

10 Years Migration Partnership

Nigeria – Switzerland



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
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Swiss Confederation

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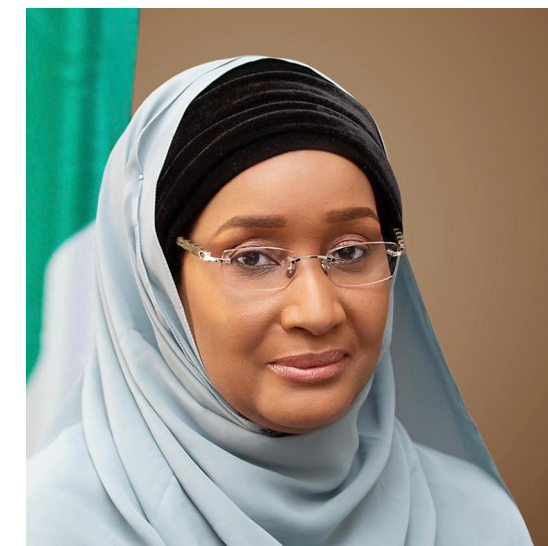
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Introductory Remarks



Karin Keller-Sutter
Federal Councillor
Head of the Federal Department of Justice and
Police, Switzerland



Sadiya Umar Farouq
Honourable Minister
Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster
Management and Social Development, Nigeria

The Migration Partnership between Nigeria and Switzerland is an ideal example of how bilateral relations can be used to address common challenges in a positive and dynamic way. For the past ten years, we have strengthened our cooperation by sharing expertise and best practices in implementing migration management mechanisms, fighting human trafficking, preventing irregular migration, facilitating return and reintegration, and enabling sustainable labour migration. These exchanges have also allowed both our countries to appreciate the opportunities migration can present and have helped us to better understand its challenges.

Over the past decade, we have consistently developed our Migration Partnership into concrete action and projects. We have held many fruitful meetings and conducted numerous valuable projects; it is in our interest to build on these achievements when shaping our future cooperation. Switzerland is determined to continuously foster the dialogue within the framework of the Migration Partnership and remains a close partner to Nigeria and the Nigerian people.

K. Keller-Sutter

The strategic Migration Partnership between Nigeria and Switzerland over the years has been classified as a role model partnership. It has facilitated tremendous knowledge transfer, mutuality and cooperation. The key element that has made the partnership a testimony of success is not necessarily the content of the agreement but rather largely the commitment in applying the provision of the agreement with mutual respect as well as putting into context the priorities of each country.

Since the partnership was reached in 2011, it has ensured humane and dignified return of irregular migrants from Switzerland with benefits attached to facilitate their reintegration. Above all, it has provided a number of laudable projects and programs aimed at facilitating mechanism to effectively integrate migration into development while ensuring safe, regular and orderly migration.

Leveraging on the gains of this partnership in all aspect of migration management, the government of Nigeria pledges to remain committed to the cooperation with Switzerland while ensuring improvement where there are gaps.

Sadiya Umar Farouq

The Path to Partnership

The 14th of February 2011 marked the beginning of the Migration Partnership between Nigeria and Switzerland. On that day, Swiss Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the then Nigerian Foreign Minister Odein Henry Ajumogobia in Abuja, formalising relations on migration matters. However, cooperation between the two countries on migration dates back to the late 1990s, when a large number of Nigerian citizens arrived in Switzerland to seek asylum. As most of these migrants were not permitted to remain in Switzerland, the issue of their return and reintegration became increasingly important. This led for the first time to formal cooperation in the field of migration: in 2003 a readmission agreement was signed by Nigeria and Switzerland to facilitate return procedures. To support the increasing number of returnees, the State Secretariat for Migration developed a return and reintegration programme, coordinated with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its Nigerian counterparts. That programme aimed to assist Nigerian returnees through tailor-made reintegration projects and to support them in setting up their own businesses or pursuing their studies. From 2005 to 2016, more than a thousand Nigerian returnees received reintegration support in various cities in Nigeria.

However, both countries recognised the need to expand their cooperation in order to broaden their joint approach to migration-related matters and to address the complexities of migration issues; they did this by establishing a multi-faceted Migration Partnership. The signature of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2011 allowed both sides to address a myriad of issues, including the fight

against the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, return and reintegration, migration and development, promotion and protection of human rights, border management, prevention of irregular migration, and the promotion of regular migration. Further important components in the Migration Partnership are capacity building and exchanges of best practices between the two countries.

While regular exchanges within the yearly held Joint Technical Committee (JTC) are crucial, diplomatic and direct contact between central authorities and the Nigerian Embassy in Bern and the Swiss Embassy in Abuja is equally important. In 2012, Switzerland decided to send an Immigration Liaison Officer to its Embassy in Abuja to further the dialogue on migration issues and emphasise the benefits of direct exchange. This position has been crucial in strengthening bilateral relations and implementing projects.

Apart from the annual JTC meetings, Nigeria and Switzerland have regularly held political consultations and human rights dialogues. As these meetings, consultations and dialogues often address the same issues, Nigeria and Switzerland decided to organise them in a coordinated manner. In March 2016, Nigeria and Switzerland signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish the “Switzerland Nigeria Days” forum. During the Switzerland Nigeria Days, political consultations and a dialogue on human rights are held in parallel with the JTC meeting. The holistic approach of the Switzerland Nigeria Days has been hailed a success in advancing bilateral relations between the two countries.



The Migration Partnership in a Nutshell

By involving authorities from several Nigerian and Swiss ministries, the Migration Partnership can be implemented in a holistic and inclusive manner. At the annual meetings of the Joint Technical Committee, both countries engage with each other at a high level and ensure the presence of experts from various ministries.

Apart from the federal authorities involved, the Migration Partnership also benefits from the expertise of other stakeholders. Over the past ten years, several projects have been implemented through collaboration with international and civil society organisations, which has been crucial for their successful outcome.

Through cooperation between the Swiss and Nigerian authorities and with other stakeholders, 50 innovative projects have been successfully implemented over the past decade.

The main areas of engagement include migration and border management, fighting trafficking in persons, and return and reintegration.

However, Nigeria and Switzerland have also established projects that allow for a direct exchange between both countries. For example, since the inception of the partnership, young Swiss and Nigerian diplomats have participated in a diplomatic exchange programme. This programme allows for

Authorities implementing the Migration Partnership

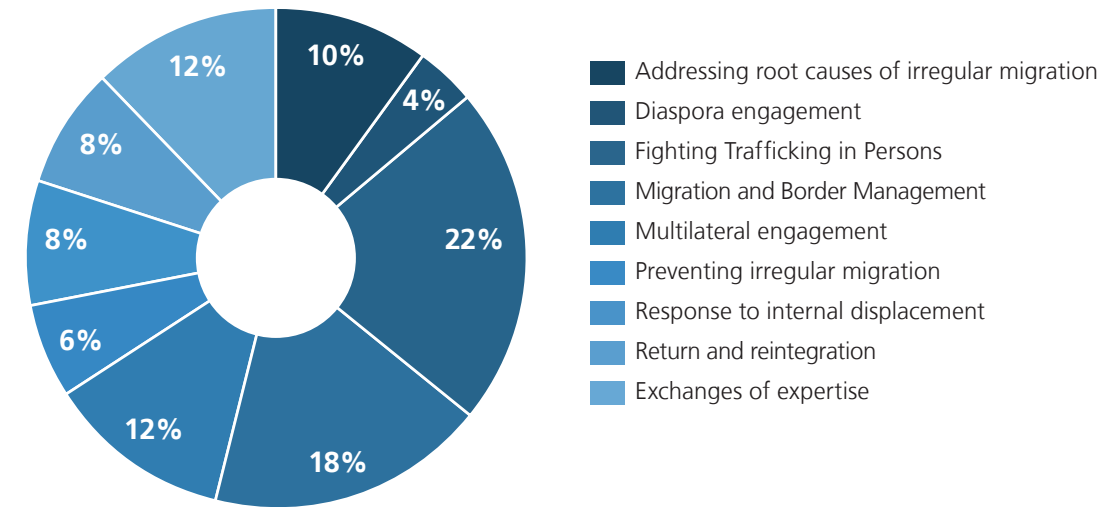
Switzerland	Nigeria
Federal Department of Justice and Police • <i>State Secretariat for Migration</i> • <i>Federal Police (fedpol)</i> Federal Department of Foreign Affairs • <i>Peace and Human Rights Division</i> • <i>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</i> • <i>Africa Division</i>	Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development • <i>National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs</i> • <i>National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons</i> Federal Ministry of Interior • <i>Nigeria Immigration Service</i> Federal Ministry of Justice • <i>National Drug Law Enforcement Agency</i>

a dynamic and insightful exchange between the two countries and promotes an understanding of each other's state structures and policy frameworks. Cooperation between police forces in the two countries at an operational level is another good example of a directly implemented project. Over the past decade, several exchanges on drug smuggling, irregular migration and human trafficking have taken place under the auspices of the Migration Partnership. The exchange of best practices between the two security forces and the use of synergies is central to successfully countering criminal activities.

Other projects have aimed to raise awareness of the dangers of irregular migration. To increase the impact of this message, Switzerland and Nigeria decided to finance a Nollywood series called "The Missing Steps". In 13 episodes, viewers are made aware of the risks involved in travelling to Europe by irregular means.

This is just a glimpse into the diversity of projects carried out over the past decade.

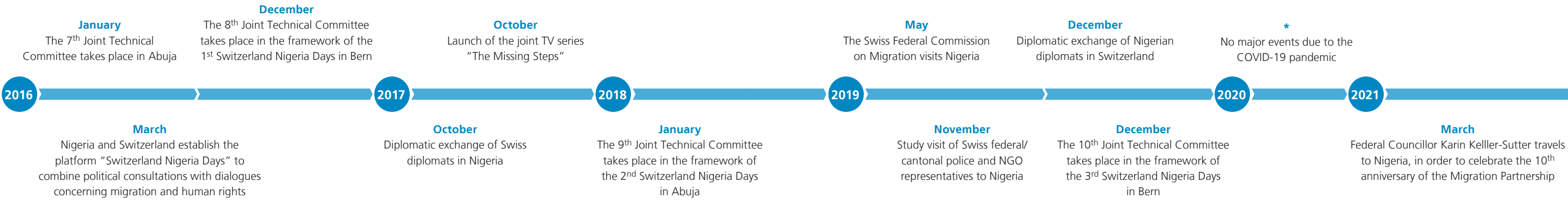
Areas of project implementation 2011–2021



Ambassador Mohammed Manu, Director Consular and Migration Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria and Ambassador Vincenzo Mascioli, Director International Affairs of the State Secretariat for Migration of Switzerland sign the agreed minutes of the 10th Joint Technical Committee in Bern

Since the establishment of the Migration Partnership, Nigeria and Switzerland have held ten Joint Technical Committee (JTC) meetings, which have taken place alternately in Abuja and in Bern. These regular meetings are an important element in this effective partnership, as they provide an opportunity to discuss relevant areas of cooperation and future initiatives.

The JTC serves as a platform to identify common interests and to explore new project ideas. Additionally, the regular discussions on technical cooperation ensure that experts from the relevant migration authorities can discuss issues such as return and reintegration, preventing irregular migration or fighting trafficking in persons.





A Successful Partnership



Mario Gattiker
State Secretary
State Secretariat for Migration of Switzerland

What role do migration partnerships play in Switzerland's foreign policy on migration?

Switzerland has concluded migration partnerships with six countries of which Nigeria was the fourth nation that agreed to implement such a partnership. For us, migration partnerships are essential to the success of our foreign policy on migration. They underline the complexities of migration and migration management and facilitate the discussion and cooperation between Switzerland and its partner countries. Nigeria is an excellent example of a successful migration partnership, as over the past ten years, the two parties have met regularly and held lively and fruitful exchanges to address challenges and seize opportunities. More importantly, these exchanges take place at all levels of the State Secretariat for Migration and the Nigerian Immigration Service and also involve several other government agencies within the Federal Departments of Justice and Police and of Foreign Affairs and their Nigerian counterparts. This open and pragmatic approach has helped us to achieve the objectives outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding concluded by our two countries in 2011.

What are the main reasons that Switzerland chose to conclude a migration partnership with Nigeria?

As the largest economy in Africa, Nigeria is an important destination country for migrants from all over the region. The country therefore manages an impressive inflow of labor migrants and cross-border movements. And with more than 15 million Nigerians living abroad, Nigerian migrants contribute considerably to third country economies and societies. In Switzerland, the Nigerian diaspora, albeit small in number, plays an important role in enriching the cultural diversity of Switzerland. While we celebrate the benefits of migration, we also have to address its challenges. Switzerland has an interest in supporting Nigeria in dealing with issues such as human trafficking and irregular migration, and appreciates the positive cooperation it receives on return and reintegration measures. Hence, as all aspects of migration are addressed in this particular Migration Partnership, Nigeria is the ideal partner for Switzerland.

What is your assessment of the migration partnership with Nigeria and what are your expectations for the future?

Over the past ten years, we have concluded many important projects. I am particularly impressed that the issues of migrant smuggling and human trafficking have not only been discussed at a policy level, but that technical exchanges between authorities have produced positive results, and more importantly, that it has been possible to support vulnerable migrants directly through specific projects. Access to employment and training are also essential to providing career opportunities to young Nigerians. We are moving in the right direction, we have common interests, our partnership is based on trust and friendship, and it will continue to grow.

A Cornerstone of Our Relations



Livia Leu
State Secretary
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

What is the significance of the migration partnership for the bilateral relations between Switzerland and Nigeria in general?

The Migration Partnership is a cornerstone of our bilateral relations. Ten years of productive collaboration on equal terms and in the interest of both countries, as well as of the migrants, greatly contributed to strengthening mutual trust and understanding. In this sense, the consistent and comprehensive cooperation in the field of migration positively affects all other areas of our bilateral relations and is thus a true partnership.

Why is the bilateral migration dialogue integrated into the so-called Switzerland-Nigeria Days since 2016?

The Switzerland-Nigeria Days combine the three bilateral dialogues on migration and human rights as well as the political consultations, which cover a wide range of topics. In the spirit of Agenda 2030 this format underlines our common interest in a holistic approach which creates synergies between different areas of cooperation. Our cooperation on migration should also take into account areas such as business, employment, education and human rights to be effective and sustainable.

Finally, how do you assess Switzerland's relations with Nigeria?

Nigeria is a very important political and economic player on the continent. We are proud of the excellent and diverse relationship we have with Nigeria. Apart from migration, our bilateral collaboration covers areas such as trade, asset recovery, humanitarian aid, human rights and peace promotion. The quality of our relationship is also reflected by regular high-level visits and success stories like the restitution of over USD 1 billion of stolen assets benefiting the poorest and most vulnerable people in Nigeria. I'm convinced that we will continue to strengthen those bonds of friendship in the coming years.

As the biggest economy in Africa, Nigeria is also an important trading partner for Switzerland on the continent with numerous Swiss companies established in Nigeria across various sectors. With the opening of the General Consulate in Lagos as trade point with a specific mandate to promote trade and investments, and the establishment of the Swiss-Nigerian Business Council, Switzerland has expanded its economic presence in Nigeria in recent years.

Efforts Which Create a Better World



H. E. Gabriel Aduda
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria

What role do migration partnerships play in Nigeria's foreign policy?

Nigeria has concluded migration partnership agreements with many European countries and a Partnership on Migration and Mobility with the European Union. While many of these migration partnerships have not actually met our collective expectations, the partnership with Switzerland has become a symbol or a model that Nigeria uses to negotiate with other countries. Nigeria views these partnerships as part of its foreign policy because these bilateral and multilateral efforts enhance collaboration, cooperation and shared experiences, which together create a better world. Our partnership with Switzerland is a source of pride to the country and all the government agencies that have participated in the projects have expressed satisfaction with the progress so far. Trust has grown and this assures us that this partnership is very important for achieving Nigeria's foreign policy goals.

What are the main reasons that Nigeria chose to conclude migration partnerships with other countries?

With a population of over 200 million and an estimated 15 million Nigerians living abroad, it makes sense for Nigeria to collaborate with multiple countries on matters concerning its diaspora. It is also very important for Nigeria to devise ways of utilising the value of the diaspora, whose remittances exceed USD 20 billion every year. Besides the regular migrants, there is also the issue of irregular migrants, who need protection, assistance and guidance. Migration partnerships provide a means of formally helping and supporting this group of Nigerians.

What is your assessment of the migration partnership with Switzerland and what are your expectations for the future?

The implementation of the Migration Partnership with Switzerland has been very successful and it now serves as a model for Nigeria's cooperation with other countries. The engagements among all the stakeholders on both sides have been cordial, and this has facilitated the successful implementation of many projects within the partnership.

Due to this success, it is difficult to project what our expectations for the future would be. However, Nigeria may wish to see more avenues for regular migration pathways being created, because we believe that this would have an impact on irregular migration in the long term.

Strengthening Migration Management



Enhancing Sea Border Data Systems in South Nigeria

Funded by:
Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP),
State Secretariat for Migration (SEM)

Partner Organizations:
Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS)

Implementing Partner:
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Field:
Migration and Border Management

Duration:
2020–2021

The Enhancing Sea Border Data System in the South of Nigeria project is linked to the Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) project, which the IOM has been conducting successfully with the Nigeria Immigration Services (NIS) since 2016.

Nigeria is confronted with a wide range of migration issues, including large-scale irregular migration across its borders. In response, the IOM has set up the MIDAS project in close cooperation with the NIS. Its main objective is to support Nigeria's migration and identity management capacities. To date, MIDAS has been installed at various land border crossings, seaports, state command centres and international airports. MIDAS expands the Nigerian government's capacities for processing migrants entering and leaving the country, for example by assisting in detecting fraudulent travel documents or in catching human traffickers and in supporting their victims. It also helps to curb irregular migration flows to Europe. Switzerland co-finances the MIDAS project with other donors.

The Swiss State Secretariat for Migration has renewed its commitment in 2020 to support NIS by financing a new phase of the MIDAS project, expanding the use of MIDAS in the South of Nigeria.

With the Anglophone Crisis causing increasing political instability in Cameroon, an urgent need emerged at Nigeria's southern border to increase migration management capabilities. To reinforce Nigeria's immigration management and to fortify national security, two seaports in Akwa Ibom State have been selected to increase their capacity. Oron seaport will undergo maintenance and a system upgrade and at Ibaka seaport the MIDAS system will be installed for the first time. The project will contribute significantly to safe, orderly and regular migration to and from Nigeria, in neighbouring countries and throughout the region.

Policy Framework to Fight Human Trafficking

Strengthening the policy framework and response to human trafficking in Nigeria

Funded by:
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA),
Peace and Human Rights Division (PHRD)

Partner and implementing Organizations:
National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Field:
Combating Trafficking in Persons

Duration:
2020–2021

NAPTIP is the leading governmental agency in the fight against TIP in Nigeria and works around five strategic pillars: (1) prevention, (2) prosecution, (3) protection of victims, (4) forming partnerships and (5) policy. The development of a direct collaboration between NAPTIP and the PHRD is particularly significant with a view to strengthening pillars (4) and (5). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as the custodian of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, is providing technical assistance to NAPTIP and the PHRD in implementing the project.

The development of a new Nigerian NAP is an endeavor with a long-term perspective as part of the Migration Partnership. The NAP will serve as a guide for Nigerian authorities' interventions at federal, state and local levels, as well as serving as a basis for cooperation with Nigeria's international partners in the fight against TIP in the country. It will also be the central source from which other strategic documents relating to fighting TIP in Nigeria will be developed and reviewed.

As a source, destination and transit country for migration movements, Nigeria is significantly affected by trafficking in persons (TIP). TIP is a major cause of migration-induced human in-security as it affects the lives of victims in drastically negative ways. It also contributes to state fragility by undermining both government authority and capabilities.

From a human security perspective, the fight against TIP is therefore a key intervention area for Nigeria and Switzerland. The overall objective of this project is to strengthen the policy framework and response to TIP in Nigeria by developing a new National Action Plan against human trafficking (NAP) for the 2021-2025 period.



Migration Policy



Consolidating the Migration Governance Architecture in Nigeria – Phase II

Funded by:
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA),
Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Global
Program for Migration and Development (GPMD)

Partner and Implementing Organizations:
National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and
Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI)

Civil Society Network on Migration and
Development (CSOnetMADE)

Field:
Migration and Border Management

Duration:
2018–2021

The National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) is the Government Agency in charge of coordinating the implementation of Migration Policy in Nigeria. Since 2014, the NCFRMI has been supported by the SDC's Global Programme on Migration and Development (GPMD) with the objective of consolidating migration governance architecture. Through this project, the NCFRMI has strengthened its leadership

in the government architecture, promoted the national dialogue, illustrated by its effectiveness in coordinating the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Migration and Development in Nigeria. It further organised the national consultation on the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2017.

To make inclusion a reality, the NCFRMI has built its vision on the principle of "leaving no one behind in the management of migration". The NCFRMI works closely with local governments through the migration focal points that it has helped to set up and the Civil Society Network on Migration and Development (CSOnetMADE). Today, with direct funding from the GPMD to the CSOnetMADE, this network has achieved the goal of enabling civil society to participate in policymaking and the national discussion on migration. Through the National Migration Dialogue (NMD) and developed workshops, knowledge of migration issues has increased, and working relationships and the synergy between civil society and state actors have developed.

Today, the exemplary relationship between the NCFRMI and the CSOnetMADE has made it possible to set a firm agenda for migration and development in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

Police Cooperation



Strengthening bilateral police cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking, human trafficking and kidnapping (project phases I–IX)

Funded by:
Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP)

Partner Organizations:
National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA)

National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking
in Persons (NAPTIP)

Nigeria Police Force (NPF)

Department of State Services (DSS)

Implementing Partners:
Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP)

Federal Office of Police (fedpol)

Field:
Fighting human trafficking, drug trafficking and
kidnapping

Duration:
2013–2021

Transnational crime threatens security, the rule of law and human rights in migrants' countries of origin and destination. Concerned by the activities of transnational criminal networks, Nigeria and Switzerland have defined the fight against drug trafficking and human trafficking in particular as crucial areas of cooperation within their Migration Partnership.

As the central agency for police cooperation in Switzerland, fedpol has been implementing several projects since 2013 that aim to strengthen bilateral cooperation through technical exchanges and capacity building measures.

In order to fight drug and human trafficking in Switzerland and Nigeria, fedpol has organised several mutual study visits to enhance bilateral technical exchanges, mutual learning and trust between the key actors in both countries. In the area of drug trafficking for example, specialists from the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency in Nigeria (NDLEA) have undergone technical training in the drug laboratory at the University of Lausanne, where they learned about the dangers in detecting and dismantling chemical laboratories.

Subsequently, the police cooperation project was expanded to the areas of kidnapping, blackmailing and hostage-taking. In cooperation with the UK's National Crime Agency, several workshops were held where Nigerian police officers learned how to manage such incidents. In the most recent project phase, cooperation is being strengthened in the field of trafficking in persons.

Both countries have benefited from the police cooperation project – direct contacts, trust and new channels for communication have facilitated the exchange of police information and cooperation at an operational level, which are key in dismantling criminal networks and protecting victims effectively.

Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking



Prevention and protection assistance for victims of human trafficking and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in North-Eastern Nigeria

Funded by:
Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA),
Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC),
Humanitarian Aid

Partner Organizations:
National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking
in Persons (NAPTIP)

Implementing Partner:
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Field:
Response to internal displacement
Protection of and assistance to victims of human
trafficking

Duration:
2019–2021

Conflict-affected North-Eastern Nigeria hosts a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). For more than a decade, armed conflict has been damaging millions of people’s lives and livelihoods. The majority of IDPs lack protection and cannot cover their basic needs. Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) and exposure to human trafficking are widespread but underreported.

State level structures, such as the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) and the Ministry of Health (MOH), play a key role in the fight against human trafficking and SGBV. Since 2019, Switzerland has supported the IOM and enhanced its partnerships with these state level structures. This has facilitated the provision of integrated prevention and response-oriented protection services, including psychosocial and safe space support for around 100,000 IDPs. In addition, the re-integration of around 50 human trafficking victims has been supported.

Support has also been given to NAPTIP efforts to respond to human trafficking concerns, including prevention, capacity building, coordination, and policy development. The Borno Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force was launched in December 2019 as part of this programme. It aims to deliver an action plan in Borno state and to provide policy guidance on victim identification and assistance.

Finally, thanks to this project, survivors, institutions, and communities have been empowered to address long-term challenges, build resilience to the consequences of the conflict, and help victims resume functional lives.

Switzerland’s support for this project is a perfect example of the Whole of Government Approach, as it enabled synergies between Swiss Development Cooperation/Humanitarian Aid and the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM). It thereby reinforces the strategic link between migration policy and international cooperation.

Internship Programme



Internship programme with Nestlé

Funded by:
Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP),
State Secretariat for Migration (SEM)

Partner Organizations:
Nestlé Nigeria

Implementing Partner:
Nestlé Nigeria and Nestlé Switzerland

Field:
Professional training

Duration:
2011–2024

The internship programme in cooperation with Nestlé is an excellent example of a successful public-private partnership between the Swiss authorities and a private sector company. The partnership was officially launched in 2011 with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the then Swiss Federal Office for Migration and Nestlé Nigeria. Following a successful first phase of the project, a second project phase was initiated in 2020.

The project aims to support young Nigerians in their education, enhance their professional capacities and technical skills, and thus ease their access to the Nigerian labour market. It therefore contributes to the prevention of irregular migration.

In 2011 Nestlé Nigeria initiated an internal 18-month training programme in its own production facilities in Lagos, in which up to twenty young Nigerians are trained to become mechatronic engineers. All participants regularly sit examinations during the training. The five best-qualified graduates are then given the opportunity to gain international professional experience during a two to three months training stay at Nestlé’s production facilities in Switzerland.

Nestlé Nigeria is responsible for recruiting the trainees and selecting the five best-qualified graduates to travel to Switzerland. The costs of training the five selected graduates in Nigeria and Switzerland and related travel expenses are split between Nestlé and the State Secretariat for Migration. The project positively contributes to the general objective of helping young Nigerians through capacity building and increasing technical skills.

Return and Reintegration



Facilitating Sustainable Reintegration of Voluntary Returnees through Business Support in Nigeria

Funded by:
Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP),
State Secretariat for Migration (SEM)

Partner Organizations:
National Directorate of Employment
Small and Medium Enterprises Development
Agency of Nigeria

Implementing Partner:
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Field:
Return and Reintegration

Duration:
2017–2023

The project “Facilitating Sustainable Reintegration of Voluntary Returnees through Business Support in Nigeria” was launched in 2017 and forms an integral part of the return and reintegration component of the Migration Partnership between Nigeria and Switzerland. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is implementing the project in

collaboration with various national and local Nigerian authorities. It succeeded the previously implemented Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Programme, which supported more than one thousand Nigerian returnees with reintegration assistance from 2005 to 2016.

The main beneficiaries of the project are Nigerian citizens who have voluntarily returned to Nigeria after they were no longer permitted to reside in Switzerland. The aim of the project is to foster the sustainable economic reintegration of returnees in Nigeria. Apart from supporting returnees from Switzerland, the project also supports vulnerable Nigerian citizens returning from neighbouring Niger and other transit countries.

The reintegration assistance offered to the returnees is facilitated by providing *entrepreneur training* and access to *microcredit loans*. The entrepreneur training aims to enhance the returnees’ business management skills. The acquired skills, together with access to micro loans, help Nigerian returnees to set up and manage small businesses. Close monitoring of the beneficiaries’ professional reintegration has been a crucial pillar of the project. In 2013, Swiss Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga visited several programme beneficiaries in Lagos.



Sustainable Development Goals



The International Organisation for Migration congratulates the Government of Switzerland and the Federal Government of Nigeria on this important ten-year milestone in their Migration Partnership and commends their joint approach to improving migration management and governance.

Over the past ten years, investments have been made to strengthen the migration-development nexus, including support to vulnerable communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through Switzerland's support, IOM has provided sustainable and scalable migrant and protection assistance programmes, including business support and micro-credit initiatives, and innovative awareness-raising campaigns in target communities. The generous contributions from the Swiss government have also enabled IOM to install the large and complex Migration Information Data Analysis System (MIDAS) to collect, process, store and analyse traveller information, develop the capacity of the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) and optimise the economic, social and political benefits of

international mobility. The crisis in north-east Nigeria largely remains a protection crisis. With support from Switzerland, IOM has been able to support the National Agency for the Prohibition in Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) through capacity building to respond to human trafficking concerns, including prevention, coordination, and policy development. These efforts culminated in the establishment of the Borno Anti-Trafficking in Persons Task Force in December 2019.

The Swiss-Nigerian Migration Partnership is a demonstration of commitment between stakeholders who recognise and understand the importance of common sustainable development goals.

Franz Celestin
Head of Mission, IOM Nigeria

Supporting Local Organizations



The role of civil society organizations and cooperation with the government is imperative in tackling the problem of trafficking in persons. Consequently, support for local organizations to raise grassroots awareness in order to prevent trafficking and irregular migration, including provision of support and assistance to trafficked victims and migrants in vulnerable situations is vital in advancing safe, legal, gainful and non-exploitative migration.

WACOL is particularly grateful about the unique partnership with the Swiss government in Edo and Delta States. The project in Edo State, titled "Community action to combat and prevent human trafficking" started in January 2019. The thrust of WACOL's intervention is to engender community action in selected communities and to prevent trafficking in persons and unsafe/irregular migration by putting in place an early warning system and involving stakeholders, which include trafficked persons/returnees and gatekeepers, in particular traditional and religious leaders.

We commend the Migration Partnership between Switzerland and Nigeria for the milestone of its 10th anniversary of working together. WACOL is proud to be associated and we re-commit our organization and team to working together to end human trafficking and unsafe migration, particularly in the post Covid-19 pandemic world, in which threats to human security would be exacerbated.

Joy Ngozi Ezeilo
Executive Director of WACOL, Nigeria

Deepen the Cordial Relationship



It is an honor to be part of the tenth anniversary of the Nigerian-Swiss Migration Partnership this year. This partnership has contributed tremendously to the cordial bilateral relations that both countries share, including partnership in police cooperation and cooperation with Nigerians in diaspora in the area of professional training, asylum and return assistance.

Relations between Nigeria and Switzerland are not only concentrated on migration partnership, but also on economic cooperation, high level political consultation and human rights. These themes which are further developed at regular bilateral meetings have further strengthened relations between both countries.

Considering these achievements that both countries have attained over the years, it is my sincere wish that we continue to develop and deepen the cordial relationship to the benefit of both countries.

H.E. Baba Madugu
Ambassador of Nigeria to Switzerland and the
Principality of Liechtenstein

Respect, Trust and Friendship



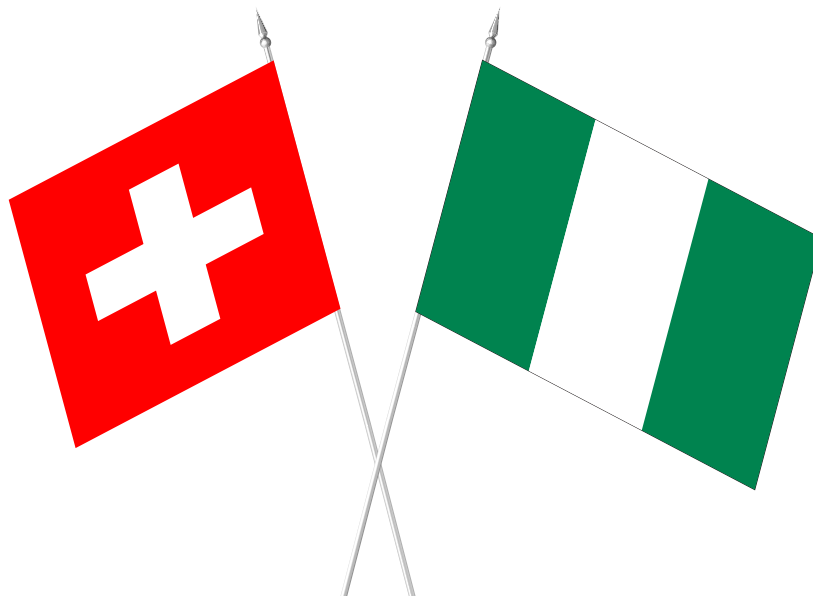
This year's celebrations around the tenth anniversary of the Nigerian-Swiss Migration Partnership are not only a reflection of our excellent cooperation in the field of migration, but also of the promising state of our bilateral relations overall.

Besides sharing a number of common features such as a federal political system or linguistic and religious diversity, Nigeria and Switzerland also share many common interests including joint trade, security, peace and development as well as the prevention of corruption, trafficking in persons and irregular migration.

Looking at our many achievements over the past ten years as well as the high level of respect, trust and friendship between our two countries, I am convinced that we will continue to deepen and expand our partnership in ways that will truly benefit both the Nigerian and the Swiss people.

Georg Steiner
Ambassador of Switzerland to Nigeria, Niger, Libya
and Chad
Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the
Economic Community of West African States
(ECOWAS)



**Imprint****Publisher**

State Secretariat for Migration SEM
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Design

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Bern, 2021