



October - December 2012

When will the funds reach Zamfara?



To Save 1,500 Lead Poisoned Children in Bagega



A report by the Follow The Money Team on a mission to track and visualize funds meant for the remediation of Bagega, a Lead Poisoned Community in Zamfara, Northern Nigeria.

‘There hasn’t been any help until now. People come to talk to us, but they won’t do anything.’

HALIMA, a grandmother living in Bagega, that has lost 8 grandchildren to lead poisoning already.

‘We are losing so many children in Bagega, and the government is not helping us.’

SANNI M. ALIU BAGEGA, An Environmental Health Officer living in Bagega.

‘7 children have died so far in this compound, if you include mine, that would make it 10.’

AMINA MURTALA, a 20year Old mother, who had 6 children, but 3 already dead, as a result of lead poisoning.

‘We have recorded many lead poisoning cases. It is pertinent for the government to release funds for the remediation of Bagega.’

AMISU YUSUF, the Head of Clinic in Bagega.

‘We have to keep this at the front burner, as such the government of Nigeria and its populace wouldn’t lose sight on the neglect of the people of Bagega.’

IBRAHIM OYEKANMI, culled from a comment on the facebook page of Follow the Money.

‘We call for the immediate release of funds for the remediation process in Bagega. This is an essential step to initiate the treatment and alleviation of ailment of the children in Bagega.’

THE ZAMFARA STATE STAKEHOLDERS ON LEAD POISONING, a joint statement made at the stakeholders meeting on November 7, 2012.

‘President Goodluck Jonathan, why won’t you release the money you promised in May to clean up poisonous lead in Zamfara? Children are dying and your government’s failure to act is putting more children at risk.’

TAIWO ADEOYE, culled from a comment on the facebook page of President Goodluck Jonathan, a response to the campaign launched by FTM and the Human Rights Watch



\$4MILLION

Amount promised by the President Goodluck Jonathan during the International Conference on Lead Poisoning in Abuja, April 2012



632

The number of people that already signed the petition at <http://followthemoneyng.org>



400

The number of children under 5yrs of age that died during the lead poisoning epidemic in 2010, in 7 villages in Zamfara.



7,323

The total population of people in Bagega, affected by lead poisoning.



37,000

The number of people reached in Nigeria with our campaign on facebook.

FOREWARD

Follow the Money tries to answer questions about the way that funds meant for development are being utilized within our local communities. How much is spent on community development? Where does it go? What is it spent on? Who spends it? Our aim is to provide clear, objective evidence on resources, easily accessible on paper and online, so that decisions and policy can better be informed on how transparent and accountable these processes are.

Our mission is to give people the news and information they need about aid meant for their communities, and the means to make their voices heard. We believe that when people are better informed, they can more easily hold their leaders accountable.

For a number of years now, the vicious and appalling corruption that characterizes management of funds for development of our communities has not only undermined individual development, it fractures families and communities. In our search for solutions to this menace, the collective voice and indigenous knowledge of affected communities has been largely excluded.

Since May 2012, the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr Goodluck Jonathan promised to release 850 million Naira for the remediation of the only village that has not been remediated as part of the 2010 emergency response to the Zamfara lead poisoning crisis.^a At the writing of this report (December 2012), the funds have not yet been released, and as stated in the budget proposal of about 650million Naira (prepared by TerraGraphics and the Zamfara Ministry of Environment), remediation was schedule to begin at the end of the last rainy season (October 2012). Doctors Without Borders, an international medical humanitarian organization that has been treating lead poisoned children in Zamfara, since the outbreak in 2010, has reiterated that about 1,500 children in Bagega are lead poisoned, and children are dying due to this fact.

This aid promised by the president is one of the resources available to respond to this urgent humanitarian crisis – even though we would not dispute the fact that, the fund promised are from tax payers money, remittances, domestic revenues, and development assistance. Agitating for the immediate release of this fund is pertinent while better information on all resources helps more effective allocations. Follow the Money is working to publish more data in these areas in order to contribute to the more effective use of resources for building resilience for very vulnerable populations.

We hope that you find this report and all the supporting data online helpful. We are always available to answer questions, provide additional information or produce specific graphs and spreadsheets through our mail and by phone. Please visit the Follow the Money website for more information:

www.followthemoneyng.org

We would welcome your feedback and suggestions about information that you will find most useful. Finally, a big thank you to all you wonderful people who have signed the petition. You all rock!

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INTRODUCTION

In the dry season of 2010, an unprecedented epidemic of community lead poisoning was discovered in Zamfara State, northern Nigeria. More than 2,000 children were severely poisoned and an estimated 400 children died as a result of lead absorption associated with artisanal gold mining/processing in residential compounds in a number of remote villages. Several international organizations - World Health Organization (WHO) and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Doctors without Borders (MSF), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF); Nigerian Federal and Zamfara State agencies, and local governments collaborated in providing emergency medical, environmental, technical and public health responses.



Fig 1: A geo-referenced visualization of communities that were affected during the lead poisoning epidemic in 2010, in Zamfara State

By the end of the remediation exercise in March 2011, about \$US2.3million¹ had been spent in villages doing soil remediation as part of Phase I (Dareta/Yargalma) and Phase II/CERF (Abare, Tungar Daji, Duza, Sunke, Tungar Guru). Unfortunately, Bagega was the only village left out due to lack of funds and it could not be remediated through the efforts which were conducted under the technical advice of TerraGraphics and Blacksmith Institute. This total includes this PCA of US \$994,312 from UNICEF/CERF/WHO, and approximately US \$400,000 by the State of Zamfara and Anka Emirate, US \$240,000 by MSF, US \$170,000 by Blacksmith, and US \$500,000 by TG in personnel, equipment, donated services and costs incurred in supporting the remediation. It is expected that a similar amount will be required to remediate Bagega and the associated Industrial Area.

Since 2010 almost 3000 children have been screened, 2900 have been enrolled in the program, 2000 children have had chelation therapy, 1500 remain in the program, and 900 have been discharged according to Doctors Without Borders, who has been administering emergency medical treatment since the discovery of the crisis.

1. Blacksmith Institute UNICEF Programme Cooperation Agreement; Environmental Remediation - Lead Poisoning in Zamfara

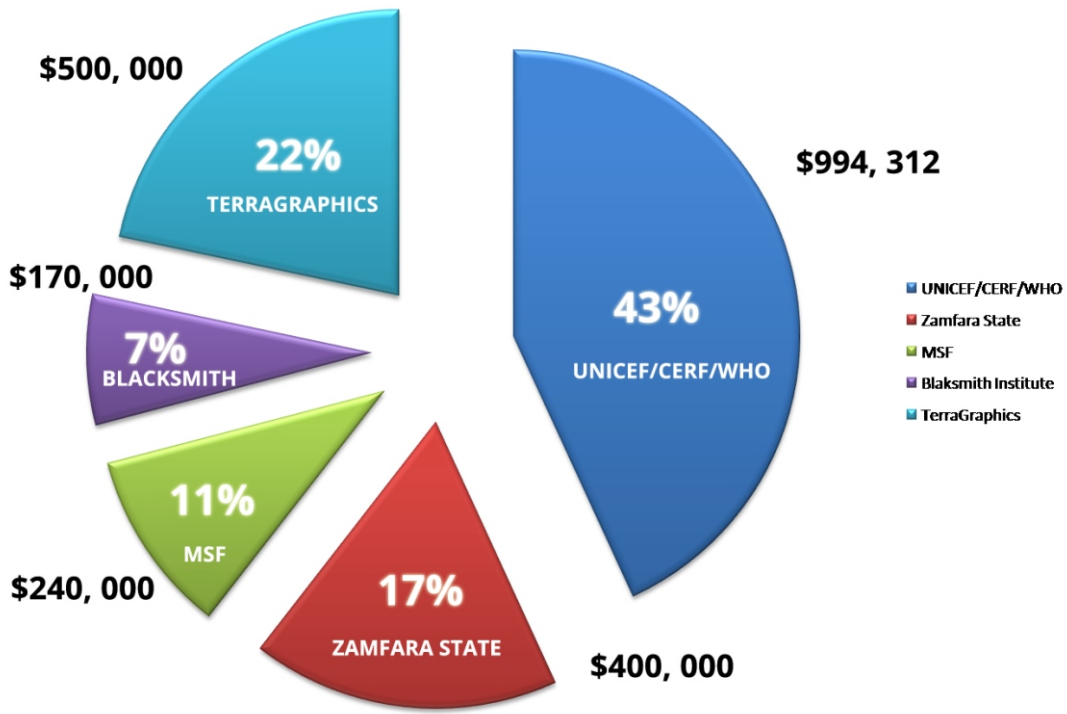


Fig 2: A visualization of the amount incurred for the phase II remediation of lead affected communities in 2010 in Zamfara State

Bagega, which is located in Zamfara, Nigeria, located roughly 33 km from Anka town, remains un-remediated under Phase I and II activities. The district comprises more than 8,000 people, including up to 1,500 children less than 5 years of age with potentially dangerously high blood levels.

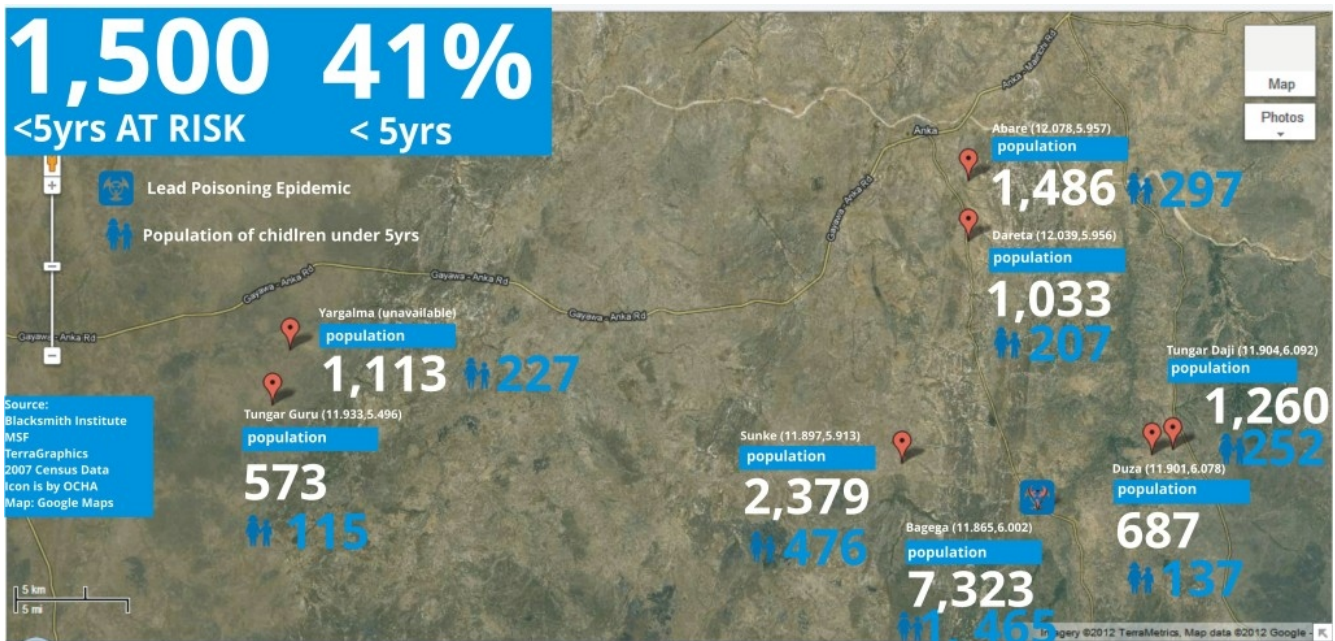


Fig 3: A geo-referenced visualization of the present state of the lead poisoned communities in Zamfara State

To save the lives of these children, remediation must be completed. TerraGraphics Environmental Engineering in conjunction with the Zamfara Ministry of Environment submitted a proposed budget of about \$2.7 million USD to the Federal Ministry of Environment in Nigeria on May 1, 2012 (See fig 4).

As part of their task, they were scheduled to begin remediation the week of October 22, 2012 at the beginning of the dry season. Half the village was scheduled to be completed by the New Year's break and the remainder by the end of March 2013.² Remediation of the Industrial Area and reservoir is currently scheduled for the peak of the dry season in February.

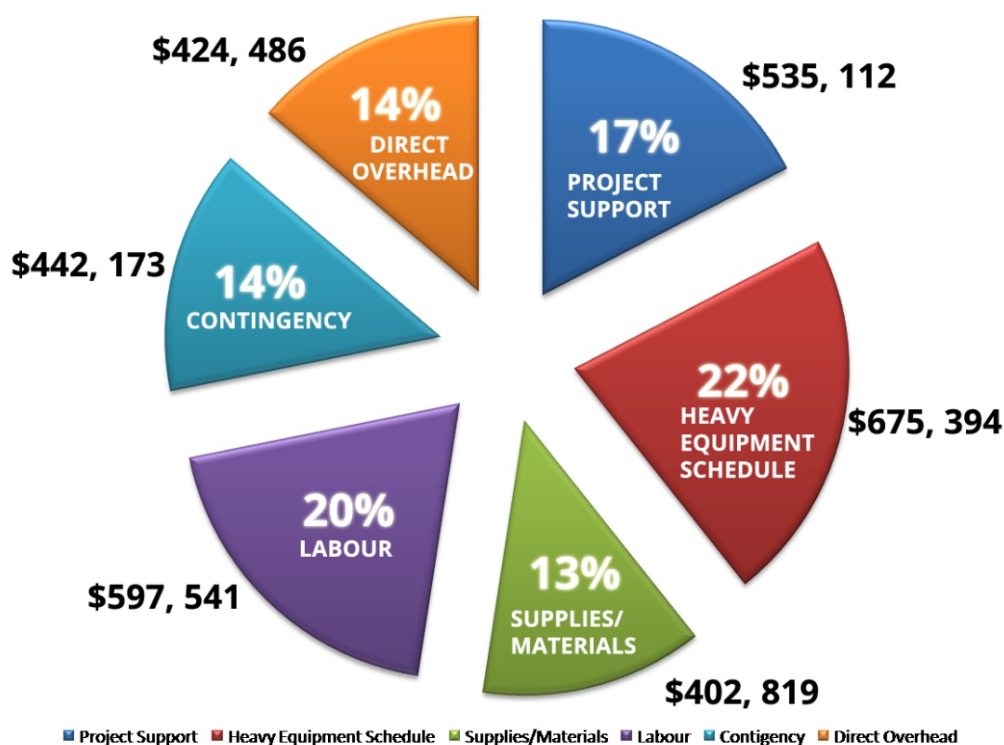


Fig 4: A visualization of the proposed budget sent to the Federal Ministry of Environment by Terragraphics in May 2012

ACTIVATION OF THE FOLLOW THE MONEY TEAM FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In September 2012, the Follow the Money team was endorsed by Doctors without Borders and other stakeholders in Zamfara. The team visited Dareta in October, 2012 to find out the real situation of things in the surrounding communities that were affected by lead poisoning.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AT BAGEGA IN OCTOBER, 2012

On October 9, 2012, the Follow the Money Team visited Bagega which is roughly 1hr 30mins from the major town of Anka on a motor bike. On our way were about 3 villages one of which was Dareta, which is one of the villages receiving medical treatment as part of the 2010 emergency response. Lining the side of the roads were electric poles, with no cable, said to have been erected by the state government seven years ago. Approaching Bagega, we saw a mining company with the sign post – Ohil Global Mining. The health clinic built by the local government is situated nearby, while the Government Day Secondary School Bagega (GDSS) is set alternate to the clinic.

As we navigated through Bagega, which is the largest of the lead-contaminated villages, we found out that four solar powered water pumps functions within the village, and there was the popular contaminated Inna Gwabi dam where most villagers get in to wash and have their bath. To confirm the significance of Bagega amongst the communities in Anka, was a large market square, which we were told receives traders from every part of Northern Nigeria.

We caught up with Halima, a grandmother of more than 30 children, who said she has lost eight of her children since 2010. “People always come to us, but they won’t do anything”.³ Please note that as most of the women in this community stay indoors, only women are allowed to enter and talk with women.



Fig 5: The Ministry of Health Clinic at Bagega, presently been refurbished by a GAVI supported fund

Amisu Yusuf, the Head of Clinic in Bagega, confirmed how prevalent the cases of lead poisoning have been (with most of the children having high blood levels), and that all cases are taken to the clinic at Anka. He called on the Federal Government of Nigeria to immediately release funds for the remediation of Bagega, so that these children could be screened for lead poisoning.⁴ The clinic has three extensive blocks (male, female ward and a makeshift post and antenatal ward), but it seems deserted, and in each block has about three rickety patient beds. Just outside the building is an adjoining staff quarters for three midwives, supposedly, posted to Bagega by the Federal Government. However, we were told the midwives never showed up in the community.

The Follow the Money team was at the local processing site, situated some 7km away from the village. Children were seen helping out in the processing of the stones. Women were also present, selling food to the workers on the site. Aminu, the secretary to the Miners in Bagega, showed us how stones are been crushed and processed into gold locally. “It could take a whole day for the mercury to attract a gram of gold” said Aminu. He let us know that several years ago, mining and processing were carried out within the main village, but they relocated to their present location when they became aware of lead poisoning in their community. “I witnessed the death of about 8 children within Bagega” affirmed Aminu.⁵ He reiterated the effort of Doctors Without Borders in creating awareness on basic safer mining

3. Story by Global Post - Nigeria's gold rush kills hundreds of children

4. A video of Amisu Yusuf, the Head of Clinic at Bagega

5. The video of Aminu, the Secretary, of the Artisanal Miners in Bagega

practices, which the village has upheld. Nevertheless they still have challenges providing protective materials to all their workers. While he noted that remediation of their village should be important to the Federal Government at this time, he enjoined them also to help provide mechanisms and tools that will encourage safer mining. Doctors Without Borders advocates for safer mining protocols as the only long - term solution to the lead-poisoning crisis.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AT SUNKE

On October 10, 2012, we visited Sunke, about a 1 - hour ride on a motor bike from Anka Town. Riding on a pretty rugged terrain, one feature that caught our eye was a valley, which during rainy season cuts off the village from other part of the world. However, coming up the valley, was a mass Cotton and Guinea Corn plantation, which answers why the state refers to farming as their pride, but one wonders how their harvest is transported to the main city.

Characterized by the Saharan thatched roof buildings, we got to stop by at the Ministry of Health clinic, built in 2004, and just opposite the clinic was a primary school building with an inscription “ETF Building 2007”. It was a three - classroom building with no chair or tables - and apparently no teachers!⁶ Taking a walk around the village, we found three borehole pumps; MSF provided two of them two years ago, while the other one was installed by a local government dispensation 20 years ago, according to the Community Head, Issa Nahakami.



Fig 6: Miners at Sunke Village in Zamfara State

The Community Head also told us that about 85 children were buried in the village cemetery during the epidemic in 2010. He lost 2 of his 3 children! Fortunately, the third child was treated in time by Doctors Without Borders. “The community has been experiencing peace since the intervention” says Issa.⁷

The Team visited the mining site, just about 5 km away from the village. Salisu, the Chairman of the Miners in Sunke confirmed he has been in the artisanal mining business for 10 years. “The mining business became bigger as from 2010 in Sunke and the surrounding community, and compared to present day, we are more enlightened in 2010, we sold 1 gram of Gold for about \$4 - \$5, but now we sell for \$25” says Salisu.

6. Education Trust Fund (ETF) Primary School Building at Sunke

7. A video of Issa Nahakami, the Head of Community at Sunke

As Sunke was remediated 2 years ago, and while acknowledging the efforts of the various government institutions, he called on them to assist in training on safer mining practices.

The team visited the General Hospital at Anka, where we met Dr Paul, who has been treating lead poison cases in the hospital for 20 months. He affirmed to us that deaths due to lead poisoning children under 5 years old in Bagega have been under reported.⁸ Moreover, they have had cases of three children from Bagega, all with high blood level of lead. The World Health Organization classified 10mg/dl as the lead toxicity level in human body. Dr Paul told us that they regularly see children with lead levels between 40 and 80mg/dl.

OCTOBER STAKEHOLDERS MEETING AT DAMBA

October 11, 2012 was scheduled for the Zamfara state stakeholders meeting on lead poisoning at the conference hall of Bright Minerals and Mining Company, Damba. The venue is about 2 hours from Anka, located just on the Katsina – Sokoto Road. The stakeholders included Mouktar Lugga, the Honourable State Commissioner of the Environment and Solid Minerals, who was the chairman of the meeting. Also present were representatives from MSF, ZESA (Zamfara Environment and Safety Authority), Ministry of Environment and Solid Minerals, Anka Emirate, Zamfara State Ministry of Health, Zamfara Radio, Gusau Emirate Council, the State Security Service and civil society organizations.⁹ Highlights of the meeting included the news from the Commissioner of Environment that a Federal technical sub-committee would be visiting affected villages on October 15 to assess the level of contamination of the affected villages and to decide on next steps.

Mr Aliyu Hafiz from the state Ministry of Health gave an update on a recent cluster survey report carried out on 115 villages by their organization. He emphasized that 87.5% of children under 5 years suffered from malaria in the last 12 months and that 17.2% of children that convulsed, died (146 out of 850 children).

The Director of Pollution Control at ZESA gave an update on Tsunami, a community in Gusau that was recently found out to have higher lead levels. He said although it has been excavated, more work still needed to be done, owing to the fact that there is still a significant level of contamination.

SAVE BAGEGA ON THE FOLLOW THE MONEY WEB PLATFORM

In November, 2012, the Save Bagega project was integrated into the Follow the Money website. About 7 million Nigerians uses facebook with a quarter of that number on Twitter. We integrated the campaign on both social media platforms to help amplify the voice of this ailing community. For the world to help take action, we put up a petition form to present all signatures to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

As at the writing of this report we have had 632 signatures, and during the course of this campaign about 700 individuals from 64 countries visited our website (see fig 9) at www.followthemoneyng.org; 134 liked our page on Facebook; we have reached 37,000. The story of Bagega has appeared in about 30 international and local media outlets in the past 3 months.¹⁰ This includes TV, radio, internet, blogs and various social media.

8. A video of Dr Paul, working at the General Hospital in Anka
9. Minutes of meeting of the stakeholders in October 2012

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STATE STAKEHOLDERS MEETING IN NOVEMBER

In the month of November, we were in Zamfara to keep abreast of the situation and new developments. On November 6, 2012, the team arrived prepared for the stakeholders meeting on November 7, 2012 in Gusau. Present at the meeting were representatives from the ZMoH, ZESA, MMSD, Zamfara Radio, MSF and civil society organizations.

An update was given on the Federal technical sub-committee that came to assess the contaminated villages, while the country director for MSF, Ivan Gayton, reiterated that MSF will not be able to carry out screening on these children if remediation didn't start as early as December 2012. Nevertheless, he mentioned that MSF is prepared to start medical treatment at Bagega immediately, once remediation is completed.



Fig 7: A cross - section of stakeholders at the meeting in November 2012

All stakeholders stated their loss of confidence in the processes been taken by the Federal Government, a press release was made that the Federal government should immediately release the funds for the remediation of Bagega according to the task plan submitted to the Federal Ministry of Environment in May 2012 by Terragraphics and the Zamfara Ministry of Environment. As most of the stakeholders requested for the task plan, the Follow the Money Team, was able to circulate the task plan to every stakeholder at the meeting, and through email to those that were not present.

The stakeholders called on the Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel Development to provide an easier way for access to legitimate licenses for the artisanal miners and to develop ways to help miners' access safe mining techniques and equipment, which will reduce risk and poisoning.¹¹

10. Links to news about Bagega, as published by different media outfit
11. Minutes of stakeholders meeting held in November 2012

Zakaria, the MSF Anka Project director, informed the stakeholders that children from the 7 villages that have been remediated no longer have excessive poisonous lead levels. Consequently, monthly discharge of these children is about 60 – 70.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH IN BAGEGA IN NOVEMBER 2012

It was another opportunity to visit Bagega, and on November 7, 2012, we moved 30km away from the MSF Anka clinic en route to Bagega. Just some meters away from the Anka clinic, we observed the presence of a construction company, with their equipment clearing the road. We were told the State government initiated the contract to construct a new road to Bagega.

Arriving at Bagega, we stopped at the head of the community's house, Alhaji Jubril Haruna, who pleaded on behalf of the people of Bagega, that the Federal Government should help release funds promised for the remediation of Bagega.¹² He confirmed the deaths from lead poisoning of children have been reported in some households.

31 year - old Sanni M. Alihu Bagega, an Environmental Health Officer, also a native of Bagega shared his displeasure with how the Government of Nigeria has been dragging its feet on releasing the funds meant for remediation of Bagega. He confirmed the deaths of children in their community and called on those in authority to please come to the aid of the about 1,500 children who are at risk.¹³

The team decided to visit the only primary school, with 3 blocks of classrooms, shaded by a massive tree. Unlike in Sunke, where there was no pupil in the school, we were greeted with a large group of pupils. Mr Salisu Abdulahi, one of their teachers briefed us on the epidemic that is ravaging their community, while two children (Abass and Awawu), pleaded on behalf of their class mates for the Federal Government to should act fast to save the future of Bagega.¹⁴

LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS MEETING AT THE ANKA PALACE IN NOVEMBER 2012

At about 11am on November 8, 2012, we were at the Emir of Anka's palace to meet with local stakeholders. The stakeholders include the Emir of Anka, chairman of Anka local government, the Emirate of Anka council members, CSOs from within and around Anka and MSF. The Emir was on his way from Abuja while the meeting was been held, and presided over by Bashir Muh'd Dan Baba.

The highlights of the meeting were MSF's update by Rick, the logistics officer, on the situation in Anka and their preparedness to start screening at Bagega immediately once the village is remediated.

12. A video of Alhaji Jubril Haruna, the head of Community at Bagega

13. A video of Sanni Alihu, an Environmental Health Officer in Bagega

14. Abass Abdulsalam's plea to the government of Nigeria

14. Salisu Awawu's plea to the government of Nigeria

Oludotun, of the Follow the Money Team introduced the Save Bagega project, and what they hope to achieve with the project. He reiterated that their voices are their power, and that the project serves as a bridge for them to amplify their voices on the state of their community. He told them the team hopes to visit Bagega and Anka continuously until the children are screened, chelated and have been discharged.



Fig 8: The Local Stakeholders at the Palace of the Emir of Anka

Alhaji Alilu, a member of the Emirate council shared the position of the Council – as there is a great need for the urgent remediation of Bagega that they recently discovered 32 mining sites in Anka that need to be monitored by the Council, and this being the case, means of transportation should be provided for the council. He also stated that the proposed task plan according to ZMoE and TerraGraphics should be made available to them.

By the close of the meeting, the secretary to the Emir informed the team that the Emir sent his greetings and that the team should meet him by night.

MEETING WITH THE EMIR OF ANKA

At 10pm, the team arrived at the Emir's palace, and we gave out copies of the task plan to the Secretary of the Emirate council.

Oludotun introduced and explained the aims and objectives of the team, and how the community voice and that of the Emirate can help in saving the lives of the children at risk, in order for the remediation to commence as soon as possible.

The Emir thanked us for our concern for their community, especially their children. He appreciated the work of MSF during the remediation of other villages and treatment of their people. The Emir said he would hold some meetings with representatives and ministers and that, within two to three weeks, he should get response.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN WITH HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

On December 6, 2012, the team, in collaboration with Human Rights Watch, launched a Social Media Campaign¹⁵ urging people to post comments to President Goodluck Jonathan's official Facebook page, asking him why he has broken his promise to release funding for the cleanup of lead contaminated areas in Zamfara state.

If you want to join the campaign, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/jonathangoodluck> and comment on his last status update with the following message:

'President Jonathan, why won't you release the money you promised in May to clean up poisonous lead in Zamfara? Children are dying and your government's failure to act is putting more children at risk'.

STATE STAKEHOLDERS MEETING IN DECEMBER

The 7th stakeholder meeting on lead poisoning crisis was held on December 11, 2012 at the Conference Hall of Bright Way Mineral and Mineral Company Damba. Present at the meeting were representatives of MSF, ZESA, State Ministry of Health, Anka Emirate, MESM, Centre of Excellence – all 33 in number.

There was an update on the visit by MSF, MESM to the Federal Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Mines and Steel Development (MMSD), where they discussed the issue of remediation, and wish the exercise might start in January, 2013.

The news of arrival of technical expertise from Terragraphics Environmental Engineering to meet with the Directors of the Federal Ministry of Environment on the remediation of Bagega came as a relieve to the stakeholders meeting.

On safer mining, the Engineer Suleiman of MESM reiterated that more cooperatives are registered and that the state government is ready to assist cooperative when fully organized. He revealed to the house about the ongoing training programme organized by National Environmental Standard and Regulatory Enforcement Agency (NESREA) for miners in Anka on safer mining practices without consulting the State nor the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development.

15. Social Media Campaign by Human Rights Watch and the Follow the Money Team
16. Minutes of stakeholders meeting in December 2012

NEXT STEPS

As we are hopeful for the release of the funds - \$4million (NGN850), perhaps in the month of January 2013, the Follow the Money Team will enter the second phase of the Save Bagega project by tracking the funds, and bringing to the public domain how the funds have been utilized in saving this community.

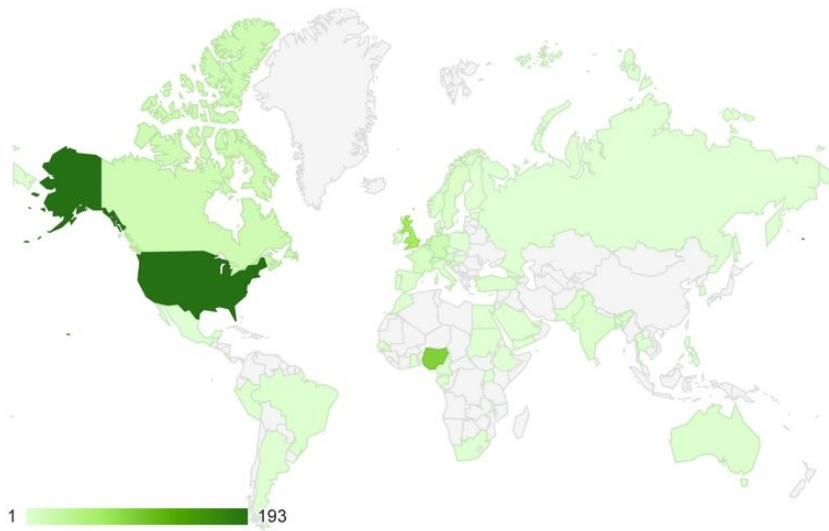


Fig 9: A visualization highlighting countries where our website visitors came from