as an addition to what they may have budget for healthcare.

"We are going to score each state on how much they have budgeted for health; and we should also be able to give them reward for that.

"Save One Million Lives is an addition and it should be seen as such. Unlike in the past, we would want to record what we have done with the money; how many lives have we save; how many cases of child mortality have we addressed; and how much improvement do we put in governance, structures and processes in the health sector. If we discover that there is no performance, there will be no reward; and the reward is more money allocation," he said.

On the issue of the resurgence of poliomyelitis, the minister said between now and December, the federal government will be "vaccinating about 41 million Nigerians against polio".

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