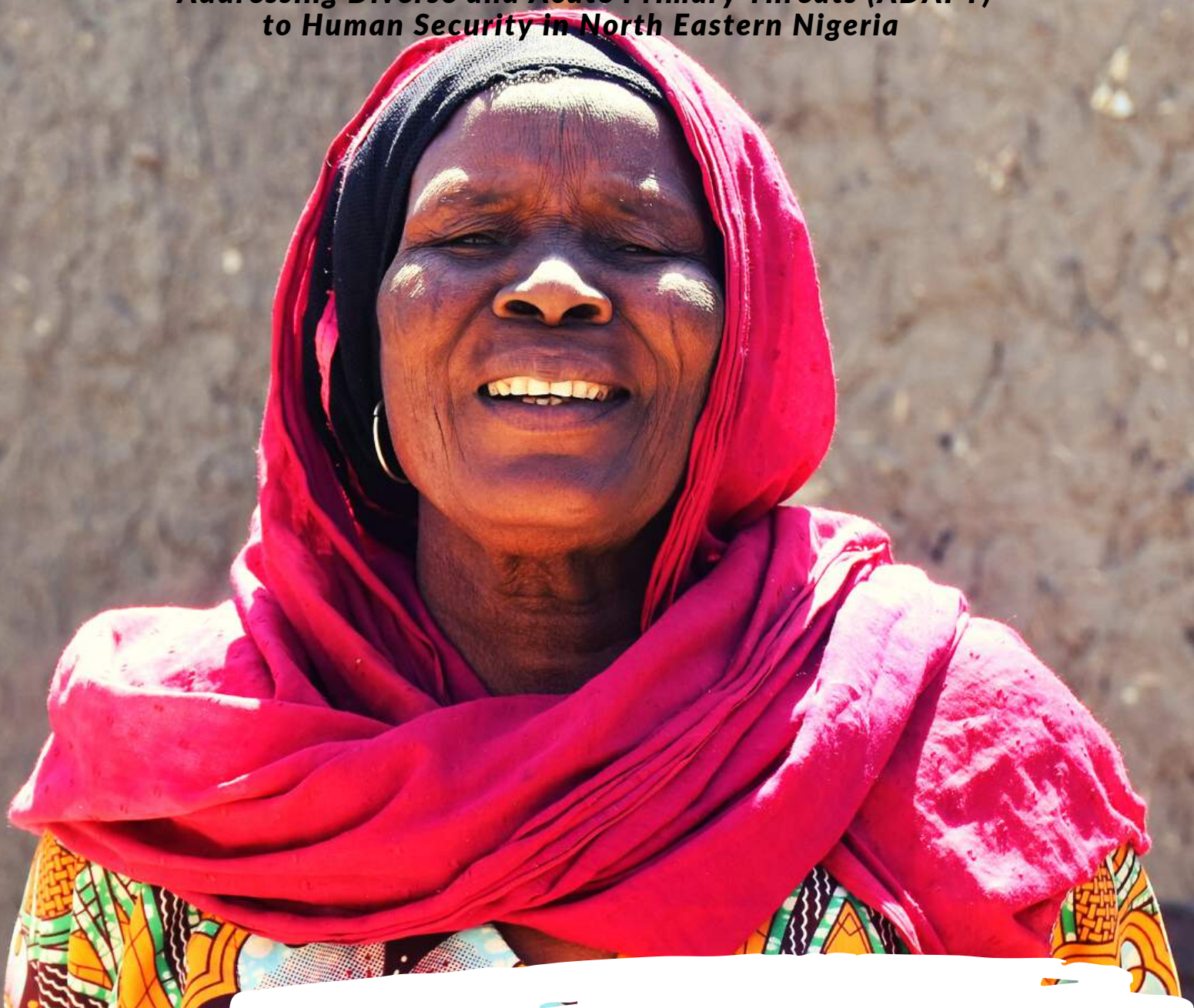




**VOL. 1 | MARCH 2022**

**Addressing Diverse and Acute Primary Threats (ADAPT)  
to Human Security in North Eastern Nigeria**



**SUPPORTING MATERNAL  
AND YOUNG CHILD  
HEALTHCARE**

**food Assistance in Damboa  
and Bama**

**PROVIDING SHELTER AND  
SETTLEMENT TO THE MOST  
VULNERABLE**

**Smart Agricultural services  
for better living**

**PROVIDING  
MULTIPURPOSE CASH  
ASSISTANCE**

**Water, Sanitation and  
Hygiene Promotion**

**STRENGTHENING PROTECTION AND GBV  
MECHANISM**



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<https://nigeria.mercycorps.org/>

to know more about Mercy Corps  
in Nigeria

# WHO WE ARE

## ABOUT MERCY CORPS IN NIGERIA

The Mercy Corps Nigeria team is a group of passionate and driven individuals working closely with communities, local organisations and governments to find sustainable solutions that make a difference.

With a strong and growing team of over 350 staff, of which 92% are nationals, Mercy Corps Nigeria is currently serving over 600,000 beneficiaries across 12 states in Nigeria. Our programs include girls' education and financial inclusion, community peacebuilding, market-based livelihoods and a multi-sector humanitarian response.

Our team is led by diverse leaders with a wide range of expertise in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, protection and safeguarding, education, health and market systems development under the effective leadership of a Country Director with over 20 years experience across the board.

Our vision is a Nigeria where all people are empowered, engaged, resilient and secure. We partner with local communities to recover from fragile situations to resilience, helping them to meet urgent needs while addressing the root causes of issues. In addition to playing an integral role in bridging the divide between humanitarian and development solutions, we work in some of the most challenging and dynamic regions of the country to strengthen economic opportunities, support integrated peace-building and economic development, promote financial inclusion, and improve the lives of adolescents.

In the face of the ongoing crisis in the Northeast, which has led to the displacement of thousands and a loss of livelihoods, we help rebuild local communities by providing shelters to families and resources to help them start small scale businesses of all forms, such as farming, poultry, carpentry, etc - revitalizing markets in crisis.

We strive to meet the most urgent needs of disaster-affected populations, as rapidly as possible. Mercy Corps saves lives by providing food, water and sanitation facilities, basic household items, and emergency shelters to the most vulnerable populations in the event of crisis. Beyond meeting basic needs, we apply a systems strengthening approach that aims to meet the urgent needs while building communities' capacities to manage and prevent the many shocks and stresses arising from the changing emergency.



# PROGRAM BRIEF

## About the ADAPT Program

Addressing Diverse and Acute Primary Threats (ADAPT) To Human Security in North Eastern Nigeria program is funded by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) with the goal to save lives and prevent human suffering among displaced, returnee and host households in Borno State. The goal aligns with BHA's overarching mission statement to "save lives, alleviate human suffering, and reduce the physical, social, and economic impact of rapid and slow-onset disasters". The scope of the program will support the Humanitarian Response strategy for Nigeria 2019 - 2021 to achieve these key strategic objectives through a multi-sectorial humanitarian response:

- Save lives by providing timely and integrated multi-sector assistance and protection interventions to the most vulnerable.
- Enhanced timely, unhindered, and equitable access to multi-sector assistance and protection interventions through principled humanitarian action.
- Strengthen the resilience of the affected population, promote early recovery and voluntary and safe durable solutions to displacement and support social cohesion.



## Strategic Approach

Mercy Corps is providing a multi-sectoral humanitarian support to Borno state over a 12-month period that will ensure the urgent, multi-sectoral humanitarian needs of 146,768 vulnerable displaced, returnee and host populations across Borno state are met. The program is also working on improving humanitarian analysis and adaptive management capacities for humanitarian actors in Borno state.

We will provide support with risk management, policy and advocacy to inform the wider humanitarian response with insights beyond needs assessments and examination of underlying dynamics driving the northeast crisis, forecasting scenarios and identifying potential risks within the humanitarian space.



## Program Interventions

We are responding to critical humanitarian needs focusing on the Food Security, Nutrition, Shelter, WASH, Multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA), Protection, and Humanitarian Analysis sectors. Sector by sector focus will be geographically specific where appropriate. MPCA, Shelter and Settlements, and WASH interventions focus will be on newly displaced or returnee caseloads across Borno state – with focus on Monguno, Ngala, Bama, Damboa, Dikwa and Gwoza LGAs.

### Access to Shelters

Mercy Corps provides dignified shelters to most vulnerable households through construction of enhanced emergency shelters, household shelter repairs, distribution of shelter reinforcement kits and Shelter NFIs. About 26,950 vulnerable people are being provided with access to safe and appropriate living spaces and household items needed to maintain a dignified existence.

### Improve Food Security & Nutrition Services

Mercy Corps promotes good maternal and Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices through appropriate Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) led by community members through Nutrition promoters, and peer to peer support groups. About 107,226 conflict affected girls, boys, women and men are being reached with the aim to improve their nutritional status. We are working to connect about 66,500 people from the conflict affected IDP, returnee and host households who are mostly food-insecure with access to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and diverse foods. In addition, 2,200 individuals will be connected to SMART agriculture practices to increase the availability of and access to nutritious food items.

### Access to WASH facilities & services

We are working to ensure 104,595 individuals from conflict-affected populations have access to sufficient safe water, increased knowledge on key hygiene practices, and live in disease-free environments. We provide equitable access to WASH facilities and services through construction and rehabilitation of water points, latrines, bathing showers, etc. This is supported through distribution of NFI kits, hygiene promotion, and environmental sanitation.

### Strengthening Protection Mechanism and Coordination

Mercy Corps strengthens coordination efforts and capacity of community leaders and other protection actors on GBV and referral pathways through trainings. Community volunteers have been trained to monitor protection issues and make referrals appropriately.

### Access to Cash Assistance

We are providing 3,000 of the most vulnerable households (17,500 people) with appropriate and timely market-based assistance in the form of MPCA, allowing them to meet their basic needs in a dignified and enabling manner.



# PD'S NOTE



It is always exciting to see the impact of the implementation of our programs in communities. When we set out to plan for the ADAPT program, we had one goal, which was to address the threats to human security in the northeastern part of Nigeria by saving lives and prevent human suffering.

There is no gainsaying, we have been able to put smiles on the faces of people in the communities where we work. Our program participants have received Multipurpose cash assistance, Shelter assistance, Food and Agricultural assistance to improve nutritional status and access to Water supply, Sanitation facilities and hygiene messages while strengthening the Protection mechanism in the communities.

We have also improved the market system by frequent engagements of vendors from within the communities to boost local economy and bridge the gap of ease of access to commodities and services in hard-to-reach locations.

Our selfless team members have continued to remain committed to addressing diverse and acute threats to human security in any location and in whatever capacity of their deployment.

Being the first complex humanitarian program in Nigeria on Mercy Corps' portfolio, the expectations were high internally (Mercy Corps), our donor, and the communities we serve. However, we stand tall against all odds.

The success of our implementations is setting the pace for others to follow. We have made great gains across all the sectors especially in our shelter research components, with the goal of improving programmatic approaches towards dignifying the living spaces of participants no matter what their status may be. A few of these impacts is enclosed in this magazine. I hope you find it interesting and insightful.

Words will fail me in pouring out my appreciation to every stakeholder that made this program as enviable as it is today. My sincere appreciation goes to our donor, the American people, through the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the entire Senior Management Team of Mercy Corps Globally and in Nigeria. Also, the indefatigable team across Maiduguri and the Deep Field Offices and the community members that served as volunteers for each of our sectoral intervention, thank you for making lives better.

**MAXWELL SAMAILA**  
Program Director | ADAPT  
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# ADAPT OVERVIEW

## 146,768

PARTICIPANTS

IN 12 MONTHS

### FOOD SECURITY

## 66,500



66,500 people from the most food-insecure, conflict affected IDP, returnee and host households have access to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and diverse foods.

## 11,400

We are supporting vulnerable populations to live in an enabling environment with improved access to key protection services.

### PROTECTION SERVICES



### CASH ASSISTANCE

## 2,500



providing 3,000 of the most vulnerable households (17,500 people) with appropriate and timely market-based assistance in the form of MPCA

## 107,226

About 107,226 conflict affected girls, boys, women and men are being reached with the aim to improve their nutritional status with IYCF, Dry Food, Fresh and Fleshy food redemptions, with 1500 households engaged in smart agricultural practices.

### NUTRITION SERVICES AND SMART AGRICULTURE



### WASH FACILITIES

## 104,595



We are working to ensure 104,595 individuals from conflict-affected populations have access to sufficient safe water, increased knowledge on key hygiene practices, and live in disease-free environments.

## 26,950

About 26,950 vulnerable people are being provided with access to safe and appropriate living spaces and household items needed to maintain a dignified existence.

### ACCESS TO SHELTERS



# SECTORAL IMPACT



## SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT







## WHY Shelter matters

The provision of shelter to victims of crisis in the northeast Nigeria became essential as the crisis affected the existing living structures in communities across the region. To support victims, Mercy Corps through the BHA funded ADAPT program, started embarking on shelter and settlements provision and repairs in local government areas within its operations.

The benefiting participants are drawn from Households in IDP Camps and host communities. The program is providing participants with Basic Emergency shelter kit, Improvement kit and the Bama-type kit. This is dependent on the level of repairs of their existing structures.



*An Excited Yagana in front of her new shelter*

**"At last Mercy Corps came to our rescue, we now have a covering over our heads"** *Yagana Mohammed*

# DIGNIFYING SHELTERS IN MONGUNO

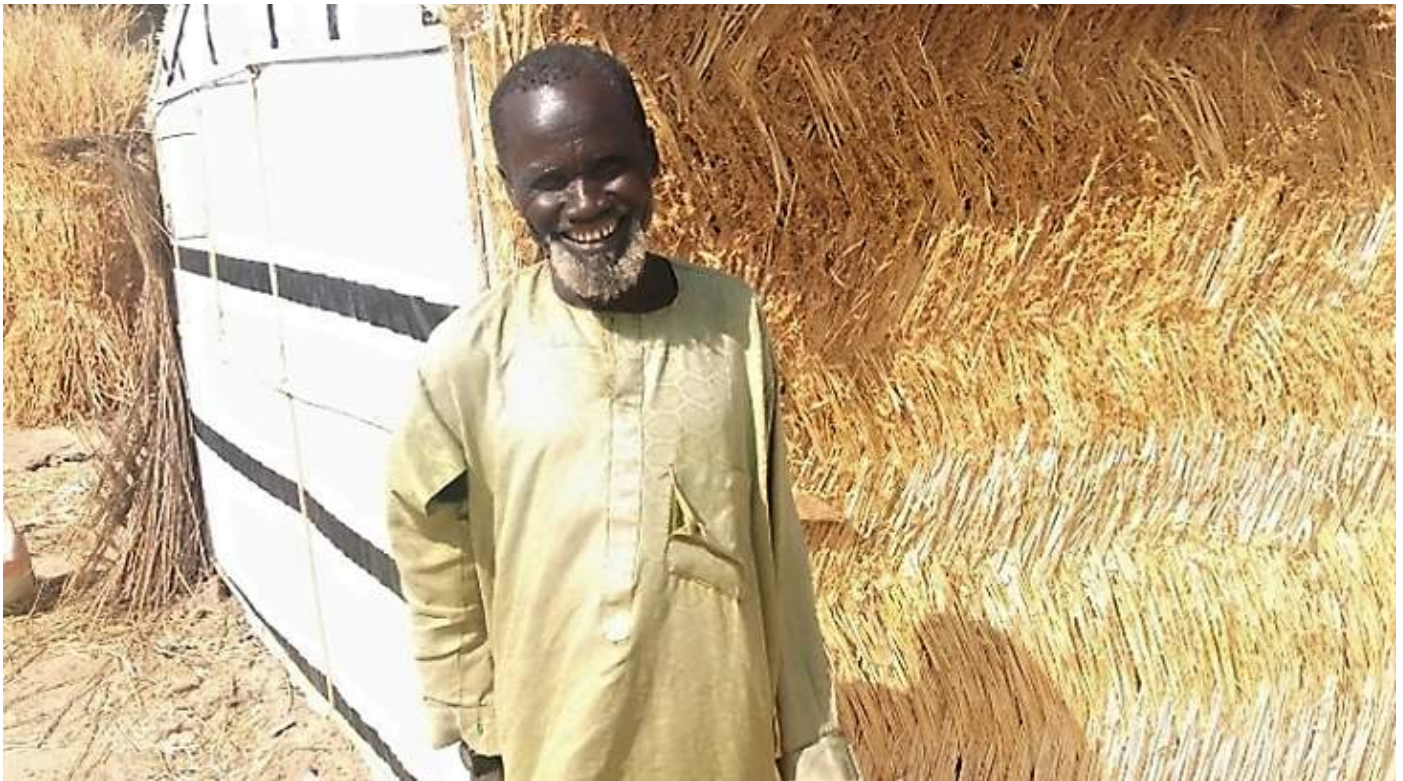


**YAGANA MOHAMMED**, a participant of the ADAPT's Shelter program in Monguno Town, fled from her home away from the conflict in 2019. She was living with her family of 9 in a dilapidated structure made of old zinc roofing sheets and some spent woods. This Shelter was constructed by her late husband before his demise. She had been hoping for shelter intervention from other partners within the Stadium IDP Camp, where she resides. However, all her effort failed to materialize.

When the ADAPT program identified her as a participant, she received shelter replenishment kits to cover her leaking roof and to shield the structure from the weather. In her words, "At last MERCY CORPS came to our rescue and clothed us with dignity by providing us with this wonderful structure. I am so excited to be among the participants of this intervention. We are so grateful to the Almighty and to MERCY CORPS for this..." GOD BLESS MERCY CORPS!!!

She has since moved into the newly renovated emergency shelter and is currently living happily with her family.





**"As an elderly man, with a fragile health, sleeping outside on a mat affected my health, but that is no longer a worry for me, thanks to Mercy Corps for the Shelter intervention"**

*Saleh Abubakar*



*Saleh's new Shelter*

**Saleh Abubakar**, an indigene of Ngoshe town in Gwoza LGA, fled to Monguno because of the insurgency in his community 4 years ago and settled at the Stadium IDP camp in Monguno. Prior to the ADAPT intervention, he used to sleep on a mat outside his makeshift shelter to create manageable room for the rest of his family. "With this shelter intervention from Mercy Corps, I can sleep in a dignifying space with my family, without spending the cold nights outside" he said.

Saleh went on to improve on his shelter with a locally made heat insulator to cover the external tarpaulin he received. According to him, the insulator will protect the tarpaulin material from wearing out quickly. With it, the shelter can last for about 3 years as against the normal life span of 6-12 month. ADAPT is making many households happier by giving them a dignifying space to stay while waiting-out the insurgency in their individual communities.



## SHELTER REPAIRS: I NO LONGER HATE THE RAINS



Asama Mammandona, 62, a single mother of 4, she was widowed earlier before the insurgency. However, when the insurgents briefly took over Ngala town, they had to seek refuge in another town. Upon returning to Ngala, they discovered that their home was burnt on a side and the roofing had been heavily vandalized. She has been struggling to patch up the leaking roof for years.

**"This People (Mercy Corps) are godsent, God has used them to preserve my life, because I don't know if I will have the strength to continue to battle with a leaking roof at this age. But that is all over. I can now face the rainy season with joy like every other person does"**

*Asama Mammandona*



While others in the town would be excited about rainfall, Asama and her children were usually not happy about it. This is because, the slightest wind can blow their roof away and when it rains, their bedroom transforms into a pool.

"We don't usually look up to the rainy season in this house, because it brings a lot of untold hardship, when it rains, we all have to move in with neighbors or be confined to a corner of the house." She narrates.

Her and her 4 children have managed the situation with regular scooping and mopping off rainwater, but at her current age, the regular bending is taking a toll on her health.

Asama was selected as a participant of the ADAPT program in Ngala local Government Area where she received shelter repairs on her building.

"This People (Mercy Corps) are godsent, God has used them to preserve my life, because I don't know if I will have the strength to continue to battle with a leaking roof at this age. But that is all over. I can now face the rainy season with joy like every other person does. Thank you, Mercy Corps". She says.



**“I am excited to live in this house now after all we have been through, even if it is not as beautiful as it was before, at least we have a roof over our head and that in itself is a lot more than I can wish for.”**

*Hajja Zara Bulama*



**Hajja in front of her newly roofed house**

## **FROM A TINY HUT TO A ROOFED HOUSE**

**Hajja Zara Bulama**, a mother of 8 was forced to flee her home in 2014. Upon returning, the building that once housed her and her children had been razed by the impact from a bomb explosion by Non state armed groups, who were seeking to take over Damboa in their campaign to install a parallel government in the northeastern part of Nigeria.

With next to nothing as a source of income, she had to start engaging in petty trade and with the proceeds from the trades she was able to rebuild a part of the house while trying to cater to her children’s needs. The build had to stop abruptly when she ran out of resources. She was then forced to live in a small hut that was constructed by her late husband to serve as a kitchen. She lived in that small hut for over three years until January 2022.

When Mercy Corps through the USAID funded, ADAPT program selected her as a participant from the shelter intervention, she received Shelter Non-Food Items (NFIs) to roof the 2 bedrooms she had already built to Lintel level.



# SECTORAL IMPACT



## Nutrition Services



## Nutritional Services

To promote healthy childcare in the community, The ADAPT Program established Support groups of Parents and caregivers, to support the implementing of infant and young child feeding projects (IYCF).

Several Mother-to-Mother support groups (MtMSG) comprising of women, of any age, come together to learn about and discuss issues of infant and young child nutrition (IYCN). These women also support each other as they care for children ages 0–5 years.

In the same vein, there are Father-to-Father support groups (FtFSG) comprising of fathers, coming together to learn and discuss issues of IYCF. Also there are regular screening of children for nutrition related issues with treatments and referrals across all locations and 3 Out-patient Therapeutic Centers (OTPs) in Gwoza.



*Falmata feeding her baby with a cuisine at a cooking demonstration*

**"I wondered why my babies get sick always, but now I know thanks to Mercy Corps"**

*Falmata Kaigama*

**WATER DIDN'T HELP MY BABIES AS I THOUGHT IT DID**



When the Nutrition team of Mercy Corps' USAID Funded ADAPT program started the Mother to mother support group in Gwoza, Falmata Kaigama thought that there will be nothing new to learn about Childcare. Like most women in rural communities in Nigeria, she had depended on knowledge passed down to her from generations before hers.

She was reluctant to join at first but was convinced by her friend. She skeptically attended the first session and realized that she had been making a lot of costly mistakes in catering to her children.

"I learnt that giving water to a newly born baby was not helping the child's health, I usually wonder why my babies always get sickly, that first meeting corrected my ideology." She says in Hausa.

Falmata has since risen to become a lead Mother in the Support group structure and is currently using any opportunity she has, to educate women in her community with the knowledge gained from the Support group meeting. She said she has mentored a lot of women by showing them practical examples on how breastfeeding can improve a child's health.





"I placed him on my chest as advised by the Mercy Corps IYCF Counsellor...he is now one of the healthiest children in this camp." *Hassana Jibrin*

## COLOSTRUM HELPED MY CHILD – HASSANA JIBRIN, FROM DAMBOA

A mother of 3, before joining the support group at low-cost camp in Damboa, Hassana Jibrin had been practicing the traditional methods of childcare as prescribed by other elderly women in her community. She had used these methods to wean her first two children.

At the support group, she learnt about the benefits of colostrum and exclusive breastfeeding. She decided to give it a try as against her habit of spilling it away and mix feeding. In her own words, she was amazed at the sharp difference in the frequency of illness between her children. The one that got colostrum and was exclusively breastfed, is healthier, stronger, and smarter than his older brother.

"I gave birth to my last child while attending support group, so I decided to put the things we learnt into practice. I delivered the baby and almost immediately, I placed him on my chest as advised by the Mercy Corps IYCF Counsellor. He has been on exclusive breastfeeding since then and he is now one of the healthiest children in this camp." She narrates.

Hassana's last child is a testament to the fact that Infant and Young child feeding program of Mercy Corps is yielding great impact in Damboa and other areas where the program is being implemented.

## ACTIVE CASE FINDING SAVED CHILDREN IN BAMA

On one of the routine active case finding exercises in Bama, the ADAPT nutrition team came across a little boy looking so malnourished that one may think he has never had a meal in his life. With the consent of his mother, the team decided to take a Mid-Upper Arm Circumference measurement (MUAC) which turned out in the red zone as suspected.

He was immediately referred to an Outpatient Therapeutic Program (OTP) center with Bama and began treatment immediately. He was also placed on therapeutic feeding to give his body a fighting chance to rebuild and attain the ideal MUAC measurement for his age.

After several visits over a period, with consistent Infant and Young Child feeding (IYCF) counselling sessions, His mother and everyone around began to see visible signs of improvement. He started becoming lively could join children of his age at the playground.

**"...after several hospital appointments and following what both Mercy Corps and the doctor recommended, he started picking up and he is now a lively child.."**

*Falmata Ali (Mohammed's Mother)*



"He used to be gloomy and slim with a protruding stomach before, we thought it was his nature, until Mercy Corps people came and advised us to take him to the hospital. After several hospital appointments and following what both Mercy Corps and the doctor recommended, he started picking up and he is now a lively child." His mother tells us.

That child is 3 years old, Mohammed Ali, who has fully recovered. Like many children in crisis region, he suffered from acute malnutrition. The Nutrition Program of the USAID funded ADAPT program has been engaging in active case finding, treatments and referral of malnutrition cases in children under five years of age, in all locations where the program is implemented. This is saving lives and putting smiles back on the faces of children and their caregivers.





## USING SOCIAL BEHAVIORAL CHANGE COMMUNICATION TO PROMOTE HEALTHY NUTRITION

Knowledge is power, they say. This is very evident in the life of Falhimta Babagana and many women in Ngala and Gamboru Communities in Borno State.

Growing up with a lot of myths around childbirth and childcare, most women in these communities raised their children without following the ideal practices. In most homes babies are raised based on what is available not what is required.

With the use of social and behavioral change communications, the USAID funded ADAPT program was able to reach a lot of women and taught them about supplementary feeding using nutrition key messages.

“We were not aware of the benefits of so many things around us, for example we didn’t know that most of the nutrients our children need could be gotten from very simple and easy meals that can be sourced locally, but Mercy Corps people helped understand that and they even taught us how to make the meals.” Falhimta Babagana says in Kanuri.



Falhimta Babagana and her peers during a support group session

Furthermore, the women were taught how to identify cases of malnutrition other illnesses in their children through the mother-led Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) screening and the appropriate steps to take whenever they discover any questionable symptoms in a child.

The impact of these lessons is gradually changing the way women handle childcare. The Nutrition focal person for Ngala Local Government, Hadiza Mohammed Lawan, attest to an improvement in childcare and nutrition services since the implementation began. “The number of Cases we see at the Out-Patient Therapeutic sites are dropping because women are now adhering to what they are taught by partner agencies especially Mercy Corps.” She explains.



Hadiza Mohammed, the Nutrition Focal Person for Ngala LGA, addressing women at a support group's graduation ceremony

**“I didn't know there were many locally accessible nutritious meals around me until Mercy Corps Nutrition people showed us and taught us how to use them.”**

Falhimta Babagana

# SECTORAL IMPACT



## Agriculture





## Agriculture

The promotion of subsistent vegetable production through Backyard Kitchen Garden using the Permagarden Technique by the ADAPT program has yielded a lot of successes. Participants across Damboa Local Government area are currently harvesting their produce.

Upon the inception of the ADAPT program, a subset of the participants from the Food Assistance Component of the program were selected to participate in the Kitchen Gardening initiative. They were provided with seeds and trained on how to monitor the growth of the vegetables.

Mercy Corps Team members with Village Agents and Extension officers engaged in sustained sensitization of the participants to ensure adoption of progressive farming methods.

**“When I harvested my first Amaranthus,... my husband was surprised and started loving me more and his respect for me increased.”**

*Falmata Muhammed*



*Falmata is excited to see her vegetables growing well*

## BACKYARD GARDENING MADE OUR LIVES BETTER

Falmata Muhammed, and her family have been able to grow their kitchen garden into a viable source of vegetable for their meals. This is changing their dietary composition and ensuring they have adequate nutrients needed for a balanced diet.

Prior to the initiative, Households like Falmata’s would have to spend more out of their meagre resources to achieve the necessary dietary composition for their meals. The effects of the insurgency in the area, which is predominantly a farming community, has limited the accessibility to arable lands for farming, thereby limiting the ability of households to make adequate income. Therefore, basic foodstuff like Vegetables became a luxury.

“We were given seeds for Onions, Carrots, Lettuces, Sorel and Amaranthus, which we planted in prepared spaces within our compounds” Falmata said.

Participants have since began harvesting the Vegetables and replanting new seeds sourced from their own farms. Some of the Participants with larger gardening space have been able to support their neighbors with vegetable gifts while some of the excesses are sold in the local markets.

On the family front, some women have been able to regain some level of increasing financial control within the family. Evening out the gender power dynamics in the home. “When I harvested my first Amaranthus and used it to make a meal for my family, my husband was surprised and started loving me more and his respect for me increased.” She said.

## POULTRY PROGRAM GAVE ME NEW HOPE



*Abbana, Showing off one of his noiler birds*

Abbana Tasama, a sexagenarian, owned a large business in kitchen utensils and livestock sales, before the crisis in the northeastern part of Nigerian displaced him. When he returned to Damboa, he couldn't restart his business, due to the blockage of the supply routes by both government forces and non-state armed groups. As the head of a large household, without a concrete source of income, he had to rely on handouts for survival.

**"This has given me new hope. I hope to own a larger poultry soon."**

*Abbana Tasema*



*Some chickens in Abbana's poultry*

He was selected as a participant under the USAID funded ADAPT program, to receive poultry training and 10 noiler birds to rear. According to him, he was skeptical about his ability to keep the birds safe seeing that he is aged and most of his children are always away looking for means to make ends meet. He reluctantly took the birds and followed what he learnt from the trainings. The birds were kept in a makeshift cage within his compound.

"We were trained and given some poultry apparatuses, to my amazement, the breed given to us by them (Mercy Corps) were very easy to care for." Abbana says.

This resuscitated his passion for livestock that he broke his safe to buy 10 more birds to rear with the hope of selling all 20 during the Easter and Ramadan season. "When Mercy Corps gave me the 10 noiler birds, I was excited. It brought back memories of my days in animal husbandry; This has given me new hope. I hope to own a larger poultry soon." he tells us in Hausa.



# SECTORAL IMPACT



## Food Security



## Food Security

Access to healthy Nutritious food is always a problem in crisis region. In Borno state, northeast Nigeria, the food security in most of the Local Government areas is very low due to the sustained actions of armed groups in the regions. Families in towns like Bama and Damboa were forced to abandon their means of livelihood thereby limiting their capacity to make a living and provide the necessary food they need to survive. Some of the Families in these two Local Government Areas were turning to desperation to make ends meet.

**"We couldn't find any meaningful thing to do to earn a regular income, the insurgency had taken all we had and left us with nothing. As a man I couldn't take care of my family"**

*Mohammed Umar*



*Mohammed Umar, after redeeming fruits and vegetables*

## FOOD ASSISTANCE, MEETS THE URGENT NEEDS OF FAMILIES IN BORNO

Mohammed Umar, is in his late sixties, he was a farmer before his community was outran by Insurgents in 2014, had struggled to cater to the needs of his family since his return in 2018. His farmland is currently inaccessible due to its proximity to insurgent routes. He was selected as a Food Assistance participant and has since been receiving food assistance from the Mercy Corps' enrolled vendors in his town. Getting his redeemable Voucher was a breath of fresh air for him and his 14 dependents.

"With this Mercy Corps' card, I can collect Meat, Fruits and Vegetables this week and next week I will be able to collect, Maize, Rice, Spaghetti, Yam and even seasoning cubes", he tells us. The availability of this food assistance has so far improved the lives of many in the communities where the implementation holds. Families' members and dependents of selected households can get healthy, nutritionally adequate, and diverse foods, periodically to meet their urgent food needs.

"I can't find a job, since I didn't go to school and when the insurgent came to destroy our lives, we thought that was all, but thanks to Mercy Corps I can now eat and feed others too. This food assistance is truly a lifesaver", he said.

Thanks to the Program, the resilience of the affected population is strengthening, and communities are getting the much-needed support to bounce back and better.



# FOOD ASSISTANCE HELPED START A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS



Things started looking up in March 2021 when she was selected as Food assistance participant under the USAID funded ADAPT program by Mercy Corps Nigeria. According to her, she got everything she and her family needed monthly from the implementation. She was then able to use the income from her water sales to cater to her mother's health needs and invested in repairing an old well and water pump bought by her late Dad in the early 2000s. She equally saved up and bought a used power generating set, to power the pump because there has been no municipal electric power supply in the town for over 2 years.

"Thanks to Mercy Corps, I can smile a lot. I didn't bother about food for months so the money I would have used, I invested it into starting up a full water trucking business with the abandoned well and pump in our compound, I even bought a Generator. Today, I supply water to people, and we have enough to cater to our needs." She says.

The pain of seeing her family go hungry on several occasions, pushed Yanziye into looking ways to better their lot. Being unmarried at 25 and the 3rd child of 7 made the tasks harder, as she was always pushed aside. So, she ventured into water sales, to help her aged mother who was widowed at the start of the insurgency.

Yanziye Mohammed's family had little to feed on and footing her mother's health bills from the water sales. This made life a lot difficult for her, that left her constantly in depression. "If we must eat in a day, my siblings and I must fetch about 800 liters of water daily from a handpump borehole to sell to houses in the neighborhood. It is always a battle with other fetchers at the waterpoint. This stress coupled with the pain of all we have been through as a family left me constantly on my fight face." She narrates.

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**"I didn't bother about food for months so the money I would have used, I invested it into starting up a full water trucking business"**

*Yanziye Mohammed*

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# FOOD ASSISTANCE HELPED ME SAVE MONEY TO EXPAND MY BUSINESS



**"I started getting food monthly, enough to feed my family. I was able to save from my little business and expanded it to a shop."**

*Kellu Mohammed*

Like every girl in her peer group, Kellu always wanted to be a star, but the Crisis in her region thwarted whatever dreams she had. Her and her family became severely food insecure due to protracted insurgency.

She was born in 1994 as the first Child of 8, Kellu always felt she could do more with her life. According to her, she constantly felt like she was swimming against the waves. Feeding was a huge problem to her family.

"We couldn't stay Idle, as the first child, everyone looked up to me for succor, either through getting married to a wealthy man or doing something extraordinary with my life. As I got older, the pressure mounted, especially because I was unmarried." She narrates bitterly. As a way out, Kellu Mohammed, started selling groceries on a table outside her house. The profit was barely enough to feed her family. She had to do other unprintable things to gather more money for feeding.

In March 2021, her household was added as a benefitting household on the USAID funded ADAPT program's Food Assistance intervention. This helped her access food from vendors at no cost. "I was the happiest person in my entire street when we got selected. I started getting food monthly, enough to feed my family. I was able to save from my little business and expanded it to a shop. Mercy Corps really covered me from shame." She said.

Kellu's shop has since expanded to become one of the largest grocery stores in her community. She hopes to keep expanding it until it becomes a superstore.



## FROM CHAFF TO SUFFICIENCY: ADAPT'S FOOD ASSISTANCE IMPACT STORY FROM BAMA



Zara Jidda, a mother of 5, has been married for twelve years even though she is just about to turn 25. Her 36 years old husband volunteers with the Civilian Joint Task force (CJTF) in Bama. Their home was raided some years back, which led them to flee to Yerwa (Maiduguri, in Kanuri). Upon returning to Bama, finding food became a huge problem, as they were neither accepted in the IDP camps nor have any viable means of livelihood.

**" I no longer had to beg for what to feed my children with. I even started saving the little money I would have committed into feeding."**

*Zara Jidda*



"We hardly had anything to eat, on a good day, if my husband comes home with maize chaffs, we will rejoice as though we had won a million Naira. Most nights our Kids had to go to bed on empty stomachs." She said.

However, she was selected as a Participant of the ADAPT's Food Assistance program in Bama and started receiving a monthly minimum expenditure basket in an e-voucher to cover both dry, fresh, and fleshy foods and vegetables. This cushioned the effect of food insecurity in her young but large family.

"When Mercy Corps selected me, I started getting food for free from the vendors around, I no longer had to beg for what to feed my children with. I even started saving the little money I would have committed into feeding." She narrates.

Zara has since begun a small business of clothes trading with the little money she and her husband saved during the period. They hope to rely on the income from this business going forward. This relatively young family is gradually and resiliently moving to self-sufficiency as a result of the intervention of the ADAPT program.

# SECTORAL IMPACT



## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH)





## Water Sanitation and Hygiene

To ensure that persons affected by the insurgency in Borno state have full access to improved water, hygiene and sanitation facilities, Mercy Corps through the USAID funded ADAPT Program, constructed several blocks of improved communal and household latrines and bathrooms, constructed and upgraded several boreholes and waterpoints, while engaging in hygiene promotion and community sensitization across different IDP camps and host communities within the locations of the program's intervention.

This is an effort to mitigate water scarcity and inadequate sanitation facilities and the prevalence of water-related illnesses across all locations.



## PROVIDING DIGNITY THROUGH LATRINE CONSTRUCTION

Falmata Ali, 35, a mother of 5, has been on moving around IDP camps since her displacement in 2017. Upon her resettlement to Bama from one of the closed IDP camps in Maiduguri, she and her family were faced with a big challenge of finding a convenient spot to relieve their bowels.

The closest Latrine to her tent was a mile away. The toilet was always occupied since so many people depended on it. She and her family had to resort to using the facility only at nights and at the break of dawn.

"If we don't go at night, we won't be able to use the bathroom, as there is always a queue during the day." She said.

On days when their schedule fails, they will have to go about their business in the open field. This practice of open defecation was rampant around the camp where she lived. According to her, she dreaded every time she or anyone in her household is pressed during daytime. The only solution is to painstakingly take a long walk to the crowded latrine and wait on the queue or look for a spot in the open and go about the business.

However, the story changed when Mercy Corps through the USAID funded ADAPT program, constructed several communal latrines and bathrooms within her camp.

**"If we don't go at night, we won't be able to use the bathroom, as there is always a queue during the day."**  
*Falmata Kaigama*

"With the new latrines constructed by Mercy Corps, my husband, my children and I, are no longer defecating in the open, we can go to the bathroom or toilet at our convenience and carry out our business there with dignity." She tells us.

One of the new communal latrines is barely a minute walk from her tent and is not used by many.



*A 20,000 liter capacity Water point, upgraded by the ADAPT program*

## **SOLAR POWERED WATER SYSTEM PROVIDES EASY ACCESS TO PORTABLE WATER**

The provision of easily accessible and portable water is a major mandate of the USAID funded ADAPT program. Mercy Corps through the program, has been able to bridge the gap between available water and those who need it.

In communities where the program is intervening, water supply points were either not available, insufficient, or dilapidated. This led the team into construction, rehabilitation, and upgrades of water point across communities.

One of the major impacts of this gesture, is the reduction in the distance traveled to access water by community members.

“Before Mercy Corps made this borehole here, we would have to walk for over 3 miles to the nearest water point to get drinkable water,” said, Modu Gonibe, a community leader who has since assumed the maintenance coordination and custodianship role of the new solar borehole constructed close to his house.

“Water was a huge problem for us, we usually keep large storage containers in our homes to store water for a day or two before we make the journey to the far well again. If one is ill, it will take the grace of God for him or her to make the journey.” He narrates.

“Now we have a solar powered water system at our doorstep, we can access water with ease without taking the long walks.” An excited Modu tells us.



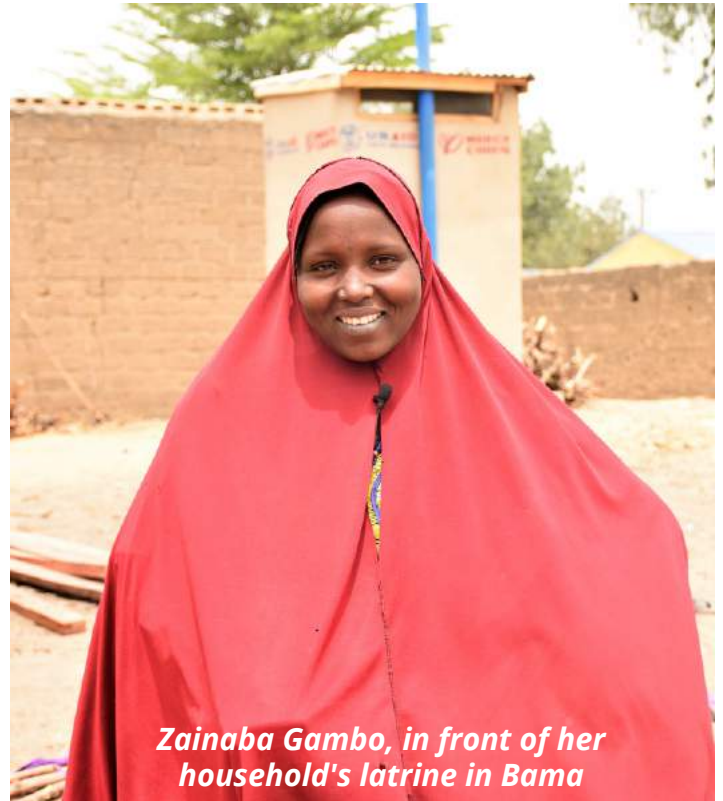
*Modu, at a waterpoint next to his house*



## HOUSEHOLD LATRINE REDUCES OPEN DEFECATION

Like most households in the northeastern part of Nigeria, where crisis is prevalent, the toilets at the Gambos' residence, was affected in a bomb blast that brought down almost all buildings in their compound in 2013.

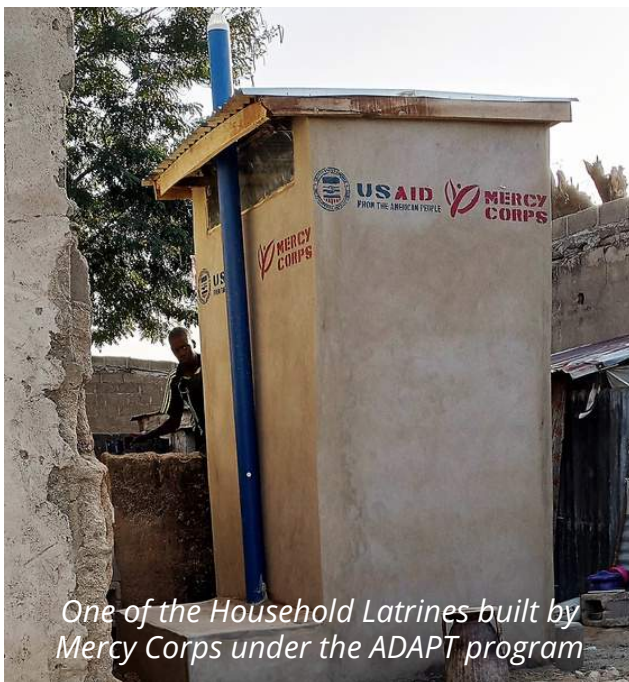
5 years after, when they return from the displacement, they had no toilet facility in their house. They had to resort to open defecation on a field that is about a mile away. Until they were able to construct a makeshift toilet out of zinc roofing sheet from rubbles around the community.



*Zainaba Gambo, in front of her household's latrine in Bama*

**"When Mercy Corps built this latrine for us, it was like they covered our nakedness..."**

*Zainaba Gambo*



*One of the Household Latrines built by Mercy Corps under the ADAPT program*

"We used to walk far away from the house to an abandoned field to relieve ourselves. We knew it wasn't healthy, but we were left with no choice as our makeshift bathroom was only for bathing since it had no drop hole." Zainaba Gambo tells us.

Mercy Corps through the ADAPT program, intervened, and constructed a household latrine for the Gambos. The latrine now serves the entire occupants of the compound.

"When Mercy Corps built this latrine for us, it was like they covered our nakedness, because we can do our business within the comfort of 4 walls and in our own compound." She said in Kanuri language. The occupants of the Gambos compound, utilize the household latrine with ease for as many times as they need to.

# HYBRID BOREHOLE PROVIDES WATER FOR PARTICIPANTS



**"I will walk for a long time from my shelter to the borehole... I will make the trip repeatedly you can imagine the stress involved just to get clean water."**

*Maimuna Muhammed*

Maimuna Muhammed a mother of 5, would usually wake up to take a long walk with her baby on her back to the water point in her Internally Displaced Persons' (IDP) camp. To meet her families daily water needs, Maimuna would have to make the long trip for 4 times at dawn and another 4 times at dusk.

Mercy Corps through the USAID funded ADAPT program, drilled and installed a hybrid powered Borehole system. This made it easy for people within the camp to have access to clean portable water from a closer source than before.

"Before Mercy Corps, repaired and upgraded this borehole, the one here was bad, so we used to go and get water from a very far place." Maimuna narrates. "We never had it easy until now, on a normal day, I will walk for a long time from my shelter to the borehole at the other side. I will make the trip repeatedly until my drum at home is full, so you can imagine the stress involved just to get clean water."

The water from the borehole is used in washing clothes, cooking meals and quenching thirsts. The proximity to the population is one of the key perks of this waterpoint. It currently serves hundreds of persons with a 20,000 liters storage capacity. "I heard that the borehole can be powered by either the sun or a diesel engine generator, so that on days that the solar system is faulty, the backup generator will still be able to pump water. All I can say is that Mercy Corps is thinking of our problems and solving them even before they occur." She says in Hausa.

Like Maimuna's other households can access the waterpoint twice daily to meet their daily water needs.



# SECTORAL IMPACT



## Protection and GBV



## Protection Mechanism

To strengthen the protection mechanism in communities where the Program is being implemented, Mercy Corps embarked on building the coordination efforts and capacity of community leaders and other protection actors on GBV and referral pathways through trainings. Community volunteers are being trained to monitor protection issues and make referrals appropriately.

Also, safe spaces were instituted across locations for adolescents to have a safe place to learn and express themselves. In Damboa, the program constructed a Listening Center for women and girls to further provide psychosocial support for women.



*Fatima Abubakar, a safe space participant from Gamboru-Ngala*

## SAFE SPACE – CREATING POSSIBILITIES THROUGH ADOLESCENT EDUCATION

She was crippled at the age of 2. Her life became more complicated when crisis forced her parents to flee their hometown into a neighboring country. They lived there for years until the Government Forces were able to retrieve their town from the control of non-state armed groups.

Fatima Abubakar, now 15, lives with her parents and other siblings. She always felt neglected whenever she sees other children of her age in their school uniforms, heading to school. "I wanted to do what other children of my age were doing, I wanted to spend time playing with my peers, learning things, but because I can't walk, I couldn't do any of these. I felt left-out." She narrates.

When the USAID funded ADAPT program start up Safe Space activities for adolescent girls and boys, Fatima was selected as a participant.

"It was a great opportunity for me to be chosen. Apart from making new friends, I learnt a lot about my rights as a child and what to do when my right is being violated. I also learnt about gender and empowerment, gender-based violence and how it can ruin a society. I realize how much fun I can have while learning" She said.



**"I see a lot of possibilities with my life now. Who knows, I could become a teacher someday..."**  
*Fatima Abubakar*

*Fatima and her younger sister after a class*

The safe space program is creating an avenue for adolescents like Fatima, to build comradery while learning about protection related issue.

Fatima dreams of becoming a teacher in the future and she see the prospect of living out her dreams. "I see a lot of possibilities with my life now. Who knows, I could become a teacher someday and be the one teaching other girls about life." She said as she rolls here wheelchair in excitement.



# FROM MILK CANDIES TO SOAP MAKING - IMPACTS FROM THE LISTENING CENTER



"I hope to make my own money from the sales of soap, once I can get money to buy my own ingredients."  
Aishatu Goani

Aishatu and other women, mixing a batch of soap at the Listening Center in Damboa

Aishatu Goani Adam, 21, is married with 3 children. She has been attending the activities at the ADAPT Listening Centre in Damboa. She had a booming business, selling beans cakes (locally called Akara) with her aged mother. In 2014, when Insurgents raided her town, their business, properties, and every means of livelihood were destroyed. They had to flee with just the clothes on their backs to Gatori Village before reaching Biu Town.

They returned to Damboa in 2019 with next to nothing. Aishatu had to start making local Milk Candies to sell for meagre income to meet her and her immediate family's needs.

When the Listening Centre was launched by the ADAPT program in Damboa, she enrolled and picked up soap-making as a trade skill to learn. The center has been of tremendous benefit to her. She says that apart from the protection and gender related support she receives from the center, she has found Soap making to be a very useful skill that will improve the quality of her life.

"Currently at the center, we make soap and sell as a group and the money is invested in buying more items. I hope to make my own money from the sales of soap, once I can get money to buy my own ingredients. I also dream of going back to tertiary school in the process and I see that dream happening soon through this soap-making." She says.

The Listening center was set up by Mercy Corps through the USAID funded ADAPT program to serve as a haven for women and girls in the communities where the program is being implemented.

Since its construction in 2021, the facility has impacted the lives of many women like Aishatu and is gradually adding more smiles to the faces of women in Borno State, northeastern Nigeria.



Aishatu, Abubakar, trying out a new soap making technique she learnt at the Listening Center

# USING SAFE SPACE AND GENDER CHAMPIONS TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL COHESION

The arrival and settlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) into any community comes with a lot of challenges. For the people in Gwoza-wakane, theirs was particularly unique, as they didn't have to live with IDPs alone but Escapees too. (Escapees are individuals who were once in the custody of non-state armed groups either as hostages or nonconsensual fighters). Social Cohesion stood out as a major issue with the different groups of people within the community. Children from each group had different negative views of those on the other sides.



The fragility of this already tensed community was further stretched by the frequent fights on the playground whenever children gather to play.

When USAID funded ADAPT program of Mercy Corps started up safe space activities in Gowza-wakane, children were enrolled from the different strata that made up the community. Sensitization and awareness on peaceful coexistence was done by the team using gender champions and protection master trainers drawn from within the community.

The team also created safe playgrounds for all children, where children interact, socialize while learning about gender issues and rights. "We didn't have a harmonious society here, everyone held a grudge or two against the other, and these grudges were passed on to our children. To the extent that a little argument over something can lead to huge quarrels, that may warrant military interventions." Said Umaru Kollo, a gender champion from Bullabulin, in Gwoza-Wakane. He continues, "when Mercy Corps started teaching our children how to play in peace, we noticed changes on their perception of each other, to the extent that our children see themselves as one big family."



"There are instances where children from the host communities would visit a sick child from the camp with fruits and spend time with him or her. This act of kindness has started moving upward to the parents."

The ADAPT program is strengthen the unity of communities while pushing for a safe and peaceful society for all.



# MENSTRUAL HYGIENE: A VITAL PART OF WOMEN'S HEALTH



*Safiya Hassan and her friends after a session on menstrual hygiene*

**“When I first got my period, I was ashamed to even talk to my sisters or my mother about it,**

*Safiya Hassan*

Safiya Hassan, 14, a student at a public school in Gamboru, like most girls her age, she was faced with the challenge of maintaining a healthy menstrual hygiene.

With very sketchy information from her older siblings and no mentors to guide her, she started using unhealthy ideas from anyone who cared to suggest them to her.

“When I first got my period, I was ashamed to even talk to my sisters or my mother about it, eventually word got out and I started getting suggestions on how to manage the situation.” She narrates in Hausa. Safiya eventually settled to tuck in some old rags under her clothes whenever she gets her flow. She did this for a while until she was advised to get sanitary pad by a friend’s elder sister. Coming by a sanitary pad in her crisis affected community with no money, became an issue.

When the USAID funded ADAPT program of Mercy Corps conducted a sensitization session on Menstrual Hygiene targeting women and girls of reproductive age from Gamboru and Ngala Host Communities, and Arabic, and ISS IDPs Camps in Ngala Local Government Area, Safiya and her friends attended.

The session was aimed at providing women and girls with vital information on menstrual hygiene and access to clean, soft, and absorbent sanitary products which will protect their health from various infections. The session also focused on creating awareness on the management and reduction on incidences of reproductive tract infections, stigmatization of women and girls during period by their male counterparts. “I now know how to manage menstrual pains by avoiding sugary things and take nutritious food when expecting and during the menstrual cycle, also I was taught how to use the reusable and disposable pads, thanks to Mercy Corps.” An excited Safiya said.

Apart from the sensitization messages, and demonstrations on how to use pads, the participants were given under wears, and pads.



*A group of Girls after a session on menstrual hygiene*

# SECTORAL IMPACT



## Multipurpose Cash Assistance





## PARTICIPANTS GETS MPCA AS A LIFELINE

52 years old Mohammed Bukar fled his hometown, Gulumba, when the insurgency in the region was inching closer towards the town. He fled to Maiduguri, with his 2 wives and thirteen children.

After a very unpleasant experience at the IDP camp in Maiduguri, He was relocated to another camp in Bama. With no viable source of income, Mohammed joined a group of former farmers and started collecting firewood from the forest to sell to across the host communities. But that venture quickly came to a stop when non state armed groups took over the access road to the forest, cutting many from the only source of survival they have come to know.

Mohammed and his large household spent days living off handouts. According to him, on a good day, they gather about a dollar (N500) in cash or material gifts with which they buy what ever staple food they can buy. While on other days, they go to bed on empty stomachs. He had lived this way for over four months.

When the ADAPT program selected Mohammed to receive the Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA), he wasn't sure what to expect as he has been selected on several occasion by other partners and didn't receive anything.

"When I was chosen, I reluctantly registered and collected the Card (e-Voucher), I had no expectations. But Mercy Corps surprised me and gave me money." He narrates in Kanuri.



Prior to receiving the cash assistance, Mohammed had plans on stockpiling seasonal foods. With the money he got, he was able feed his family and invested the rest into his future business.

"I bought food with the money, it was a lifeline, I was hungry on that day and when I got the money, I bought food for myself and my family. We have been able to eat well ever since. I am also looking to start a little food sales business with what I saved." Mohammed tells us.

**"We have been able to eat well ever since. I am also looking to start a little food sales business with what I saved."**

*Mohammed Bukar*

# MULTIPURPOSE CASH ASSISTANCE CREATES NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPANTS

**"I divided the money I got into 3 parts, I committed a third of it into buying materials and tools to start up a cap weaving business, I used the other part to buy uniforms for my Kids."** *Bintu Modu*



*A Mercy Corps Team Member interacting with Bintu Modu*

For many small business owners within Internal Displaced people's (IDP) camps, the income from their business is committed wholly into feeding. This is the case with Bintu Modu.

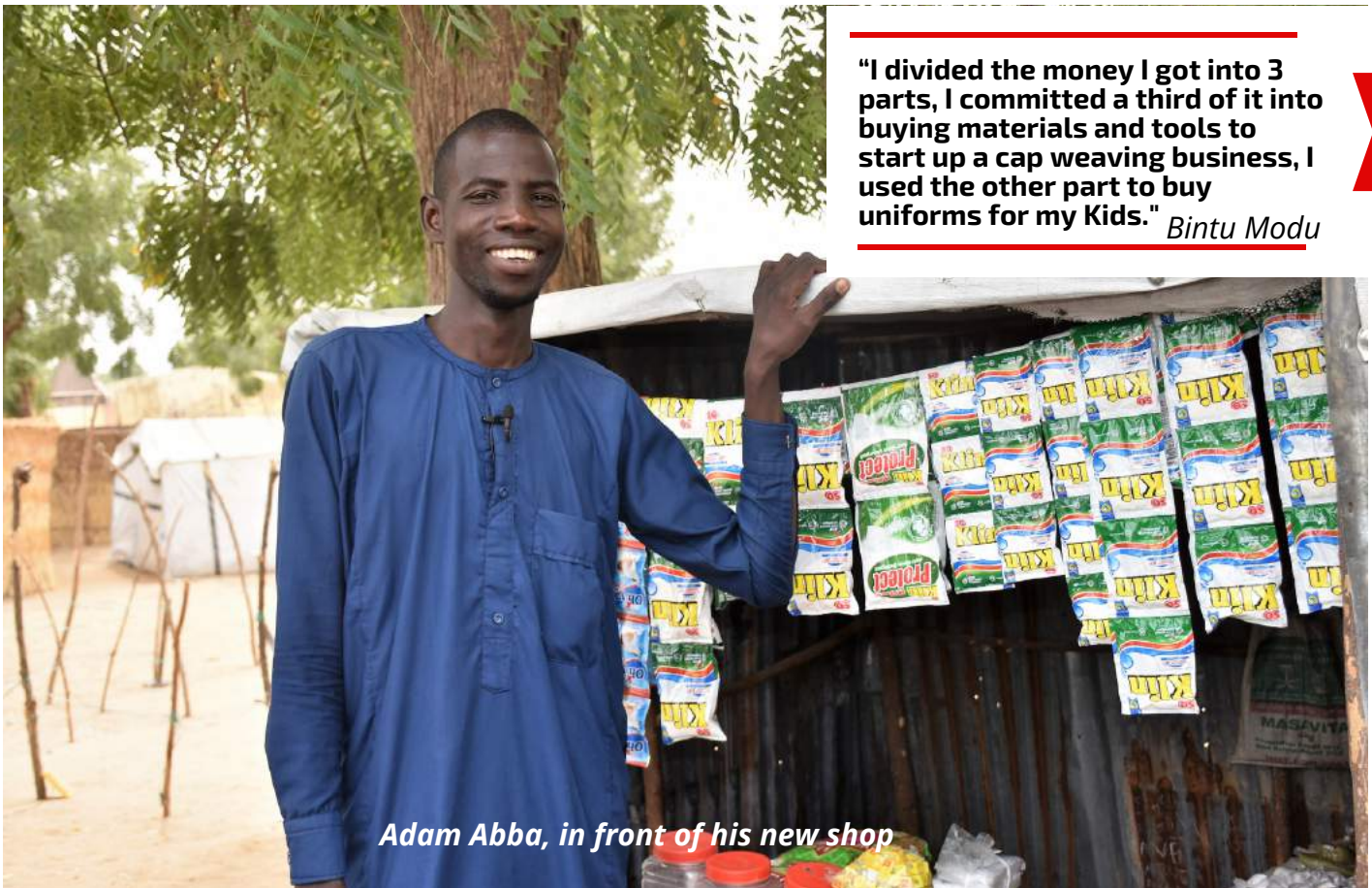
Bintu sold firewood and sachet water before she relocated from her town due to the crisis in the region. Finding herself and her 8 children in dire need of a means to life, she started stocking up dry wood from trees nearby with the hope of selling them to make a living.

"I didn't have any way of making money, my husband and I tried all we could to feed our eight children, but we couldn't send them back to school." She narrates. Mercy Corps through the USAID funded ADAPT program selected Bintu to benefit from the multipurpose cash assistance. She was given NGN45,000:00 (\$108) to cover for her essential needs.

"I divided the money I got into 3 parts, I committed a third of it into buying materials and tools to start up a cap weaving business, I used the other part to buy uniforms for my Kids. What was left we committed into buying food stuff for the house." According to Bintu, the Multipurpose Cash assistance program, gave her another opportunity to restart her life in a new territory.



# MPCA HELPED ME START UP MY OWN BUSINESS



**"I divided the money I got into 3 parts, I committed a third of it into buying materials and tools to start up a cap weaving business, I used the other part to buy uniforms for my Kids." *Bintu Modu***

*Adam Abba, in front of his new shop*

Adam Abba hails from Walasa community in Borno state northeastern Nigeria. He was displaced from his hometown during a conflict. Upon arrival at the IDP camp, he had no means of livelihood. With a baby on the way and 4 orphaned relatives to cater to, his life got more complicated when he was relocated to another camp. Adam struggled to make ends meet. His wife had to start menial jobs around the host communities to support the family.

"I didn't have any means of making the money that my household needed to stay alive, so my wife started helping people with their house chores for a token. We lived off whatever she got, until Mercy Corps came to my aid." Adam tells us in Kanuri.

Adam was selected to join the participants for the multipurpose cash assistance by the ADAPT program, where he got 45,000 naira. He invested the money in setting up a little grocery store within the Camp.

"I was desperate when I got the money, but my wife and I had a long talk on what to do with it. We decided to use the money in setting up a shop. Our major concern was what percent to use for food and what to commit to the new business." He says. They found a way around it and used the larger part as capital for the new business. Adam now runs one of the 3 grocery stalls in his camp. With profit from the business, he is able to care for his wife and entire household.

# MPCA: PROVIDING CASH TO MEET NEEDS IN DESPERATE TIMES



**"I have had a tough life, so you can imagine the joy I felt when I got the money from Mercy Corps."**

*Yagana Bukar*

Yagana Fanna Bukar used to be a very successful businesswoman. She had a very comfortable life with her family of 5, but everything came to a stop when her town was raided, and she had to flee.

Finding herself in an IDP camp with no viable source of income, she decided to leverage on the heavy population of children in the camp by starting up a new business, selling children clothes. However, that business was faced a different kind of challenge when her family was relocated to another Camp in a different town.

At this point, her husband became paralyzed by stroke. They spent all they had saved on his treatment but to no avail.

After a mapping exercise, the USAID funded ADAPT program of Mercy Corps, selected Yagana and her household as participants of the Multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA).

"I have had a tough life, so you can imagine the joy I felt when I got the money from Mercy Corps. At least someone deems me worthy to be assisted. The money came at the exact time when I had run out of my savings and options to finance my needs." She said soberly.

She used the cash she got to get food for the family and medicine for her husband. She equal got some tools which she intends to use in setting up a firewood business.



**THE EDITORIAL TEAM WISHES TO  
THANK EVERYONE WHO  
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ESPECIALLY THE TEAMS IN ALL  
DEEP FIELD LOCATIONS. THE WORK  
THAT WE DO AS A TEAM, IS  
IMPACTING LIVES AND  
ADDRESSING ISSUES THAT  
THREATENS HUMAN SECURITY  
PHYSICALLY, PSYCHOLOGICALLY,  
AND EMOTIONALLY. YOUR WORK  
HAS MADE LIFE BETTER FOR MANY  
AND WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT IT  
WILL CONTINUE TO BE A RAY OF  
HOPE TO THOSE AFFECTED BY  
CRISIS**

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***Addressing Diverse and Acute Primary Threats (ADAPT)  
to Human Security in North Eastern Nigeria***

