

Information about Ramatu

Ramatu lives with her family in the state of Niger in the west of Nigeria. Ramatu was born in 2015, and she is one of a family of 5 children. English is the official language of Nigeria, but in rural areas like Niger many other local dialects are also spoken. Most families living here, including Ramatu's, speak a mixture of their local dialect and English.

Homes in Niger are commonly built with mud bricks with grass thatched roofs. Inside, there are generally two rooms for living and sleeping. The family prepares and cooks their meals outside. The majority of families depend on farming for food and an income. Most families have a small piece of land, where they grow staple crops like cassava, maize, groundnuts and soya beans. Livestock are also important for families like Ramatu's. Chickens, sheep and goats are the most commonly reared animals, all valuable sources of food and income, helping families to cover the costs of education and healthcare.

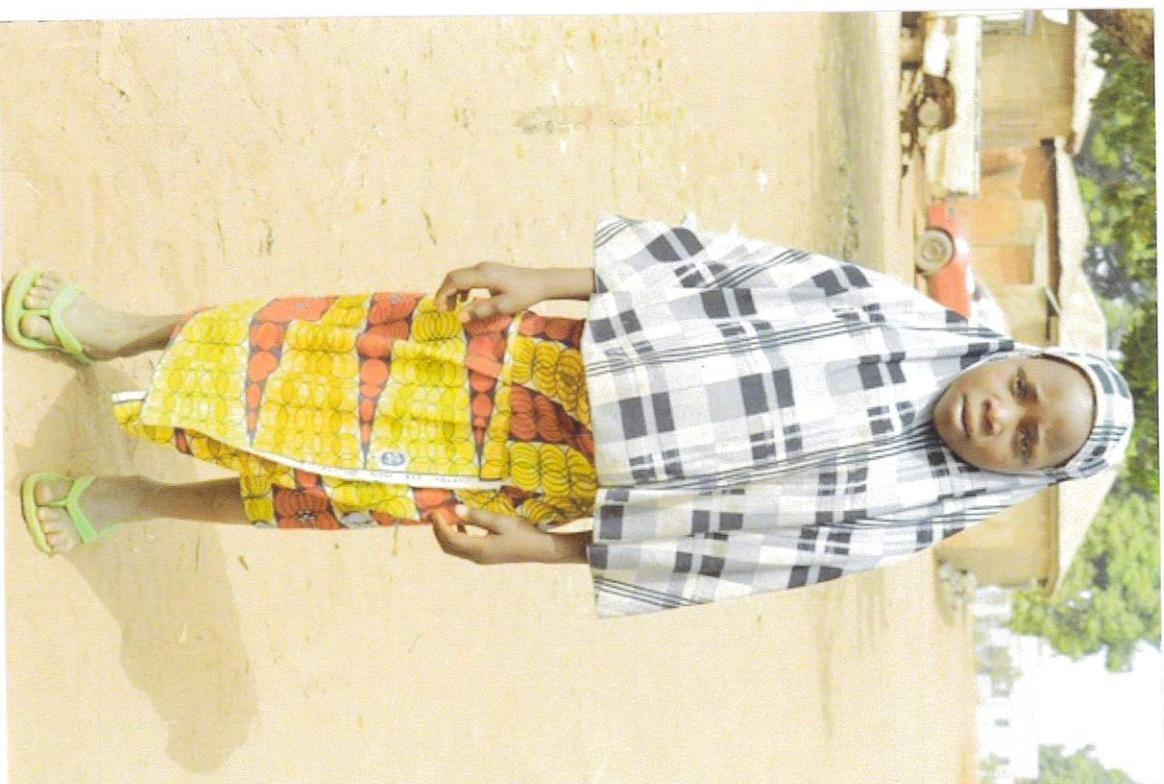
Ramatu is currently not in school. In rural areas, school enrolment rates are low, often because of the long distance the children have to walk to reach their nearest school. Once at school, the quality of education available to the children is poor; schools lack both facilities and trained teachers.

Healthcare is a big challenge for families in Niger. The few health centres available are poorly staffed and inadequately resourced. The nearest health centre is over 10km from the community, the cost of travelling to a health centre and buying prescribed medication is out of the reach of most families.

Accessing safe, clean water is also problem in Niger. Women and children are responsible for fetching water for the family, usually from nearby streams; it is a backbreaking and time-consuming task. In addition, with so few safe sources of water, families are vulnerable to infection from waterborne diseases.

Through child sponsorship, ActionAid is working in partnership with families like Ramatu's to secure adequate healthcare, improve education and develop livelihoods. The rights of women and girls are at the heart of everything we do, and our programmes are developed to ensure they gain the opportunities they need to have an active voice in the development of their communities.

If you would like to write to Ramatu, she would love to hear from you. The address is: ActionAid, UK Child Sponsorship Office, Chard Business Park, Jarman Way, Chard, Somerset, TA20 1FB.



Child name:

Ramatu

Child reference:

NG01800168

Sex:

Female

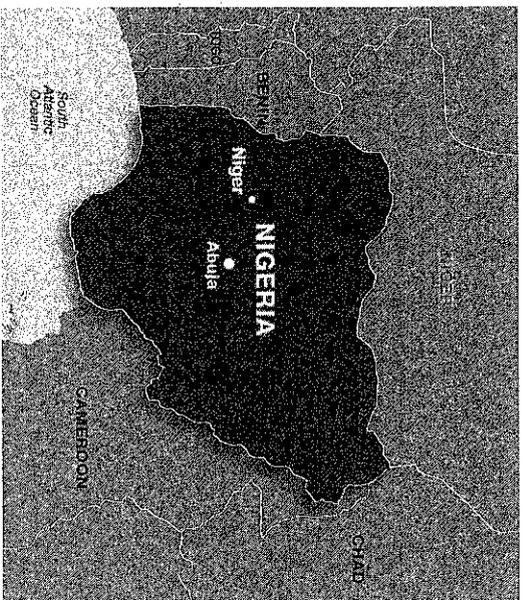
Year of birth:

2015

2102

Nigeria

actionaid



Information about Nigeria, and Niger, where Ramatu Lives

Nigeria is located in West Africa, bordering Benin, Chad, Cameroon and Niger. Abuja is the capital city. The country is made up of an incredibly mixed group of people from more than 250 different ethnic groups and several different religions. Its landscape is just as varied, ranging from tropical rainforests and swamps to deserts and open grasslands.

Nigeria is often referred to as the Giant of Africa because of its large population (the most populous country in Africa, and seventh highest population in the world) and healthy economy. But Nigeria faces some of the world's biggest development challenges. Despite its growing wealth as one of the world's largest oil producers, the gap between the wealthy and people living in poverty is huge. More than two thirds of the population live on less than \$1 a day.

Approximately 47% of Nigeria's estimated 190 million population are under the age of 18. Investment within Nigeria's education sector does not match its youth population, particularly in rural areas. The education system is overwhelmed - there are insufficient schools and teachers. Classrooms are dilapidated and overcrowded. Many children never finish school, especially girls whose education is not seen as important as boys. Many girls are kept at home to help with family chores, and despite laws in Nigeria protecting girls from marriage, child marriage is sadly still common.

The discrimination girls face in their childhood, continues into adulthood. Despite women in rural areas making up the majority of

the agricultural workforce, they are denied land ownership and control over resources and yields. Generally responsible for the health and wellbeing of their children, limited control over resources means women are often prevented from ensuring their children have adequate food, can go to school or get the healthcare they need.

Despite these challenges, communities in Nigeria are eager for change, including those we are working with in the state of Niger.

Life in Niger where Ramatu Lives

The state of Niger is situated in the western region of Nigeria, and is named after Africa's third longest river, the River Niger. The largest state in Nigeria, Niger is a four-hour drive from Abuja, Nigeria's capital city. Livelihoods, women's rights, access to water, education and healthcare are all challenges faced by the families living in Niger. Through child sponsorship, we are working in partnership with the communities of Niger to tackle these issues and develop solutions to overcome them.

Tackling the inequality women and girls face - despite farming the land, looking after the children, collecting water and being responsible for feeding the family, women continue to lack a voice in their family or community decisions. We are working with women in Niger to form groups, tackle violence and change opinions to ensure the rights of women and girls are met.

Helping families to improve their livelihoods and access to food - We are supporting families living in Niger to improve food production and develop alternative sources of income. This includes improving farming skills and providing training in rearing livestock. We are also forming community groups and cooperatives that bring people together to share skills and maximise profits.

Increasing school enrolment and providing children with a quality education - Lack of investment has seen children face overcrowded classrooms, dilapidated facilities, and a lack of teachers. With your support we are working to get children a quality education. We are doing this by rebuilding schools, training teachers, and ensuring adequate school materials are available to all children. We are also working with parents, teachers and community leaders to challenge entrenched attitudes and address the reasons why many girls drop out of school.

Despite the many problems that the people of Nigeria face, there is hope. We are working with communities in Niger to resolve these issues and bring lasting improvements to the lives of the families living here.

Thanks to your child sponsorship, we can change lives in Niger.