

FON Board Approves Two New Projects

By Warren Keller (23) 66-67

Two additional grants requested by VSO volunteers currently in Nigeria were approved by the FON Board of Directors on May 3, 2013. These are the 5th and 6th such grants since this FON program started in August 2011. The FON Board committee chaired by Andy Philpot and including Jim Clark, Mike Goodkind, and Greg Zell recommended these projects for funding. The committee relied upon the volunteers' applications and VSO/Nigeria coordinator Bola Ojo to make their recommendations. Below are the details about each project, mainly taken from their grant applications.

Improved Maize Seeds

Lucas Partzsch (Germany) arrived in Nigeria in July 2012. His volunteer assignment is with the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) Community Development Program (CCDP). He requested \$1,525 for the purchase of improved maize seeds (1500kg) for use in Mangu, Plateau State.

Maize is a primary crop in Plateau

State. The project is intended to support farmers who are currently using local maize seeds which are very vulnerable to environmental stress and therefore low yielding. The aim is to introduce modern farming systems using improved maize seeds (Genetically Modified seeds - GMO) which are high yielding, pest and disease resistant, etc. Certified GMO seeds shall be procured from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture Centre (IITA) in Ibadan and transported to Mangu.

Most of the seeds shall then be distributed to farmers (3kg each) for use in their farms while a small part of the seeds shall be used for demonstration by the Community Agricultural Extension Volunteers (CAEVs). A seed bank shall thereafter be established.

To ensure that the seeds multiply to benefit other farmers as well, each beneficiary farmer who has received the seeds shall be required to pay back maize seeds of any variety worth 1000 Naira (at the market price at the time) immediately after harvest. These shall then be stored in

the seed bank and thereafter sold and the money used to procure more improved seeds from Ibadan and given to others as well. The reason for the returned seeds not to be given directly to farmers is to avoid variety impurities. Therefore, the solution is to sell what the farmers are paying back and buy pure varieties. This act shall ensure that there is always seed availability for the farmers. Because even if the crops fail, a farmer cannot fail to raise seeds worth 1000 Naira to pay back.

The seeds shall be kept for some two months to ensure that the value goes high with the increasing market price so that it can support the procurement of the seeds and its transportation costs from Ibadan to the communities.

The local authorities like the village heads shall be part of this process to ensure that it does not fail since it will also serve as a seed bank in case of natural disasters. This is a revival of a seed bank system which traditionally was under the control of local chiefs and served the subjects in situa-

(Continued on page 5)

Biennial Meeting Planning Underway

Friends of Nigeria will be holding its biennial meeting from October 17-30, 2013 at the idyllic Asilomar resort on Monterey Bay in Pacific Grove, Calif. Located on the grounds of a California state park, Asilomar offers some breathtaking scenery and a variety of recreational activities that should appeal to any visitor.

Commenting on the location, FON President, Greg Jones, said "the focus of our meeting this year is on fellowship and what better place to accomplish that than at a knockout gorgeous resort on the California Coast?"

Mike Goodkind, an organizer of the conference and longtime California resident, is assisted by other planning committee members Bud Abbott,

Norm Gary, Jan Heise, Warren Keller, Anne Sherwood, and registration chair Mary-Ann Palmieri. The committee has planned a dinner for Saturday night (included with registration) and a cocktail reception with surprise treats for Thursday night in the lodge's Julia Morgan-designed reception hall. In addition, scheduled walks, talks and optional field trips to such destinations as Central Coast wineries, Point Lobos, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and the beach just below our rooms are in the works. The meetings, scheduled for Friday and Saturday, will focus on FON's ongoing and innovative philanthropy, the future of Peace Corps and Nigeria and programs with FON may which to become involved. President Jones plans also to

discuss the future directions of FON.

Use the registration form on page 13 of the newsletter to register for the meeting and to get further information about hotel reservations and travel options from area airports to Asilomar. Please sign up early. Knowing how many are coming will help the committee plan the best event possible. Further information is available at FONAsilomar@gmail.com.

"We are beyond the summer tourist season, but October is usually the warmest, sunniest time of year to visit California's Central Coast," said Goodkind. Just one more good reason to go ahead and sign up!

President's Column

By Greg Jones (22) 66-68

In response to an appeal from the NPCA for funds to help revamp their membership / mentor database, I commented that we are a relatively “long-in-the-tooth” group as there have been no new volunteers in Nigeria since 1972. The response was twofold: 1) relatively elderly volunteers make excellent mentors, and you, dear reader, should become one (simply go to <http://mentoring.peacecorpsconnect.org/>) and, 2) we are not the only group that has the problem of no new volunteers. The Peace Corps Iran Association has the same problem, exacerbated by the political situation in Iran and domestic fulminations about its potential nuclear program. It is running a session titled *The Complex, Vivid Life of Today's Iran: Reflections and Next Steps for Iran RPCVs and PC Friends* on Friday morning from 9:00 – 10:30 AM at the Peace Corps Connect session in Boston. I plan to attend that meeting and see how the discussion relates to our situation. I will also follow up with individual members of the Peace Corps Iran Association. It helps that I lived for almost two years in Iran (10 years after serving in Nigeria) and I loved the experience. So, if I can get past the “did you ever go to XXX” and “did you ever eat real YYY” discussions, I hope to explore how they are wrestling with the issues of group identity and group survival.

Those who are planning to attend Peace Corps Connect, please join us for dinner Saturday night after the festivities. Actually, as I compose this column, news has arrived that Attiku Abubakar may attend the event. He was awarded the Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award in 2011 and donated the funds that now support the award and the Global Leaders Program going forward. Once his travel schedule becomes clearer, we may host an event in his honor, so the nature of our activities on 6/29 may be changing.

Please plan to attend the bi-annual FON meeting on October 17-20, 2013. Mike Goodkind and crew are planning an interesting program that will be held at Asilomar, an enchanting facility located the grounds of a California State Park on

Monterey Bay in the historic town of Pacific Grove, Calif. I personally am using the event as an excuse to visit the California branch of the family and see some sights that have long been on my bucket list. As indicated above, FON has some real issues to discuss. What criteria should we use in selecting projects we support in Nigeria? Since we can “kiss goodbye” the notion of volunteers ever returning to Nigeria, what should our response be to the fact that in 10 years our average age will be 80? Can we realistically recruit from the Nigeria diaspora? Should we resign ourselves to being an alumni organization that will simply “peter out” as time goes by? Should we enthusiastically embrace the role of being an alumni association as such associations can do far more than just sit around and reminisce? How should we balance our efforts stateside and in Nigeria? Does the fact that our dollar goes so much farther in Nigeria counteract the fact that everything in Nigeria is subject to uncertainty and corruption? What should our relationship be to the NPCA? There are lots of questions we can grapple with and doing so in a beautiful location should help us come to fruitful conclusions.

While I am composing this column, your board is considering how to utilize funds that have accumulated as a result of unrestricted donations and frugal operations. I would like to comment that your board takes its responsibilities to represent you and spend your money wisely very seriously. It is also a very inquisitive board, raising no end of questions when a proposal shows the least hint of ambiguity or fuzzy thinking. The discussion/questioning is ongoing, but stay tuned to the FON Google Group and the next newsletter for the outcome of how the funds have been expended. We are considering very exciting alternative projects. We may be “long in the tooth” and far removed from Nigeria, but clearly our formative experiences in the Peace Corps are still giving us perspective on what will or will not work in Nigeria. We still care deeply that things improve there and we still want to help out.

See you in the fall at Asilomar!

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Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor,

Thanks for the spring 2013 Newsletter. David Strain's review of Chinua Achebe's *There Was a Country*, a Personal History of Biafra, expressed far more understanding of Achebe's message than Adam Nossiter's New York Times review did. Nossiter was writing from the Times West Africa office in Dakar. Distant in space and time from the events that defined Biafra and Nigeria, the New York Times is nevertheless the "newspaper of record," as David calls it. People and news outlets around the world look to the Times for coverage and interpretation, so the impact of Nossiter's shallow and inaccurate review is magnified.

David Strain's review stands as an important counter voice to the Times, along with the letters and recollections from former Nigeria PCVs such as Penny Callan Partridge (23), Dorothy Crews Herzberg (03), James Jablonski (12), Rick Machmer (18), Kathleen Whitney (15), Bob Criso and all the others who have been telling their stories. The Times may have more influence, but FON has more credibility. Since the last reluctant

PCVs evacuated the area at the start of the Biafra-Nigeria war, few other young Americans have been back there to live in the culture so deeply or for so long. Charles Ahlgren (04) said in his letter to FON: "We PCVs were having new experiences that 'burst the spirit's sleep' (from Shelly), that opened us up to new thinking about life and society and created a desire to share these new insights with others..."

We need to keep sharing our insights from a time and place closer to Biafra than Dakar is.

David Koren (9), Umuahia, Eastern Nigeria 64-66; Biafra 68-69.

Dear Editor:

I found David Strain's review of Chinua Achebe's *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra* to be quite interesting. I am currently reading it, so, for me, the review could not be more timely. It is sad, of course, that Achebe recently died, making this his "last" and not his "latest" book.

One set of Strain's comments I especially applaud: His reaction to Adam Nossiter's review of the book in The New York Times. Nossiter is one of the reasons I cancelled my years-long subscription to the former "newspaper of record." I found his and others' reporting on African affairs to be, at best, filled with

pejorative terms and, at worst, racist. (Jeffrey Gettleman is probably the worst, in this regard, but a number of other reporters and editors also share the blame.) After a multitude of emails, pointing out the vulgar attitudes of Nossiter, Gettleman, et al., with no effect (other than the rare, defensive response from an editor which was actually worse than what I was complaining about), I cancelled my subscription.

Errors of fact are also rampant when it comes to African coverage by this newspaper we once thought venerable. Col. Ojukwu's obituary in The Times contained several mistakes, along with what I dub "attitudinal errors" – the draft of the obit was written, obviously, when he was head of Biafra. The same tired phrases and comments that we complained about in 1967 were really inappropriate in 2011. My corrections of factual errors and my complaints about the tone of the obit, emailed immediately, were ignored.

I encourage everyone to complain, repeatedly and specifically, about the racism that is rampant in The Times' stories on Africa. Can we make a difference? If enough of us do it, and do it often (you'll have plenty of opportunities), I am confident that we can.

John Sherman (23) 66-67

FON to Host Dinner at Peace Corps Connect Event

Friends of Nigeria members attending the National Peace Corps Association's (NPCA) Peace Corps Connect "gathering" in Boston are invited to join together for dinner on Saturday, June 29th at Bertucci's Restaurant. Bertucci's is a short walk from the gathering site, the Longmirewood Medical Center, and will follow immediately an NPCA-sponsored evening reception. Reservations for the FON dinner can be made by contacting Murray Frank at mwfrank17@gmail.com.



NPCA's meeting, fashioned on their successful event in Minneapolis last year, is scheduled for June 28th and 29th. Several FON members have registered and FON President Greg Jones will be representing us at the meetings, along with the many "Friends of..." groups attending.

For more information about Peace Corps Connect, go to <http://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/annual-gathering>.

Greetings from Nigeria!

By Stacey Cram (VSO)

Editor's note: VSO volunteer, Stacey Cram, recently arrived in Nigeria and has agreed to provide the newsletter with frequent reports on her work and experiences there.

Last May I had my first interview with VSO in the UK; in the following months



VSO Volunteer Stacey Cram

after several trainings, vaccinations and lots of packing, I accepted a placement with VSO Nigeria. There is no denying that many people thought I was mad for moving here. "Kidnappings", "email scams", "terrorism", "corruption" were among the most frequent words I heard when I broke the news to people that I was packing up my bags and leaving London, my adopted home for the last seven years. I had left before, but that was to work in New York; Nigeria was a whole other ball game. However, the role looked interesting and having spent five years working in international development with only a few short trips to the field, I was eager to take on this more long-term challenge.

I have been living in Ilorin for close to six months now and while I am slowly getting used to how things work, I am still often taken aback by the things I see; just this morning I saw a man on a push bike cycling with his

dog sitting on the crossbar with its two front paws on the handlebar. Ilorin is the State Capital of Kwara State, located in the North Central region. The population is estimated to be around two million, the majority of whom are Yoruba; 40% are Christian and the city's 60% Muslim population worships in what is said to be the largest mosque in West Africa. It's a pretty religious and conservative place. The Pentecostal residents, whom I work with mainly, pray all the time: in the morning before work, at the start of a meeting, at the end of a meeting and before driving to a field visit. There is also a prayer for the NEPA (the electricity) to come on. I stopped going to work prayers on the second day after they started talking about pornography mid-prayer and then encouraged me to attempt speak in tongues! I live in between a church and a mosque so I get prayers blasting through my window at all hours of the day and night so, if it's possible, I am becoming religious through osmosis. Thankfully there are limited security issues in Ilorin and relations between Muslims and Christians are very harmonious; Boko Haram has firmly been kept out by the Emirs across Northern Kwara.

My VSO placement is as an Advocacy Adviser for the Civil Society Action Coali-

tion on Education for All (CSACEFA). CSACEFA is a coalition of NGOs working to ensure that every individual has a right to access and attain the quality education that enables one to achieve dignity as well as contribute to the sustainable future of Nigeria. UNESCO estimates that there are 10.5 million children out of school in Nigeria, accounting for one in every five out of school children in the world. Nigeria needs to move forward and decrease its poverty rate and serious attention must be paid to tackling this issue. I am working to build the capacity of local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and Civil Society Organisations (CSO) so that they are better positioned to advocate the government to improve educational standards and undertake community level advocacy to encourage residents to send their children to school. There are a lot of challenges to overcome but progress is slowly being made.

There is no real average day for me here; work ranges from recording radio shows, school visits in remote rural areas (the most obscure of which could only be reached by a 40-minute canoe ride), meetings with the Commissioner of Education, training NGOs to use social media – the list goes on and on. It's a far cry from my life in London or New York and

while there is no denying sometimes there is a lot of 'wahala' (trouble), I feel there will be no situation I cannot tackle after working here. Nigeria does have a bad reputation; it probably has more problems than any other country I have come across. But the country is fascinating, the challenges are huge and getting your head around them is intriguing, jaw dropping and really quite fun sometimes.



Stacey and friends in Nigeria

*(New FON Projects
Continued from p. 1)*

tions of need or disaster. This system has vanished and will now be restored. The local community shall provide the seed bank store, land, labour and fertilizers for seed variety demonstration by the CAEVs.

Youth Community Center

Michael Mawambi (Uganda) arrived in Nigeria in March 2012 and volunteers with Conscientizing Against Injustice and Violence (CAIV), which attempts to promote activities to improve the quality of lives of Nigerians, especially women, youths, and vulnerable children. Because of its exemplary work in the community, CAIV was offered free land with a building by local authorities in ward 10, Calabar, Cross River State. Michael requested a grant of \$1,875 to renovate the building into a community resource/recreation cen-

ter for at-risk youth. The renovated building will have a hall, office, play room and a mini library. It will also have a playground for sports and games.

With an estimated youth population of 349,000 where 70% are out of school unemployed youths, the 9 communities in ward 10 makes it one of the most volatile communities in Calabar, Cross River State. This area is characterized by worse challenges than those of the other local government areas within the state partly because of its coastal positioning and the increasing number of unemployed youths in the area.

We have designed a project to provide these youths with information for skills acquisition through establishment of a resource centre. Youths will be provided with resourceful information on sexual and reproduction health, employment, peer education, adult literacy, HIV testing and counselling as well as career guidance. In addition, a recreational point will be

set up where youths may converge in the evenings for sports and games.

These youths will be trained and mentored in various disciplines that can improve the quality of their lives. The proposed project will focus on the most vulnerable youths in the community and also empowering the families in addressing the multitude of problems that impact negatively on children's future well-being.

Through my placement in this organisation as a program and fundraising advisor, I initiated a Training and Research program for the organization. We embarked on a research program to ascertain the level of vulnerability of youths in the coastal communities of Calabar though emphasis was put on the nine communities in ward ten because of the level of volatility in these areas. This will be a pilot project in reducing the high rates of youth violence, cultism and unemployment.

The Tuttung Dispensary Renovation Project: A Successful Conclusion

By Jim Clark (12) 64-66

Thanks to the generosity of FON, more than 10,500 "poor people" living in 12 communities in the Jos, Plateau State area of Nigeria now have access to health care.

That's the assessment of VSO volunteer Philemon Tubei, anyway. In June 2012, Tubei submitted a grant request to the FON grants committee requesting \$3,000 to refurbish a badly neglected and unusable community health center in Dengi, Nigeria. The committee said yes! And work began shortly thereafter. In his final report, Tubei stated that the funds were used specifically to strengthen, replaster, and

paint interior and exterior walls, repair and/or replace doors and windows, and repair existing ceilings and roof. All labor was furnished by local craftsmen and community volunteers.

"These renovations," said Tubei, "expanded the dispensary's capacity to handle the community's health needs and increased access of the poor to regular medical care." Consequently, the area's poor are now less likely to have unmet health

needs and are more likely to practice preventive measures.



The Tuttung Medical Dispensary after renovations

Keep The Lorry Rolling!

As of June, 2013

VSO Project (Since 2004)

Total raised:	\$44,619.42
Number of donations:	855
Number of donors:	348

Fantsuam Foundation (Since 2008)

Total raised:	\$22,106.00
Number of donations:	378
Number of donors:	214

Results of November 2012 Solicitation:

Fantsuam	
Foundation donations:	\$1,535.00
VSO donations:	\$1,120.00
Unrestricted donations:	\$4,607.00

Work Nearing Completion with Panyam Reforestation Project

By Jim Clark (12) 64-66

As reported in FON's spring 2012 newsletter, work on the FON-funded Panyam Reforestation project was at that time well underway in Nigeria's Plateau State. It is now nearing its completion.

Under the direction of VSO volunteer Silvester Odundo, the project had its beginnings in July 2012 when FON's grants committee agreed to fund the grant request for \$1,200 submitted by the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) as a part of COCIN's community development initiative.

Odundo reports that work began im-

mediately on the establishment of a tree nursery that would house *jatropha*, *tectonia grandis* (teak), *jacaranda ferusa* and *eucalyptus esculentum* tree seedlings. At the proper time, the more mature plants would be used to reforest areas that had been deforested by overcutting or climatic conditions. To date, over 4,000 seedlings are available for planting with another and 8,000 more *tectonia grandis* seeds purchased for raising in 2013.

As of April 2012, Odundo reports that 20 interns, 40 COCIN coordinators and 300 church members have been trained; three environmental clubs (each containing 50 student members) have

been formed in three secondary schools and that a soft-cover technical guide on the management of *moringa oleifera* has been compiled. The COCIN leaders have encouraged the community to "religiously observe environmental day each June 5th".

Odundo states that the project is on a sustainable path and is likely to continue well into the future guided by local farmers, trained staff and a grateful community. "CCDP remains indebted to FON," states Odundo and "heartfelt thanks are extended from the communities and students affected."



2 kg *Tectonia grandis* seeds



Tectonia grandis raised on March 19, 2013



Mr. Longpan (trained CCDP staff), tending the new nursery of trees



Mr. Silvester (VSO volunteer) watering the trees



Mr. Longpan roguing the tree nursery



Mr. Silvester displaying the trees raised in the nursery

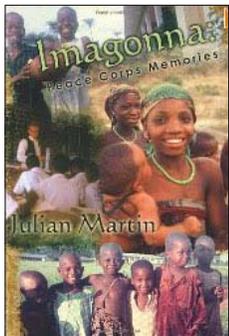
**Imagonna:
Peace Corps Memories**

By Julian Martin (3) 61-63

Amazon.com (2012)

Reviewed by Hugh Rogers

“In March, 1961, the day after President Kennedy announced he was forming the Peace Corps, I called Washington and volunteered.” Julian Martin, now a well-known political activist, recalls those days in his newly published memoir, *Imagonna*. What he tells about his motivation—his activities in the Wesley Foundation at West Virginia University, his discovery of certain heroes—only begins to explain that leap into the unknown. Some people are just born radical, although it helps if you’re born



into a family of altruistic Christians and union activists. In 1961, a “peace corps” was a radical idea.

It’s still a miniscule program. The number of volunteers who have served over

the past fifty years, 200,000, is less than ten percent of the number of active military and reserves serving just this year. Our military personnel are stationed in 150 countries. At one time or another, Peace Corps had projects in 139; currently, about 8,000 PCV’s are working in 77 countries. Coincidentally, they are no longer sent to the countries where Julian and I went, Nigeria and Korea.

Among RPCV’s (Returned Peace Corps Volunteers), *Imagonna* will bring up lots of stories. Let me mention two more coincidences. The title of Julian’s book comes from his students’ puzzlement at a particular word he used—which turned out to be his pronunciation of “I am going to.” Similarly, my wife Ruth had to overcome her North

Carolina accent so her students could be understood. Like Julian, who married a fellow PCV in Nigeria, we had a baby in Korea. In both places, strangers were curious and direct about the babies’ sex. His girl’s diaper was pulled off. Ruth learned how to say, “Yes, he has a chili pepper!” while yanking our boy away from probing fingers.

Julian was not only the first volunteer from West Virginia, he was one of the first from anywhere in the country. Peace Corps’ fledgling bureaucracy made some annoying mistakes. The telegram that arrived a few months after his call said he was being sent to Nicaragua. That was easy to correct, but the trainees rebelled at the pervasive pseudopsychology that was supposed to reveal character weaknesses. The language Julian was taught, Hausa, was useless in the Igbo region where he was sent. Fortunately, he was expected to teach chemistry, and coach track, in English, the language of education in the former colony. He learned Igbo on his own.

Instead of dealing with English colonials, he had to cope with Irish priests. His boss at the missionary school was a throwback in a long white cassock. He calls him Headmaster:

“For two years I would witness Headmaster’s vow of humility being tested daily by the power he possessed to lord it over, abuse, and degrade the hired help and the three hundred teenage boys under his control. He usually failed the test.”

And not only the vow of humility. The vow of poverty was difficult to reconcile with the cook, two houseboys, well-furnished house, new Peugeot, ample foreign food, etc. Headmaster’s irritable temper and bigotry seemed to indicate he’d overstayed. The plush situation might help to explain why he didn’t leave.

Julian would learn that even his hero in Africa, Albert Schweitzer, was an appalling racist. His Peace Corps friend, William Shurtleff, who had worked for Schweitzer at the Lambarene hospital, could only shrug and quote the great

man’s biographer: “A man does not have to be an angel to be a saint.”

“Culture shock” had to do with more than poverty, strange food, and mysterious customs. While trying to answer his students’ questions about faraway American racism, Julian became aware of local animosities between Igbos, Hausas, and Yorubas. The Biafran War, in which up to a million Igbos died, began shortly after he left. The neighboring country of Cameroon was already seething with insurrection. On vacation there in what he had thought was a safe mountain region, he had an AK-47 stuck in his face, and ate dinner beneath “fencing that swooped from the roof to the street” to divert hand grenades.

Nevertheless, it was a happy vacation: “Dispositions become flowery in a cool climate.” Perhaps he was missing West Virginia. Back at school, his thoughts of home turned to practical help. Friends from his chemical engineering class at WVU arranged donations of more than four hundred books, not only badly needed textbooks but a diverse collection for the school library. A wall-sized periodic chart of the elements came courtesy of Charleston Catholic High School.

Julian’s letters, saved by family and friends, and a journal he kept intermittently, were sources and “memory joggers” for the book. We get a double perspective, the eager 25-year-old and the reflective 75-year-old. Brief sections, some less than a page long, carry the story forward with no dilly-dallying. Yet it doesn’t seem hurried or thin; there’s a lot to savor.

There are moments when the full import of what he did appears in a startling image. His best student grew up in a mud hut with a thatched roof where his mother pounded yams into fufu. It looked exactly like a picture in the encyclopedia illustrating family life in 3000 B.C. Now Edwin Igbozurike could figure out, with a piece of zinc and a copper sulfate solution, the equivalent weight of copper. Julian writes, “Edwin made a five-thousand-year leap.”

Reforming the Unreformable: Lessons from Nigeria

by Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

The MIT Press 2012,
198 pages, \$24.95.

Reviewed by David Strain (07) 63-64

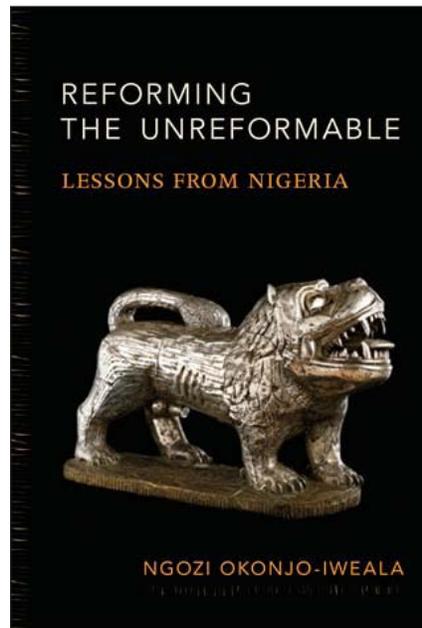
A certain cynicism is hard to restrain when thinking about Nigeria's governments (federal, state (36), and local (774)). I remember President Obasanjo early in his first term reporting, with an expectation of praise, that "leakage" of oil revenues, the predominant source of all of these governments' income, had been limited to "only a third". President Jonathan has hardly burnished his anti-corruption credentials by his March 2013 pardon of former Bayelsa State governor Alamieyeseigha, convicted of stealing millions from his state's coffers.

But then you read in *Reforming the Unreformable* of the hardy band of Nigerian reformers, led by Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala who was appointed Minister of Finance and head of the Economic Team at the start of Obasanjo's second term in 2003. An accomplished economist educated at Harvard and MIT, Okonjo-Iweala, an Igbo from Ogwashi-Uku, was at the time of appointment vice-president and recording secretary of the World Bank. Her international reputation and expertise, as we'll see shortly, was one key to Obasanjo's motives in appointing her; they also helped guide her attack on the Nigerian government's many economic problems, and she had friendships with others with relevant experiences, one being Amaury Bier, former deputy finance minister of Brazil.

Some key problems did not involve corruption, for example, the "Dutch disease". Countries experiencing massive increases in income from extractive industries such as Nigeria's oil (in the Netherland's case it was North Sea natural gas) find their currency appreciating versus other currencies. The effect is to make their other exports, agriculture in Nigeria's case, too expensive in world markets. Nigeria experienced an almost 100% decline in

agricultural exports, and a rush of workers to the city, although oil industry jobs were few.

A second problem was the volatility of oil prices which swung wildly between \$8 a barrel in the mid-80s to \$145. Oil is 75% of the government's revenue so these gyrations made it difficult to plan and complete projects. To solve this the Economic Team instituted a budgeting process, the Oil Price-based Fiscal Rule which allowed the government to use only amounts equal to a ten year "average" oil price, banking the balance in an Excess Crude oil account to pay for government services when oil prices sank. The timing was good; oil prices were on the rise allowing the government to



amass substantial reserves before payments were needed. This rule applied to states and local governments also, who under the constitution, received half of the oil revenues, and who protested mightily about being restricted from a full immediate flood of oil cash.

The Economic Team also instituted transparency, so for the first time the amounts of oil revenues and the amounts delivered to state and local governments were published regularly in newspapers for the public to view, and to wonder, for example, why teachers had not been paid. To encourage private enterprise the

government sold or leased some of its 590 public enterprises (the opening of mobile telecommunications to the private market was a positive) but ran into obstacles where entrenched interests were too powerful; examples: local oil refineries, electricity generation and distribution. (Government industries were not only a source of graft but also a place for legislators to provide jobs to constituents). Attempts to reform the hugely corrupt Customs Service ran into Obasanjo's direct opposition.

Okonjo-Iweala details her plans and their problems, including others not mentioned above, in clear but measured tones, and while she does not name names, she makes clear who thwarted adoption of her desired reforms.

The earlier oil revenue fluctuations had led to extensive borrowing. Nigeria had a \$36 billion external debt at the beginning of Obasanjo's second term, which he considered to be a real drag on Nigeria's lagging economy. Ultimately for Obasanjo, it was the external \$30 billion debt owed to the Paris Club of creditors which he wanted to shake free from, and he informed Okonjo-Iweala of this early on. For many, including the creditor banks, it was hard, in a time of high oil prices, to place oil rich Nigeria into the group of impoverished African debtor countries who required debt relief in order to survive. Okonjo-Iweala, with her extensive international banking and non-profit knowledge and connections, was able to convince these organizations that Nigeria, emerging as a newly democratic country, after decades of military exploitation, and adopting reforms to set the country straight, was deserving of a "democracy dividend," massive debt relief despite burgeoning oil prices. The arguments were interesting: high oil prices cannot be assumed as the Oil Price-based Fiscal Rule Nigeria had adopted showed; oil money comes from a dwindling asset and must be spent to secure Nigeria's future, not pay for its past corrupt debt. Moreover if forced to pay off the debt Nigeria could not use the money to meet (by 2015) its Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty, 100% primary education, decreasing infant

(Continued on next page)

“Disappeared” Nigeria RPCVs

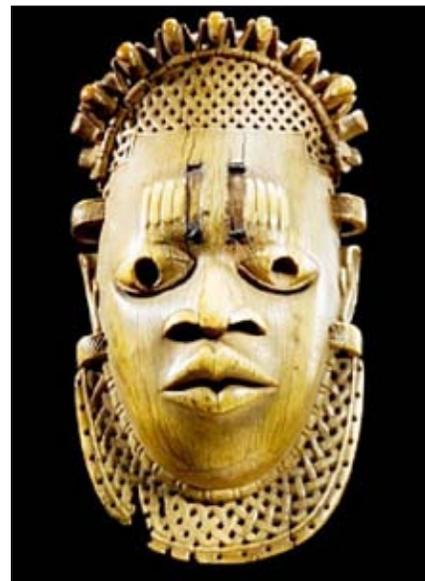
By Peter Hansen (27) 66-68

One of the difficulties of maintaining a database of nearly 2000 Nigeria RPCVs, staff, and friends results from the mobility of Americans. People move but do not always provide us with their new address – and in some cases neither does the USPS. People also die and the USPS simply returns their newsletters marked “not deliverable as addressed.” The individuals listed below all received our FON newsletter at one time (in the city shown), but they subsequently vanished. If you are in touch with any of these folks, or if you have any information as to their whereabouts, would you please contact me at pjhansen717@gmail.com or 319-466-3119? Thanks for your help.

Diane K. McDowell, La Quinta, CA – Nigeria 4 (62-63)
Syed Malik (fka Cedric C Clark) Khatib, Riverside, CA – Nigeria 4 (62-64)
Johnnie Prather, Washington, DC – Nigeria 4 (62-64)
Ann (Smith) Dieye, San Mateo, CA – Nigeria 10 (64-66)
Calvin Albert Kiiffner, Washington, CT

– Nigeria 11 (64-66)
Patricia Bonifer Tiedt, Alexandria, VA – Nigeria 13 (64-66)
Susan S. (Oliver) Kintner, Westport, CT – Nigeria 13 (64-66)
Shaun A. Burns, San Jose, CA – Nigeria 15 (65-67)
Stephen L. Tack, Fairbanks, AK – Nigeria 15 (65-67)
James R. Melton, Humble, TX – Nigeria 16 (65-66)
Leonard R. Slock, San Francisco, CA – Nigeria 16 (65-67)
Sandra Lee (McNett) McGowan, Miami, FL – Nigeria 19 (65-67)
Robert J (Bob) Royer, Seattle, WA – Nigeria 20 (66-67)
David E. Baldwin, Oceanside, CA – Nigeria 24 (66-68)
Richard L. Barr, Calgary, AB, Canada – Nigeria 24 (66-67)
Barry L. Fankhauser, Narrabundah, ACT, Australia – Nigeria 31 (68-71)
Elizabeth Hodes, Santa Barbara, CA – Nigeria 31 (68-71)
Leon Carl Jacobsen, Takoma Park, MD – PCV (67-67)

Derel D. Schrock, Colorado Springs, CO – PCV (61-61)
Mary Grummon, East Lansing, MI – PC staff spouse (61-62)
Charles J. & Maureen T. Nelson, Washington, DC – PC staff (61-64)



Nigerian Protesters Force Sotheby's To Shelve Planned Sale Of Stolen Benin Ivory Mask, December 26, 2010

(Reforming the Unreformable continued)

mortality etc. The argument succeeded. The Paris Group wrote off \$18 billion when Nigeria from its newly increased reserves paid off \$12 billion, a sixty percent write-off. Okonjo-Iweala had delivered Obasanjo his objective.

The Economic Team were intended to be technocrats and not political, and they attempted to be that . . . to their pain. Considering the failures, Okonjo-Iweala chides herself for not paying more attention to the politicians – whom she found generally unlikeable. It's hard to see how it would have made a difference given they were polar opposites in purpose. She knew she needed the President's support, but

Obasanjo showed his limits when he nixed Customs reform. After Okonjo-Iweala negotiated the debt reduction, Obasanjo removed her as Finance Minister and from the leadership of the Economic Team; he appointed her Foreign Minister, from which she shortly abruptly resigned. After returning to a position as Managing Director with the United Nations (2007-2012), she was persuaded by President Jonathan to return as Nigeria's Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Finance Minister.

Reforming the Unreformable is meant as a primer for reformers in other developing countries, but it is a hopeful book for all of us who wish Nigeria well. There was a band of Nigerians willing to butt heads and take risks for their country, who developed, tried, and implemented reforms, even in

the midst of being used for ulterior purposes. From Obasanjo's perspective much of the reform was window dressing to obtain debt relief. His support for reform flagged after debt relief was obtained. Much of the debt payments saved, ostensibly for Millennium Development Goals, appear to have “leaked” elsewhere. Nevertheless the Economic Team increased transparency, improved budgeting and control of expenditures, and did accomplish many of their aims to privatize corrupt public enterprises. *Reforming the Unreformable* is must reading, for both the developing and developed world, on how to take on massive problems . . . as Chinua Achebe often said, change comes incrementally.

Observations of the Biafran War from the Northern Region

By Gerald Sodomka (21) 66-68

I have been reading with great interest in the Friends of Nigeria Newsletter all the recent articles and book reviews of the tragic Biafran War. I knew Bob Criso from my training group, bought David Koren's book "Far Away in the Sky," and had an email exchange with Josh Arinze. I bought Chinua Achebe newest book "There was a Country" and just read the Nossiter review in the New York Times. I was part of the Nigeria 21 training group. We started training in St. Croix, Virgin Islands in early February 1966 and arrived in Nigeria in early May. We were sandwiched in between the two military coups.



Gerald Sodomka, left, shaking hands with PC Director Jack Vaughn

I was sent to Sokoto in the north-west corner of the Northern Region only about 60 miles from the Niger border. This is the historic religious center of the Islamic north and the tribal area of the Hausa/Fulani. The Sultan of Sokoto was the de facto religious leader in the North. I was assigned to the Government Craft School, which only had Forms 1-3 and included classes in metal and woodworking. I was to be the math and science teacher. There had never been a PC Volunteer there before, and the school was completely rundown with every window broken, had no textbooks, and all paper and wood in the science storeroom had been eaten by termites. Only glassware had survived.

Additionally there was no principal and a shortage of staff and no housing available for me on the school com-

pound, which was miles outside of town on the road to Birnin Kebbi. I moved in with other volunteers at a house on the brand new Federal School, which was also outside of town, but on the main road to Zaria, Kano and Kaduna. So I had a long commute and no transportation. I was dependent on the unreliable school lorry to pick me up to take me to school. I finally got a Honda 50. And a new principal too!

I set to work. The Ministry of Education was putting money into improving the school. I eventually got textbooks and science equipment, but only taught math classes the first year, because no one else was available. All of this was interrupted by what was called the "northern riots" not long after my arrival. We would call this ethnic cleansing now. The principal ordered the students not to go into town, but many went anyway, and two ended up getting killed, supposedly by soldiers. I never knew the truth. The Ibo area of town was ransacked. I watched a long parade of mammy wagons piled high with belongings going past the Federal School for the long trip south. I never found out how many people were killed and didn't see any carnage myself.

Since the principal and I were the only senior staff (university graduates) at the school, I was automatically made vice-principal. I felt inadequate for this responsibility, so I maneuvered to have Malam Nuhu Koko, although junior staff, made vice-principal. The Ministry of Education approved it, and I breathed a sigh of relief. He was a local Hausa with excellent English, a keen intelligence, and a congenial personality. Our principal was an Igala and knew less Hausa than I did. He was eventually transferred out, along with all other non-Hausa staff. As things deteriorated with the looming civil war, all of this turned out to be a very fortunate decision on my part, as Nuhu Koko turned out to be a solid and steady friend and made me feel I had someone to rely on if things got very iffy.

I never felt threatened through my whole Peace Corps experience in Sokoto. The worst was the disappearance of imported supplies, the long delays in receiving mail, and the isolation and uncertainty because Sokoto really was the end-of-the-line in Nigeria. This isolation was actually a benefit in some ways. We were far removed from the action. There was only a feeble attempt at bombing the Sokoto airport that did no damage.

In April 1967 I realized that civil war would soon break out and decided I wanted to travel in the Eastern Region before it was too late. No one wanted to go with me, so I went alone. It was a long trip, 2 or 3 days to Lagos, another day to Benin City, and then to Onitsha. Crossing the Nigeria River Bridge was like going into another country. I have never been searched so thoroughly in my life. Not at the London airport during the height of the IRA problem, not going into Israel or Cuba, and not traveling in southern Mexico during the Zapatista uprising and driving through innumerable road blocks, both in government and Zapatista areas.

The border guards on the east side of the Niger River were very suspicious. I lied about my working in the North. It was late in the afternoon when I finally cleared "customs." I found a cheap hotel and went to eat in its modest restaurant. There was an Easterner who invited me to have a beer and eat with him. He too was very suspicious and wanted to know what I was doing there. I started asking myself the same question. My plan was to go to the coast and catch a boat to the island of Fernando Po. I went to bed having decided to go back to Lagos and head north to Sokoto. I went to the famous market the next day, took a few photos, and got a taxi to Lagos. It seemed too risky for me to stay in what soon would become Biafra. I didn't want to slip up and be arrested as a "spy."

The war soon began. Peace Corps told us that in the case of evacuation

(Continued on next page)

we would be on our own. My plan was to head north to the Niger border, on a camel if necessary and I couldn't find other transportation. A second volunteer, Tom Comer, had been assigned to my school. We joked about using two camels, as the Honda couldn't carry both of us on the long, dirt road north. I always had confidence that Nuhu Koko and my cook Moyi Gwiwa would help me if it became necessary. Moyi sent me letters for years afterwards, even though he couldn't read and write English. He paid someone to do it.

Early in the Civil War, especially after the Biafran invasion of the Mid-West Region and the thrust toward Lagos, I thought the Federal government might collapse. By the time I terminated in April 1968 I thought the secession and war would not end favorably for Biafra. I was surprised that it went on so long, all due to the talent and determination of the Ibos and the airlift of food, medicine and arms. This only made the ending more tragic.

I suppose Biafra might have survived if it had pulled off an early victory and had more African and international support. There has always been a belief in Africa that the old colonial borders should be respected, no matter how absurd they are. This attitude worked against Biafra. A small country can exist, but it has to be supported by its neighbors, not opposed by it.



Gerald Sodoma now

There's plenty of blame to put on everyone. I think the major blame falls on the North for turning a blind eye to the pogroms that precipitated the massive exodus out of the North. However, passions were running so high and rivalries were so strong that the necessary compromises couldn't be made. My disappointment with Achebe's new book is not with the factual rendition of all of the events of the war. The author is very careful about this. I guess I was expecting a deeper reflection on his role in the terrible sequence of events that was the Biafran war and how he might have helped avoid the staggering death toll. This is his valedictory address to the world and his justification for his actions.

I think the best account of the Biafran War that I have read is the book "The Brothers' War – Biafra and Nigeria" by John de St. Jorre. It was published in 1972. St. Jorre wrote for the Observer and covered both sides of the war and was a witness to the events.

There are certain vivid memories that are still strong. One was the time I was in Kaduna, where the PC had its office. The war had started. We had gone to the Hamdala Hotel, the best hotel in the North with its Olympic-sized swimming pool and snack bar that served hamburgers. We had nothing at all like this in Sokoto! Lounging around the pool was a group of Czech and Russian advisors from the Soviet Bloc.

Another time was when we had a student-staff soccer match. We staff won 2-0, with me scoring a lucky goal and another staff member, who was known for his excessive drinking and missing his classes, scored the other. The school boys were exhilarated by the improbable outcome. I was too.

There were two moments when the Sultan of Sokoto visited the school. He arrived in his stretch limousine Mercedes dressed in his traditional finery. I greeted him in Hausa and shook his hand. The principal was more nervous than I was. We were later invited to a fancy dinner in the Sultan's mud-walled palace. The old city was still surrounded by mud walls with impressive gates leading into

it. We sat on the floor to eat, and it was probably the best meal I had in Nigeria. The end of Ramadan was the most colorful and festive time. In front of the palace there were drummers, dancers, and a parade of mounted horsemen. It was right out of National Geographic, as were the long camel caravans that used to arrive from across the Sahara Desert in the winter time. I feel privileged to have experienced all of this.

The saddest and most memorable moment was during my last term at the school. A new principal had arrived who was totally different. The first had been very difficult. Tom and I had previously moved to a house at the Craft School. The first principal had treated us badly because of a long series of events, culminating in his shutting off the water to our house. Tom transferred to another school, and I stayed to finish my term. For the first time the new principal offered the school lorry to bring the bottled gas that we used in cooking. Previously I had had to balance the empty tank in my lap for the long trip into town and return with the heavy load on the Honda 50. The new principal asked me to extend my stay, but I had already decided it was time to leave.

My last months were bittersweet as I watched conditions decline in Nigeria. Yet I had a new supportive atmosphere at the school which encouraged me, but I was unsure about how much of what I had done to improve things at the school would survive my leaving. I never missed any classes, was always present for after-class sports supervision, and never missed bed check when I was on duty. I thought I set a good example for the students.

I often joke now that I was at the worst school in Nigeria and had the worst principal in Nigeria. I don't know that this is true, but I can say that my circumstances were challenging. I was happy that I was able to complete my full term of service in Nigeria. I flew out of Kano to Europe with absolutely no regrets. Well, maybe one – I never made it to Fernando Po.

APOCALYPSE THEN (Part Two)

By Bob Criso (21)66-67

In Part one, a crowd gathered around Bob's house after two PCV's, unknown to the locals, returned there with him. After a confrontation at the front door, two men rolled a fifty gallon kerosene drum under his house.

"Bob, they're going to kill us! They're going to burn the house down." Laura was shaking.

"So this is how I'm going to die." I visualized the headlines of my hometown newspaper: **Peace Corps Volunteer Killed in Nigeria.**

I grabbed Laura by the shoulders. "Put your sneakers on. We may have to make a run for it." Jeff was silent and frozen.

Outside, an elderly local man stepped up onto a flat tree stump and addressed the crowd. He told them that he knew me, I was a good man and the two visitors were my friends. "Come to your senses!" he shouted like a scolding parent.

It started to rain and the crowd quieted and thinned.

That evening, Ugwu, Ekuma and Otu, fellow teachers, came to the house. They were somber-faced, apologetic and ashamed. "We are all in a panic," Ugwu said. "People are coming from the North with unimaginable stories, making some of us paranoid and crazy."

Laura and Jeff wanted to leave. I asked the teachers if they would bring them to the nearby train station in the morning. They could go to Enugu and tell Ruth Olsen what was happening. Feeling responsible, over-responsible as I look back on it,

I remained behind to wait for help to pick up the others.

A few people, all unknown to me, still loitered around the house. We were unable to sleep that night. The next morning the teachers returned and took Laura and Jeff to the train. Sometime during the night, Felix, the houseboy, disappeared.

For the next twenty four hours all I could think of was: *Where the fuck is the Peace Corps?* A few people still milled around the house, maybe keeping watch. The kerosene drum was still under the house and I was afraid to go to sleep.

The next morning a military jeep pulled up in front of my house. I recognized June, the Peace Corps nurse, sitting in the back seat. I felt like I had been thrown a life raft in the middle of the Atlantic. A Biafran army officer got out wearing a fancy red beret. Two soldiers holding rifles wore crisp new khaki uniforms.

"Let's go NOW," June said. "We have to pick up Alan. Everyone else has gone. We have to get to Port Harcourt."

Alan was in Okposi, outside of Afikpo and the trip there was filled with more roadblock confrontations, even with the soldiers. I followed the jeep in the van. On a bush road outside of Okposi we encountered an unruly crowd in front of a large tree blocking the red clay road. We were in the middle of a heavy rain. They refused to let us pass. Finally, the frustrated officer just turned around and signaled for me to pull around the fallen tree. I swallowed hard and drove through the crowd, not knowing what to expect.

We picked up Alan who came into the van with me. The next challenge was getting to Port Harcourt. There were lots of people walking along the sides of the roads carrying bags in their hands and on their heads, refugees we assumed. As we pulled into Aba, the sun was setting and there were lots of small cooking fires with people camping alongside the road. We had a major confrontation as we entered the city, only this time some of the locals had guns. After a heated exchange the officer got into the jeep and gunned the engine. I did the same and followed. As we pulled away, I realized that the shots I heard were probably being fired at us.

We made it to the boat in Port Harcourt and left that night. In the middle of the night the boat were stopped at sea by the naval blockade. There was a stalemate for quite a while and then we continued. We stopped at Lagos and then went on to Accra where PCV's were reassigned or went home. I flew to my new post in Somalia.

In part three Bob tries to track down Ruth, Laura, Jeff, June and Alan in order to get their recollections. In 2008 he returns to Nigeria and his old house.



Bob Criso now.

Atiku Abubakar to Visit the United States

Former Nigerian Vice President and Harris Wofford Global Citizen Award winner Atiku Abubakar will visit the United States during the last week of June 2013. Abubakar speaks often of his PCV teachers and has contributed substantially to the founding of the American University of Nigeria. The Global

Citizen award is made possible by a generous gift from Abubakar, a businessman and philanthropist.

The FON board appointed a committee to arrange informal meetings in Abubakar's honor in both DC and Boston. The Boston meeting will take place on Thursday, June 27th at a time and

place to be announced and the DC meeting will be coordinated with meetings at American University. More information on both events will be available on the FON Google Group.

Please come and meet one of Peace Corps' most enthusiastic supporters.

**FON Biennial Meeting
Registration Form
Thursday, Oct. 17 to Sunday, Oct. 20, 2013**

Name(s) _____ #of persons _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

FON member: Yes, No, but let me know how to sign up.

FON affiliation: RPCV? Yes, group number _____ Other _____

I am coming to the October FON events. Enclosed is a check for \$135 per person.*

I am interested in a training group reunion during the weekend.

I would be interested in sharing a hotel room.

Please mail check and the completed form to:

Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri

149 West St.

New Salem, MA 1355

Phone: 978-544-2611; E-mail: mapalmieri1126@gmail.com

Hotel Reservations: To reserve a room, call Asilomar at 888-635-5310, Prompt 2. Please tell the reservationist that you would like your reservation keyed to individual itinerary 8000218X0 (zeroes, not letter "o").

Transportation: shuttle buses connect San Jose (SJC), San Francisco (SFO) and Monterey (MRY) airports with the front door of Asilomar. Driving time from SJC is about 75 minutes. Rail and bus are also available.

For further information, contact Mary-Ann at the above address or use our email hotline, FONAsilomar@gmail.com. (We'll be happy to phone back).

MEETING DETAILS WILL BE UPDATED ON THE FON WEBSITE:

www.friendsofnigeria.org or join a discussion at the FONmembers GoogleGroup site: <http://groups.google.com/group/FON-members>

*A portion of any unspent funds may be used to fund FON's charitable activities in Nigeria.



In Memoriam

Chandler B. Parker (9) 63-65

Chandler Parker died Thursday, April 14, 2011 in Chelmsford, Mass. where he had resided for the past 30 years. He was born in Manchester, NH on May 7, 1937 and was the son of the late Frederic and Elisabeth (Shirley) Parker. He received his early education in Cambridge schools and was a graduate of the Buckingham, Browne & Nichols School in Cambridge. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and his master's degrees from Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT and Harvard University.

Parker served in the United States Army and later in the Peace Corps from 1963 to 1965. As a Peace Corps volunteer, he served as a teacher in Ikole-Editi, Nigeria. He returned home and continued his passion for education teaching in Massachusetts at Lexington High School, Arlington High School, Brookline High School, Nashoba Valley Technical High School in Westford, the Western Reserve Academy in Ohio, and The Hill School in Pa. He spent his last 23 years as a teacher at Andover High School.

He will be remembered for his keen intellect, quick wit, great laugh, love of teaching and life, and his ability to shape the lives of many students' futures. He was an avid reader and had a great appreciation for music and art. He also enjoyed gourmet cooking, traveling, writing poetry, fishing, skiing, photography, politics, fine dining, Wellfleet, Mass., and the New England Patriots.

Chandler Parker is survived by his wife of 43 years, Nasrin (Majde-Ziae), and a daughter, Katherine E. Parker of Charlestown.

[Source: *The Boston Globe*, April 17, 2011]

Dennis F. Dunmire (23) 66-67

Dennis (Dennie) Dunmire passed away on May 3, 2013 in Wilmington, NY. He was born in Kittanning, Pa. on December 16, 1943, the son of Robert

and Gertrude Dunmire. He attended Penn State University where he earned an undergraduate degree in science and a few years later received a master's degree from Michigan State University. Following his undergraduate degree, he joined the Peace Corps, serving as a teacher in Ikot-Epene, Nigeria. At the outbreak of the Biafran war, he was evacuated to Tanzania where he completed his Peace Corp service.

In 1968 he returned to the United States to teach biology in Cleveland, Ohio where he met his wife Karen. They were married on November 22, 1969. Denny and Karen left Cleveland to begin a life of adventure, teaching overseas. They began their overseas teaching careers in Zambia. Denny, a science, math, and computer teacher, traveled extensively with his family. He lived and taught in Zambia, Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Poland, and Spain. For some years he also was on the faculty at North Country School, in Lake Placid, N.Y. After he retired from teaching overseas, he taught at the National Sports Academy in Lake Placid, N.Y. Denny was a passionate JV and Varsity soccer coach as well as a wrestling coach for many years. He was a voracious reader, who was most enthused when he was learning about a new scientific theory, the latest technological advances, or reading about history.

Prior to his illness, Denny was engaged in an active retirement which included everything he most loved. He was at the family home "The Knoll" surrounded by his eclectic collection of books and music. His tools were close at hand for his next building project, and his lesson plans were meticulously prepared. He was an inspiring teacher and mentor, who never lost his youthful enthusiasm for other cultures. He was also an avid Steelers fan. During his many years overseas he easily adapted to homes in different countries, but his true home and happiest times were at The Knoll, surrounded by his family and friends.

He is survived by his wife Karen, daughters Erika and Coco Dunmire, and

ten sisters and their families: Anne and Terry Bumpers, Evelyn and Lance Benton, Jeanne and Bruce Watson, Roberta and Robert Jack, Marian and John Morris, Kathleen and Michael Woytowish, Arleen and Rob Pryde, Carol Shepard and Greg Wyant, Nancy Johnson and Laura and Charles Himes.

Patrick James Weagruff, (Staff) 67-68

Patrick James Weagruff passed away at home in Mission Viejo, Calif. December 9, 2010. Weagruff was born on May 27, 1940 to Donnabelle O'Brian in Cuba, N.Y. He grew up in Buffalo, NY and graduated from Hutch-Tech H.S in 1958. He served in the USAF Reserve from 1958-1962. In 1959 he married Jane Kinsman and fathered three children. In 1963 he graduated with a BS from SUNY, Buffalo, and in 1964 received a MEd. from the University of Maryland.

At the young age of twenty five, Weagruff was personally recruited by Sargent Shriver to the position of Assoc. Director U.S. Peace Corps, Lagos, Nigeria 1965-1968 where he was responsible for more than 400 volunteers. One of his most valued accomplishments was the collection, preservation and storage of African tribal artifacts. He was a recipient of the Legion of Merit-Nigeria.

Weagruff returned to the United States in 1968, graduated from UCLA in 1970 with an EdD and in 1971 with a PhD. From 1971-1993 he continued his career as a California state government official and, in that capacity, he worked to lower barriers and advance women into senior management positions and championed the chronic and persistently mentally ill. Patrick's greatest passion was as a teacher and educator, which he considered to be his most cherished and honored roles. Patrick authored nine books, several manuals and more than forty published reports and articles. He can be found in *Who's Who in the West*, 1978-1979 16th Edition, 1982-1983 18th Edition, 1998-1999, 26th Edition and *Who's Who in America* 1999-2000, the

53rd Edition and Millennium Edition.

He is survived by his wife, Sandra; children, Kim York, Susan Rye, Patrick Weagraff Jr., Nickolas Turner and Michael Weagraff and grandchildren, Karissa and Kaili York and Austin and Ava Weagraff.

[Source: *Orange County Register*, December 21, 2010]

John M. Pincetich (Staff) 66-66

John M. Pincetich passed away on April 6, 2013 in Seaside, Ore. John was born on September 4, 1916 in Astoria, Ore. where he attended grade school and later graduated from Astoria High School. He briefly attended the University of Oregon prior to joining the US Navy and serving as a pilot in WWII.

After a successful career in Hawaii, Pincetich served as a member of the Peace Corps staff in Nigeria in 1966 and later served in Micronesia and Malaysia. In 1981, he and his wife, Jerry, returned to Nigeria as UNICEF representatives to work on clean water projects. He was active in Common Cause and directed Hawaii's bicentennial celebration in 1976.

In 1981, Pincetich and his family settled in Gearhart, Ore. where Jerry became active in community affairs while John continued his work on overseas projects.

John Pincetich is survived by his children, Michael and Daniel; grandchildren John, Andrew, Christopher and Brian; and great-grandchildren Seth, Giselle, Jonah, Genevieve and Zane.

[Source: Michael and Daniel Pincetich]

John Malcolm Violette (9) 63-65

John M. Violette passed away on early Friday morning, December 14, 2012, at the Maine Veteran's Home in Scarborough, Maine. He was born on January 27, 1930 in Boston, Mass, a son of Alvie and Geneva (Mason) Violette,

later moving with his family from Eagle Lake to southern Maine in 1937. He graduated from Old Orchard Beach high school, class of 1947.

Violette received a Bachelor's degree from Boston College in 1953 and his Masters Degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1956. He also did graduate work at Harvard University and the University of California at Los Angeles.

He served his country in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict and the United States Peace Corps from 1963 to 1965. John lived in Zaria during his time in Nigeria and taught at Government College in Zaria.

Violette was a professor of English and Humanistic Studies at the University of Wisconsin and also taught at Ohio University, Florida A&M University, Southern Illinois University and Westbrook College. He was also employed by the United States Postal Service from 1979 to 1996 as a training technician in the development center.

John Violette is survived by his brother and sister-in-law Charles and Laura Violette of Hot Springs Village, Arkansas, as well as two nieces, Cynthia and Jennifer, two nephews David and Michael and was also loved by many other relatives and friends.

[Source: cotefuneralhome.com]

Jules Burstein (10) 64-66

Jules Burstein, Ph.D., died at his home in Berkeley, Calif., on Feb. 24, 2012. Jules served in Oke-Mesi, Nigeria during the years 1964-66 as a math teacher at the Anglican Grammar School.

Burstein graduated from Brooklyn College, NYU and the New School in New York and the CSPP in San Francisco. He was dedicated to his work as both a psychotherapist and forensic psychologist. He remained devoted to liberal and humanistic causes both in his community and the wider world. He will be missed by family and friends and will remain an inspiration to those who knew him and were touched by the beauty of

his mind and his heart

Jules Burstein was the beloved father of Shira and Max, adoring grandfather of Chloe and Emilie, loving brother of Rob, Harry and Cindy, father-in-law of Jordan, beloved uncle of Russ, Steve, Luz, Jennifer, Carly and Carl. Jules was a loyal friend to many on both the East and West Coasts.

[Source: jweekly.com]

David A. Wilcox (04) 62-64

David A. Wilcox passed away on May 1, 2011 in Colorado Springs, Colo. As a Peace Corps volunteer in Nigeria, he served as a lecturer at the University of Ife, which at the time was located in the city of Ibadan.

Wilcox was a certified planner and had 38 years of practice and experience ranging from Washington, D.C., to Los Angeles, to Adak, Alaska, and Sydney, Australia. Realistic planning for economic development was his essential mission in both practice and teaching. One of his specialties was conducting studies relating to the conversion of military bases across the country for commercial and recreational use. One of the hallmarks of his career was the creation of the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Most of his work was done from his base in the Los Angeles area and he had a major role in planting trees as part of the preparation for the Olympics held there. In 2004, Wilcox was named a Fellow in the American Institute of Certified Planners' College of Fellows for his contributions to planning and society.

David Wilcox is survived by his wife, Carol, and is remembered fondly by his many friends as a creative and inventive person with whom friendship meant being stimulated and prodded as well as enjoying each other.

[Source: Lowell Fewster (4) 62-64]

Edited by Virginia DeLancey ((04) 62-64

Chinua Achebe has Died

World-renowned Nigerian author and dissident Chinua Achebe, best known for his 1958 novel *Things Fall Apart*, has died at the age of 82. Achebe, known by many as the “father of modern African literature,” wrote novels, stories, and essays on the history of his own country, Nigeria. He was in his 20s when he completed *Things Fall Apart* about a Nigerian villager’s downfall at the hand of British colonialists. The book was one of the first to relate the story of European colonialism from an African perspective, and it helped make Achebe a literary idol for many Africans. The book has been translated into 50 languages and has sold more than 10 million copies worldwide. Achebe also wrote more than 20 other works, some very critical of politicians and failure of leadership in Nigeria.

Achebe, who was paralyzed from the waist down after a car accident in 1990 in Nigeria, lived and taught in universities in the U.S. in recent years, but he continued to plea for democracy in Nigeria. In 2007 he won the prestigious Man Booker International Prize for lifetime achievement (Source: BBC News, 3/22/13; VOA News, 3/22/13).

Nigeria Launches Air Strikes Against Militant Camps

President Jonathan declared a state of emergency in Borno, and the neighboring states of Yobe and Adamawa, on May 14 and authorized security forces to take “all necessary actions” against militants that had taken over the state. Troops and jet fighters were deployed in Borno the next day, launching air strikes against suspected Islamist militant camps, and killing an undetermined number of insurgents. A government spokesman said that several camps were targeted, including some in the Sambisa Game Reserve, a known hideout of Boko Haram.

Following the air strikes, tens of thousands of residents of Borno State fled their homes. Officials say that 2,000 crossed borders into Niger and Cameroon, though some believe that the

number was greater. Some fled for fear of a repeat of the attacks which occurred on April 16 and 17 in the towns of Baga and Bama when fighting broke out between troops from the Chad-Niger-Nigeria Joint Multi-National Task Force and Boko Haram members in which 187 residents were killed, 2,275 homes were burned and 125 were severely damaged, according to Human Rights Watch. Thousands of residents of Baga remain displaced for fear of further clashes. In a recent video, Boko Haram’s purported leader claimed responsibility for those attacks and said that militants would now begin kidnapping women and children as part of their strategy.

The government military action was taken after several attempts at dialogue, including on April 17 when President Jonathan set up a 26-member Amnesty Committee with a three-month mandate to try to convince Boko Haram to lay down its arms in exchange for a state pardon and social reintegration. However, dialogue broke down and Boko Haram increased bombing attacks and assassinations in April and May in defiance of the proposed amnesty. Boko Haram has rejected peace talks, citing insincerity of the Nigerian government following a series of failed mediated negotiations.

On May 8 and 9, the Amnesty Committee met Nigerian security chiefs in Abuja and also imprisoned Boko Haram members in Kuje prison near Abujato to determine how to reach out to Boko Haram leadership for talks. But, on May 9, around 200 Boko Haram members, armed with rocket launchers and rifles, attacked security forces in Bama, including military barracks, a prison and police buildings, killing 42 people including soldiers, police, prison guards and civilians, and freeing 105 inmates. The Nigerian military claimed to have killed 13 of the Boko Haram gunmen.

In a May 13 video, Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shehu rejected the government’s offer of amnesty and vowed not to stop the violent campaigns to establish an Islamic state in Nigeria. On May 19, Nigeria once again offered amnesty to militants who surrender and reported that

17 people (14 Boko Haram militants and 3 soldiers) had been killed on the fifth day of the biggest offensive by Nigerian forces since the insurgency began in 2009. Other reports differ on the number killed, but it is difficult to verify the military claims because roads to affected areas have been blocked and the communications networks have been sporadic. (Sources: *Chicago Tribune*, 5/8/13, 5/17/13, 5/20/13; IRIN [Baga], 5/7/13, [Kano] 5/22/13; VOA News, 4/22/13, 5/17/13, 5/19/13; *The Washington Post*, 5/14/13).

Nigeria Seeks Help from Niger in Battle with Militants

Nigeria has asked Niger for support after a week-long offensive against Islamist insurgent bases in its semi-desert frontier region, signaling efforts to develop West African cooperation against jihadis seen as a cross-border threat. Nigerian forces have faced stiff resistance by Islamist rebels entrenched in the north and using cross-border routes to smuggle in weapons. Concerns have grown after militants associated with al-Qaida seized the north of Mali last year and were dislodged only after French-led military intervention.

Nigeria and Niger signed a bilateral defense pact in October 2012 that includes sharing intelligence on Islamist groups and joint military exercises. A request for military aid by one nation cannot be refused by the other. The two countries share a porous border of more than 940 miles, and the fighting has pushed more than 1,000 refugees across that border into Niger in recent weeks. Soldiers from Niger and Chad also participated with Nigerian forces in an assault against Boko Haram in April in Baga, a fishing settlement on the shores of Lake Chad. (Source: VOA News, 5/21/13).

Doctors Without Borders Closes Clinic in Northern Nigeria

Aid organization Doctors Without Borders said that it suspended emergency health care in Borno State, the heart of the insurgency under assault by government troops. Several weeks before, the organization had moved into Baga, a town where thousands of homes were

burned to the ground and hundreds of people were killed in April. Since then, the organization had been treating 80 patients a day, half of them children. However, the decision to suspend operations was made after five gunmen hijacked an aid vehicle, stealing it along with medical supplies and other equipment on Saturday, May 18. The organization determined that the project was just too dangerous to continue. (Source: VOA News, 5/23/13).

Kerry Criticizes Nigeria on Human Rights

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, speaking at an African Union summit during his first visit to sub-Saharan Africa since taking office, stated that Nigeria has the right to defend itself against an Islamic terrorist group threatening the country's north, but that it must not condone human rights violations committed by its own forces fighting Boko Haram. (Source: *Washington Post* [Washington, DC], 5/25/13).

Boko Haram Attacks Affect School Attendance

About 15,000 children, mostly primary school students, have stopped attending school in Borno State since February, 2013. Boko Haram has burned or destroyed 50 of the state's 175 schools, and students are staying at home for fear of attack or are being transferred to private Islamic schools. In addition, on May 6, when state schools officially reopened after a six-week break, many remained closed, as officials and teachers fear attacks.

Boko Haram gunmen initially targeted mostly primary schools at night, detonating grenades and homemade explosives or dousing classrooms with gasoline and setting them on fire. But, on March 18, Boko Haram changed tactics and attacked four schools in Maiduguri in broad daylight, killing four teachers and seriously injuring four students. On April 9, suspected Boko Haram members killed two school teachers in their homes and four officials of the Borno State Feeding Committee, which runs a primary and secondary school feeding program, while they were on an inspection tour of schools

in Dikwa town, Borno State. The shift to direct attacks on educators and students has left many of them too frightened to go to school. Secondary school enrollment is now only 28 percent in Borno State, the lowest in the country.

Many parents see the safest option is to send their children to Islamic schools which have seen a sharp rise in enrolment rates. These are private religious schools which teach an Islamic education, though some include English and math in the curriculum. With the increased demand, fees at some Islamic schools have also increased, by 300 percent in some cases. (Source: IRIN [Kano], 5/14/13)

Negotiators Paid Boko Haram to Free French Hostages

In February, a family of seven French tourists was kidnapped as they returned from a vacation at Waza National Park in Northern Cameroon near the Nigerian border (see *Friends of Nigeria Newsletter*, Spring 2013, Vol. 17, No. 2, "Nigeria News"). Recent reports indicate that Boko Haram was paid the equivalent of about \$3.15 million by French and Cameroonian negotiators before freeing the hostages in April, according to a confidential Nigerian government report obtained by Reuters news service. The memo does not say who funded the ransom but says that Cameroon also freed some Boko Haram detainees as part of the deal. France and Cameroon denied that a ransom was paid. (Source: *Washington Post*, 4/26/13).

Boko Haram is Well-Funded

Boko Haram militants are well-armed and well-funded, but analysts do not seem to know who or what might be paying for them. When the Nigerian military announces a victory against Boko Haram, it usually provides a list of the weapons that the soldiers have recovered. While the list used to include mostly AK-47s, ammunition and bombs, it now includes machine guns mounted on trucks, as well as anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns.

A prominent Nigerian political analyst believes that the group is well-funded or they would have disappeared long ago.

According to him, for them to be able to continue to recruit, train, and acquire equipment, there must be a sustainable way of funding the organization. And, if Nigeria's intelligence agencies know who is sponsoring them, they are not saying. However, it is clear that Boko Haram's operations are far more sophisticated than they were when the group began its uprising in 2009.

The Executive Director of the Policy and Legal Advocacy Center in Abuja suggests that funding for Boko Haram could be part of a larger regional push by radical Islamist militant groups seeking to acquire territory in West Africa and who want perhaps to create a base in northern Nigeria. His theory is supported by recent events in Mali where militant groups took over much of the country's north last year and where analysts believe that Boko Haram has more in common with the Mali rebels than previously thought.

It is established now that Boko Haram has not only established bases in parts of the northeast that nobody can penetrate, but some also say that they are in control of some local governments in the northeast and that they are collecting taxes. They also have another source of income, although it is relatively new. Boko Haram has promised to start kidnapping civilians in retaliation for the imprisonment of their members' families. Several prominent Nigerians have been reported kidnapped for ransom this year and, as noted above, Reuters news agency believes that Boko Haram received more than \$3 million to release the French family that they kidnapped in Cameroon. (Source: VOA News, 5/22/13).

Nigerian Leaders Call on MEND to Revoke Threat

After the former Niger Delta militant group known as MEND (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta) threatened to attack Muslim interests in retaliation for Boko Haram attacks, Christian leaders and ex-militants called on MEND to revoke their threat and not turn the crisis in the north into a religious war. MEND previously fought against oil companies and the government over

Nigeria's oil wealth, which is located in the southern Niger Delta region and which does little to help the impoverished local people. But, now MEND, or people claiming to be MEND, said that they would attack Muslim interests at the end of May in retaliation for years of attacks against Christians by Boko Haram. The government has been reaching out to MEND, and the governor of Delta State is leading a team to dialogue with them. Other Niger Deltans, including former MEND allies also are calling on the group to drop their threat of violence. (Source: VOA News, 4/29/13).

Nigerian Police Killed in "Cult" Ambush

Gunmen from a Nigerian cult killed at least 23 police officers who were attempting to arrest the group's leader. Newspapers reported even higher casualties, up to 55 police and more than 90 people, in the gun battle that erupted in the village of Alakyo. They reported that 11 trucks of security personnel were sent to the village, but only two returned.

The police officers were ambushed as they approached a shrine of the cult known as Ombatse in Nassarawa state. Local officials say the cult was forcefully recruiting people in the area. (Source: VOA News, 5/9/13).

Natural Disasters Displace 8.2 Million in Africa in 2012

A new report says that 32 million people throughout the world were forced to flee their homes in 2012 due to natural disasters, with most of the displacement occurring in developing countries. The continent of Africa saw a record number of newly-displaced people in 2012--8.2 million. Floods in Nigeria caused the second largest disaster displacement in the world in 2012, just less than the flood disasters in north-east India. The floods in Nigeria were the most devastating in the country's recent history, particularly affecting the populated areas of the vast river plains of the Benue and Niger, destroying houses, bridges, farmland, and killing numerous cattle. (Source: VOA News, 5/13/13).

Pirates Release Five Kidnapped Sailors

Pirates have released five Russian and Polish nationals kidnapped from a cargo ship in April about 100 miles off the coast of Nigeria. The German operator confirmed that the crew members were in good health and that they had returned to their home countries. The shipping company did not say if a ransom was paid, but ship owners often hand over large sums to free abducted sailors. The crew members were kidnapped April 25 when 14 heavily armed pirates forced their way into the MV City of Xiamen container ship's citadel, a strong room designed to protect the crew from attack.

Piracy has declined worldwide, especially off Somalia. There were 66 reported pirate attacks during the first quarter of 2013, a drop of 55 percent compared to a year ago, and Somali pirates carried out only five of those attacks, with just one hijacking. Somali attacks are down because of international naval patrols and better security measures by ships, including the use of armed guards. In the past, pirates have demanded between \$5 million and \$10 million to free hijacked ships and their crews. Piracy is increasing in the Gulf of Guinea, however, with the majority of the attacks taking place off the coast of Nigeria. There were 19 incidents off Nigeria so far this year, as well as the hijacking of two tankers taken off Ivory Coast. The pirates attack not only industrial petroleum vessels, but also ships carrying cocoa and metals to world markets. Pirates have killed Cameroon security officials and taken the mayor of a western Cameroonian locality captive while en route to Nigeria. As a result of the increasing attacks, the United Nations has appointed a special representative to Central Africa with a focus on reducing insecurity in the gulf. In addition, West African security experts and defense ministers met in April in Yaoundé where they resolved against negotiating with pirates and agreed to use any force necessary to eliminate threats. (Source: VOA News, 4/18/13, 4/15/13, 4/29/13, 5/14/13).

Companies in Nigeria Cook the Books

Marketing firm Ipsos asked 3,459 workers in 36 nations if companies in their country "cook the books". Nigeria was the winner, with 68 percent of respondents in that country saying "yes". In South Africa, 35 percent said "yes", while in Finland, only 7 percent said "yes". (Source: *Time* [New York], 6/3/13, p. 8).

Disruption of Grain Trade Threatens Sahel Food Security

Northern Nigeria normally supplies almost half of the Sahel's grain. However, Nigeria's grain trade has slowed severely, and abnormally high prices for staple grains across the Sahel have caused concern about food security throughout this vulnerable region. The areas most at risk are southeastern and central Niger, as well as northern Nigeria and northern Benin, but the World Food Program has reported that fewer traders are crossing the border for supplies from Nigeria. Moreover, in Kano, the region's largest grain market, a 100 kg. bag of maize cost \$47 in March 2013 compared to \$38 in 2012, and a 100 kg. bag of millet cost \$51 compared to \$47 last year.

There are several reasons for the problems. In Northern Nigeria, widespread flooding last year, compounded by insecurity, has caused much of the local deficit. In addition, many producers of millet and tubers in Nigeria have turned to cash crops. Thus, millet production in northern Nigeria declined by 13 percent last year compared to the five-year average.

The Boko Haram insurgency has also had an impact, forcing many farmers to move southward, away from their fields this planting season. Nigeria's emergency agency NEMA estimates that 65 percent of farmers in northeastern Nigeria's Lake Chad basin have fled southward to escape the violence. Conflict between Boko Haram and Nigerian security forces has also kept traders out of the market, and caused transporters to fear crossing the border from Niger into Nigeria.

One of the results of the overall situation is reverse trade flows, with maize and

millet being exported to Nigeria from Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, rather than the other way around. (Source: *IRIN* [Dakar and Kano], 5/27/13).

Some Children Go to School at Sea

Makoko is an old fishing village, with homes built on stilts along the waterfront of Lagos. Because it has been battered by floods caused by heavy rains and rising seas, it was becoming dangerous, leading the government to forcibly close part of it last year. However, Kunle Adeyemi, a Nigerian architect, asked the community what it would like. With help from the community and financial assistance from the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the United Nations, Adeyemi devised and, with his team, built a floating school—a low-cost wood, three-story, A-frame, buoyed by about 250 plastic barrels, and powered by solar panels, with a 1,000-square-foot play area, classrooms, rainwater collection system, and composting toilets. Made to serve 100 elementary school children, the building rises above the settlement like a lighthouse and provides a prototype for housing and other potential structures. (Source: *nytimes.com*, Magazine, 5/26/13).

Save the Children Publishes 2013 Mother's Index

Each year the organization Save the Children releases a ranking of the best and worst places in the world for mothers. This year's Mother's Index includes five indicators, including a woman's risk of dying from childbirth or pregnancy. In 2013, Greece was the best performer, with only one in every 25,000 mothers dying from maternal causes. Chad performed the worst among the 176 countries included, with one in every 15 mothers risking death in childbirth or pregnancy. This has been attributed largely to the fact that nearly 50 percent of all girls are married by the age of 18 when their bodies are not fully developed for motherhood.

Next to Chad is Somalia where one in 16 mothers risk dying in childbirth or pregnancy. Among the other countries ranking in the bottom 10 are Niger, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Central

African Republic, Mali, Nigeria, and Guinea. (Source: Devex, 5/9/13).

Nigeria, BBC, and DFID to Produce Films on HIV

The Project Manager of Enhancing Nigeria's Response to HIV and AIDS in Nigeria (ENR) disclosed that the BBC Media Action, in collaboration with the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and UKaid are collaborating to produce films to combat HIV/AIDS, as well as 18 TV and radio spots within the year. He believes that since the BBC is in partnership with 150 radio stations and over 53 television stations across the country, it would insure that the sensitization campaign will reach its target. The ENR was initiated to contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) target. (Source: *Daily Trust*, 4/14/13).

Alarm Raised Over 60,000 HIV+ Babies Annually in Nigeria

The U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria raised an alarm recently over the increasing number of babies born with HIV in Nigeria. The most recent figures indicate that 60,000 babies are born HIV+ each year, even though the infections are preventable. The Ambassador was on a tour to observe the progress made on Prevention-of-Mother-to-Child-Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV supported by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). He noted that where PMTCT is properly implemented, the chances of infection from mother-to-child could drop from 40 percent to just two percent, but many HIV+ pregnant women in Nigeria do not have access to the PMTCT. It was also noted that 6.9 million women need to be able to access PMTCT early in their pregnancy, but Nigeria reported reaching only 1.2 million last year. (Source: Agence de Presse Africaine, APA News, 4/20/13).

Drinking Water Bags are Harming Nigeria

Many Nigerians drink water from small plastic bags sold on the streets because they do not have running water at home or at least not water that is clean enough to drink. Since the 1990s,

children sell clear plastic bags, each holding about a half liter of what is known as "pure water", for little more than 10 cents. Environmentalists are now saying that the bags are clogging drainpipes, degrading sanitation and causing diseases. They are a problem because they do not decompose and by the time they get into a drain, the drain is often plugged and it causes flooding. The drain blockage also creates breeding grounds for mosquitoes, which spread malaria, one of Nigeria's biggest killers.

An alternative clean water source is bottled water. In the short run, the bottles can be reused, although not everyone can afford bottled water. The most obvious solution, of course, is for the government to provide drinking water, but there is the need for a more immediate solution. The waste management board is trying to convince people to throw the plastic bags into trash cans and is providing trash cans to do so. But, for large-scale waste management, there is a lack of basic resources like equipment and treatment plants. (Source: VOA News 4/24/13).

World Bank to Help Nigeria Improve Gas Supply and Electricity

The World Bank provided its first Partial Risk Guarantee (PRG) for \$145 million to support Nigeria's gas sector and bring more electricity to Nigerian consumers. The agreements in support of a Gas Supply and Aggregation Agreement (GSAA) were signed between the World Bank and the Power Holding Company of Nigeria, Egbin Power PLC, Chevron Nigeria Ltd., and Deutsche Bank. Under the 10-year GSAA, Chevron Nigeria Ltd will provide gas to Egbin power plant, assuring reliable gas availability for power generation. The previous absence of long-term gas supply arrangements has been one of the main causes of power shortages in Nigeria, as the gas had to be procured on a "best endeavor" basis which often was of low quality and insufficient quantity, resulting in poor performance of the power plants. (Source: The World Bank [Washington, DC], Press Release, Abuja, 4/22/13).

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