

ANNUAL REPORT OF JUSTICE DEVELOPMENT PEACE AND CARITAS INITIATIVES,
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF UROMI, FROM JANUARY – DECEMBER, 2016

SUBMITTED TO

MOST REV. DR. DONATUS A. OGUN (OSA)
CATHOLIC BISHOP OF UROMI DIOCESE,
EDO STATE, NIGERIA.

DECEMBER, 2016

OUR VISION

A peaceful and developed society where there is peaceful co-existence and promotion of human rights and empowerment of the people for meaningful living.

OUR MISSION

To alleviate poverty and promote integral development through the motivation and empowerment of the less privileged / oppressed and challenge unjust structures that enhances injustice, hatred and backwardness in Nigeria.

OUR CORE VALUE

Integrity

Accountability

Transparency

Excellence

FOCUS GROUP

- The rural populace
- The economically deprived and vulnerable families, Unemployed youths, women and widows living amongst the poorest of the poor in the society.
- Inmates in prison and ex-inmates.
- People stigmatized with deadly disease.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To promote human right as enshrined in the charters of human rights.
2. To co-operate with people of other faith and persuasion on issues of common social concern and uplift human conditions without discrimination or segregation.
3. To bear witness to the liberating Gospel of Jesus through continued prophetic action for the promotion of Justice, Development and Peace in the society.
4. To promote human right as enshrined in the UN Charter and Banjul declaration of Human Rights.
5. To form animated groups to participate in their own development for peaceful co-existence.
6. To co-operate with international agencies, government and NGOs for integral development.

CORPORATE FACT SHEET

Name	Uromi Justice Development Peace & Caritas Initiatives.
Owner	Catholic Diocese of Uromi, Nigeria.
Legal Holder	His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Donatus Aimioshor Ogun (OSA)
Authorized Representative & Director	Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Oriabure Arhedo
Corporate Registration No:	CAC/IT/No: 500042 & ED/MWASD/NGOR/200/04
Status	Catholic Non-Governmental, Non-Profit making, Humanitarian and Development Organization.
Motto	Hope for the Oppressed and Empowerment for All
Areas of operation	Integral Development, Human Rights, Democracy, and Good Governance, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Prison Apostolate and Legal Aid services, Peace Building, Micro-Credit and Caritas, TB and HIV/AIDS care and support, HIV Counseling and testing, Livelihood improvement, Anti-Human trafficking and VC programming
Project steered	Conflict Management, Training of Electorate, Election Observation, Budget Monitoring, Community TB Care, HIV/AIDS Awareness Creation & Counseling, Micro-Credit Facilities, Rural Community Development Enlightenment Campaign, Prisoners' Welfare Services, Gender And Child Rights, Widowhood Association, Human Rights, Training Programmes for Police Officers and Youths, Women Development & Promotion through Micro Credit, Emergency Response, Legal Aid and VC Programming.
Focus Group	The rural populace, the economically deprived, families, children, students, youths, women and widows living among the poorest of the

	poor in the society. Inmates in Prison and Ex-inmates, persons stigmatized with deadly diseases.
Physical Address	Inside Uromi Diocesan Secretariat at Egbele Quarter, Uromi, Edo State.
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Bankers	• UBA BANK PLC Mission Road, Uromi • ECOBANK PLC Mission Road, Uromi • FIDELITY BANK PLC Mission Road, Uromi • Unity Bank PLC Mission Road Uromi • Union Bank PLC Mission Road Uromi
Staff Strength	17
Number of Community Volunteers	55
Project Executed	12

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

We are very grateful to God for making 2016 a fruitful year. Indeed, it was very fruitful and a year of breakthrough amidst economic recession and hardship that have marred the Nigerian people most especially the rural populace. Uromi JDPCI was able to positively impact transformation in the lives of her targeted populace of her interventions in line with her vision. As the social arm of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi, the Commission is tasked with the mandate to bring about enlightenment, relief, peace-building, alleviation, succour, solace, awareness creation and good governance as well as challenging unjust structures that bring about hardship, backwardness and retardation in economy and integral development.

There is an urgent need for mainstreaming of our collective responsibility to address the issue of bad governance that often emanates from money politics and political apathy due to resultant effect of many elites who distance themselves from politics. Currently, we are complaining of bad roads, poor electricity, lack of social amenities and many anomalies in our community due to manipulation of desperate politicians that focus only on their pockets and nothing else. We cannot achieve good governance if we continue like this. Therefore, we call on all and sundry to collaborate with Uromi JDPCI good governance project intervention that will awaken people's consciousness, collective mandate guaranteed and protected. This is paramount as it ensures everyone is well served because there is a government on the one hand and citizens on the other that play their respective roles hence negative vices which debases human existence will be eliminated due to good governance.

We therefore advocate for community surveillance throughout the country on Democracy monitoring that will guarantee peaceful environment for election as well as building the capacities of all stakeholders for critical consciousness, collective assertiveness and protection of their mandate. This can only be possible when people's synergy is strengthened through capacity building that will help eliminate manipulation in the electoral process. We must resist these desperate politician's trick who use our different political and religious affiliations as well as tribal consciousness to cause confusion and violate human sanctity.

Towards promoting the overall wellbeing of orphans and vulnerable children in Esan North East Local Government Area, Uromi JDPCI was able to effectively provide services through psychosocial support, improved health, nutrition and livelihood opportunities to 5666 vulnerable children and 1714 households in target communities within Uromi. More importantly, 297 most vulnerable households that were enrolled in SMILE project received cash transfer of Twenty Thousand Naira (#20,000) each.

The Commission has also done a great deal in empowering the less privileged adolescent populace within Edo Central Senatorial District. In the year under review, 38 persons were

enrolled into various skills of their choice and 55 others empowered with equipments to aid in setting up of their own cottage industry. The aim was to provide an alternative to vulnerable adolescents who might be prone to human trafficking in the form of economic opportunities. Farmers and traders have also been supported with farm implements (improved agricultural inputs) and soft loans (from micro-credit scheme) to assist their farms and businesses towards a stronger and better economy.

The inmates in prison who are part of the Commission's target populace were not left out in this year's interventions. They are still recognized as part of the country's populace with rights and as such their welfare is worthy of concern. Towards impacting a better life for inmates, the Commission was able to provide spiritual counselling, bible studies, medical examination and treatment, reconciliation of inmates and their family members on the one hand and those they have wronged on the other. The celebration of Christmas is always an awaited party at Federal Prison, Ubiaja. This year's celebration was no exception as inmates ate and danced in merriment of the Christmas celebration.



The Commission is indeed grateful to Most Rev. Dr. Donatus A. Ogun, priests and religious, good spirited individuals in Uromi Diocese and to all our partners both National and International for making the year 2016 a huge success. We sue for more partnerships, collaboration and cooperation from individuals and groups towards making successive years laudable and one filled with greater awareness, education as well as impact on the spiritual, physical and economic lives of our target populace.

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Oriabure Arhedo
Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

It is with joy that Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI), Catholic Diocese of Uromi, presents this annual report which covers the activities of the Organisation from January – December 2016. We are indeed grateful to God for the grace provided to conclude the year with utmost fulfillment.

Uromi Justice, Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives, Catholic Diocese of Uromi, was established in the year 2006, as a social arm of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi saddled with the responsibility to promote justice and peace, encourage meaningful development, provide succour for the less-privileged thereby upholding the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Commission does this by identifying and addressing the social ills of our time concretely in line with the life and teaching of Christ. Uromi JDPCI is posed to fulfill her mission to the target beneficiaries on the basis of rights and needs, and not based on religion, race or ethnicity.

Uromi JDPCI of Uromi Diocese is part of the national network of JDPCs in 53 Catholic Dioceses in Nigeria. It's coordinated nationally by the Catholic Secretariat based in Abuja, Nigeria. The co-ordination is further broken down to Provincial, Diocesan and Parish levels.

Within the year, series of interventions geared towards positive impact and meaningful changes in the lives of the people, especially the down trodden and vulnerable households were carried out. This was to ensure that preferential option for the poor and the less privilege, which the Organization promotes, was better felt. Amidst challenges that occurred during the year, the Commission was able to scale up her mission with useful collaboration and sustainable intervention.

In the reporting year 2016, Uromi JDPCI beefed up efforts to institutionalize and strengthen participatory democracy and community involvement in governance so as to ensure a better society and a more responsive government especially at the local level. The Commission advanced and sustained capacity building for the local Community based organizations in ensuring participatory democracy across Edo Central Senatorial District. This was done with support from MISEREOR as part of the project on "Community Mobilization and Capacity Strengthening for Good Governance in Edo Central Senatorial District" **PHASE II**.

In a bid to promote peaceful, violence free and fair election Uromi JDPCI during the course of the year convened eminent stakeholders' fora/peace accord across the five Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District. The Commission also engaged in sensitizing eligible voters across communities in the district on the need to exercise their franchise during the 2016 gubernatorial election in Edo State. To fulfill our mission to ensure a free and fair 2016 general election, the Commission was involved in elections observation held across the five Local Government Areas in Edo central senatorial district.

The Commission continued the collaboration and partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) on the SMILE project (Sustainable Mechanism for Improving Livelihood and Household Economic Strengthening) with the aim to improve the Livelihood of Vulnerable Children and their Households across selected communities in Esan North East Local Government Area of Edo State. The Commission through the partnership has established, caregivers' forum, Kids club, support group for infant and young child feeding, SILC groups and Community Improvement Team. In the course of the year the Commission was involved in promoting gender integration in selected communities across Esan North East Local Government Area. As part of the effort to reduce scourge of HIV/AIDs the Commission has also carried out community dialogue to reduce stigma and discrimination as well as increase demand for HIV/AIDs services.

To expand on health services, the Commission partnered with Edo State Agency for the Control of AIDS (Edo SACA) on the project "Promoting Healthy Living at the grass-root through the integration of HIV/AIDs services" with support from World Bank. This project which focused on behavioural change started in 2014 and was concluded in the month of May, 2016.

Uromi JDPCI continued with the effort to improved household income generating and economic empowerment for a meaningful living through the Micro Credit/PROMIC department of the Commission. The Micro Credit was expanded to include Agric PROMIC in order to be able to cater for the needs of farmers who also yearn to improve their livelihood and productivity. This was made possible through partnership with Swiss hand – Open Hand Foundation.

The Commission also paid series of visit to the Inmates in the Federal Prison, Ubiaja to provide welfare, counselling, reconciliation and legal services for them. Uromi JDPCI organized its annual Christmas party for the inmates and also collaborated with friends of the Commission to provide some essential services such as counselling, health education, food, chemical for fumigation among others to the inmates in prison.

During the course of the year, the capacities of staff members of Uromi JDPCI were built in different areas, special thanks to MISEREOR and Catholic Relief Services. The Commission was also represented by some of the staff in trainings and workshops held by different partners in the Commission's intervention.

We wish to appreciate our partners and Funders; Misereor, Swisshand, Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria, MISSIO Edo SACA, Volunteers, Prison Authority- Ubiaja, and the Monarchs of Ekpoma, Igubeben, Ogwa, Irrua, Uromi, Ubiaja, Ewatto, Ekpon, Ugbegun and other communities in Esan Land for their support to our programmes.

Special thanks to the Bishop of Uromi Diocese, Most Rev. Dr. Donatus A. Ogun and the entire Diocese of Uromi for their support towards achieving the set objectives and goal of Uromi JDPCI. May God bless and reward you all abundantly----- AMEN!

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiative Good governance intervention is a process that is aimed at involving the populace in an all-inclusive government. This affirms that the people have a stand to checkmate the running of the government at the Local Level and participate actively in order to proffer solution that will promote sustainable development in the society.

It is in the light of this that Uromi JDPCI has worked relentlessly in ensuring that it accomplishes this aim through the formation and building of the capacity of the 35 civic groups in communities across Edo Central Senatorial District (Esan land). This is made possible by way of trainings, mentorship and meetings to discuss issues on good governance as well as address issues concerning barrier to effective participatory democracy in Edo central senatorial district.

The Commission has adopted a strategy that is simple but effective in attaining its goals; Engage, Educate and Empower. This was done to build the capacity of the civic groups in relevant areas (such as training on Right-based governance and Needs Assessment) of governance and to help them to resolve possible challenges posed on them by bad governance.

For the period under review a total of twenty quarterly meetings were held across the five Local Government Areas. Ten new groups were inaugurated across the five Local Government areas, bringing the total number of groups inaugurated in this year to twelve. Four trainings were conducted; one was on Policy Analysis and Strategic Response, Lobby and Advocacy while the other two were on training for Social Transformation

ADVOCACY VISIT TO TRADITION RULER, COMMUNITY LEADERS AND EMINENT PERSONS IN THE TARGET COMMUNITIES

To mark the commencement of the second phase of the good governance project in Edo Central Senatorial District, Uromi JDPCI project team made advocacy and sensitization visits to twelve traditional rulers covering the thirty five communities of her interventions. 17 community heads were also visited within the reporting period. The purpose of the visits was to brief the Monarchs and community leaders of the intention of the Commission to



Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo addressing the Oniie of Ekpon

institutionalize the civic group activities into their community structures and in some cases form civic groups where they do not exist. The Monarchs traditionally known as the Onojie, welcomed the project



HRH Zaiki Anthony Abumere with Fr Fidelis Arhedo

team to their various communities with bowl of Kola nut and then introduced some members of their council who were with them at the time of the meeting. The monarchs thanked the team for their respect for traditional institutions and promised to give support to the Commissions' project any time on request.

The team then explained to the various Monarchs the purpose of their visit which was to discuss the intention to mobilize their communities, build the capacity of their people so as to strengthen good governance and promote participatory democracy. The project team recommended community ownership through mobilization and civic education for members of the community, eminent stakeholder's forum to be held twice a year, community/Monarch representatives at monthly civic group meetings, town hall meetings with their representatives and the drafting of social contract document for the community. These items were explained to their understanding and they all agreed to support the intervention to the latter.

INAUGURATION OF CIVIC GROUPS

The need to enlarge the scope of civic groups in Edo Central Senatorial District became paramount hence, the project team embarked on community sensitization, identification and selection of interest groups in ten communities across the five local government areas, after which inauguration of civic group was conducted in the ten communities. Among the groups inaugurated were Usenu, Agwa and Idumebo in Esan Central Local Government Area, Oria and Okhuesan in Esan South East local government area and Ujoelen and Emiala in Esan West local government area and then Idumu-Egan and Okalo/Upkujie in Igueben Local Government. In Esan North East Local Government Area two groups were also formed Idigun and Uzea respectively. In all a total of 11 groups were formed and more communities are signifying interest to be inaugurated into the fold.



Director addressing civic group members at inauguration in Usenu

In each of the communities, the Director Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo briefed the People of the purpose of visit which was to inaugurate civic group. He described civic group as a group of people who have the interest of their community at heart and willing to make the necessary sacrifice to bring good governance to their community through community mobilization and engagement of elected representatives. This he said can be done through dialogue or Town Hall meeting. He noted that through the same process they can tell elected representatives what they need in their Community without resulting to fighting or violence. He added that membership of civic group was opened to all members of the community who have the interest

of their community at heart and as such members are drawn from the following community based organizations (CBOs)

- Aged Group (Youth)
- Interest Group
- Faith Based Associations
- Women Association
- Bike rider Association
- Respected Influencers in the Community.



Newly inaugurated civic group with Director at Oria.

The people who spoke for the various communities expressed satisfaction and appreciation for the initiative noting that they will embrace and work with the civic groups in their communities. The Director then declared the groups inaugurated and then invited them to the next quarterly meeting. After which the project team gave the groups materials to document their activities

Quarterly Meeting of Civic Groups

A total of four quarterly meetings of civic groups were successfully held across the five Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District in this project year with a total of 2100 persons in attendance. The meetings focused on building the capacity of the various groups to understand the dynamics of community mobilization, develop a better understanding of participatory democracy and be able to engage their representatives for effective service delivery in their communities.



The Director addressing members during quarterly meeting in Igueben

The first quarter meeting was held in the month of March, 2016 while the second quarter meetings were held in the month of June 2016. The third and fourth were held in the months



A section of members during quarterly meeting in Ubiaja

September and December respectively. These meetings took place at different locations within each LGA on different days. In Igueben, Esan South East, Esan West and Esan North East LGAs, the meetings were held at the palace hall of the Monarchs while in Esan Central the Monarch directed that the meeting be held hence forth in the community town which is directly under his control.

The first quarterly meetings of civic groups had impressive attendance and robust discussion on issues and plan to institutionalize the civic group activities into the community system in the various communities. The expectations of the various groups in the PHSAEII of the project were

also discussed, among which were the inauguration of 10 new groups across the five Local Government Area, community mobilization and sensitization aimed at including more influencers into the groups, sensitization visit to traditional leaders and community head with the aim to strengthen community ownership and sustainability as well as to make civic group part of the community system like they have other association for community development. The project team lead by the Director informed the participants that the traditional leaders have been visited and that 95% of them gave strong support and directive to respected persons and influencers within their territory to represent them in civic group meeting and report to them about the groups' activities. The need to draft social contract and hold regular town hall meetings were also discussed. The participants agreed to carry out the activities and report on them by the second quarter meeting. They also requested for training on needs assessment so as to be able to effectively aggregate community needs in the social contract.



Group photograph after quarterly meeting

In the second quarter meetings which was held in the month of June 80% of the civic groups across the Senatorial District reported that they have carried out sensitization and that the exercise yielded strong support for the group and that they now serve as viable instrument for development in the community. The project team then presented a short training on needs assessment so as to provide a guide on how to conduct it in the community. The various groups were tasked to conduct needs assessment in their community



Group photograph after quarterly meeting in Esan South East LGA

and present the result at the next quarterly meeting for analysis and preference ranking. They were also encouraged to design social contract base on the outcome of their assessment.



Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo addressing the civic group members in Esan Central LGA

The third quarterly meeting which was held in the month of September saw the various groups reporting the outcome of their needs assessment and their desire to develop the findings into a social contract to establish a basis for engaging representatives and demand for the provision of community needs from the Local Government and other representatives. The project team then assisted them with templates to draft social contract and request them to share it with their various communities for adoption if accepted.

The project team led by the Director Very Rev.Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo tasked the members to be agents of transformation by engaging in voters' education and sensitization in their communities to prepare their people for effective participation in deciding who govern them. The project team shared IEC materials with the various groups for effective mobilization. Some groups also gave impressive report of their engagement with groups, individuals and representatives and how the engagement affected their community positively.



Civic group members in a group photograph after

In the fourth quarterly meeting held in December, emphasis was on knowing the challenges the various civic groups had in 2016, their plan to address the challenges and their improvement plan for the coming year. This was done to prepare them for a more engaging year with a vision for success and to give the ample time to articulate the plans as well as ways to achieve them.

A summary of the plans common to all the groups were as follow:

- To galvanize and mobilize for support to ensure the tarring and grading of earth roads around their community,
- Brainstorm on possible ways to resolve the problem of low electricity supply experienced in the community,
- Liaise with influential members of the community to assist in the provision of employment opportunity for their children
- To improve on their networking, mobilization and information dissemination among members
- To facilitate the provision of ID card for members.

A brief report of the conduct of the gubernatorial elections in the various communities were also presented, members generally agreed that the election was peaceful and violence free. They however complained about the high level of financial inducement displayed by political parties during the election and cautioned that if nothing was done about it in subsequent elections, it would be capable of undermining the credibility of such election. The civic group members gave credence and credit to the eminent stakeholders' forum/peace accord and the voters' education facilitated by Uromi JDPCI to ensure peaceful and violence free gubernatorial election. They appealed that such gesture/intervention should be propagated in subsequent elections.

The Director Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo who was present in all the meetings thanked them for playing their part by hearken to the appeal to sensitize their people on the need for a peaceful and violence free election in their various communities.

EMINENT STAKEHOLDERS' FORUM/PEACE ACCORD HELD ACROSS THE FIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF EDO CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 2016

Uromi JDPCI as part of her mission to promote peaceful coexistence and promote human right for a meaningful living conveyed meetings of stakeholders across the five Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District. This meeting was necessitated by the pace of political activities and the intensity of campaigns between the major political parties in the State, which was observed to be causing a rift between different people within the same community. The Commission observed that many families and community members were unnecessarily divided along party line and hostile to each other. To avert this crisis and ensure a violence free gubernatorial election in Edo State, the Commission decided to convey a meeting of stakeholders in each of the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District in Edo State.



The Director addressing the participants during eminent stakeholders' forum in Igueben LGA

The purpose of the meeting was to sensitize the people on the need to avoid electoral violence, promote peaceful co-existence, dialogue way forward for a peaceful election and establish a peace accord among the relevant stakeholders in the various Local Government Areas. To achieve this objective, important stakeholders made up of Traditional rulers, chiefs in the various communities, security Agencies, political leaders, youth leaders, Independent National Electoral Commission representatives, Religious Leaders, CBOs and civic group representatives were selected to attend the meeting which was held across the five Local Government Area of Edo Central Senatorial District.



The Director, Chiefs, security officials and other participants in the eminent stakeholders' forum in Esan South East LGA

The Director, Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhede in his remark stated that the stakeholders' forum was necessary to create a community surveillance which would build the capacity of all stakeholders within each of the local government Area for critical consciousness, collective assertiveness for their mandate as well as build synergy in a more proactive measure that will help eliminate manipulation of the electoral process. He emphasized that ignorance brings backwardness, poverty and violence but knowledge is power that eradicates ignorance. The fora were designed to afford all stakeholders and representatives the opportunity to update their civic

knowledge in order to create political awareness through participatory democratic discourse, which will further enhance the ability of the electorate to protect their mandate in a truly participatory democracy. The Director used the opportunity to solicit the cooperation and collaboration of the formidable stakeholders (such as the leaders of the different towns and communities, the law enforcement agencies, constituency representatives and representatives of the different political parties) towards a proactive peace accord initiative for the gubernatorial election. This he said would help a great deal to reshape their thinking and values for election in the Senatorial District.

He stated that we are brothers and sisters irrespective of our political or religious affiliation as such we should uphold the human dignity of human sanctity and rights that promote peace. He urged all to preach peace and not violence in their conduct, even in campaigns. He added that the people were afraid because of the aftermath of the gubernatorial elections held in Rivers, Bayelsa and Imo States that were declared inconclusive amidst violence that characterized the elections. He emphasized that it was pertinent to inculcate peace accord into our political parties and communities. Members of the communities were to watch against the use of thugs to steal ballot boxes as well as the disappearance of vital documents from polling centers. This he said can create mayhem which often scare people from coming out to cast their votes on election day. He reminded the people that election is a contest in



A party youth leader making a commitment for peaceful election during the eminent stakeholders' meeting in Esan Central LGA

which only one person is declared winner as such we do not need to kill ourselves because there is life after election.



Some security officials during eminent stakeholders' meeting in Esan Central LGA

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo also used the opportunity to enlighten the people on some basic features of democracy as well as the characteristics of a free and fair election. This session was very interactive as participants were given opportunity to air their minds as well as ask questions on possible ways forward for a peaceful gubernatorial election in Edo State. the Director further highlighted some key pre election information which can help to promote active participation in the electoral process as well violence free election.

The stake holders who were pleased with the idea thanked the Commission for the opportunity to reflect on ways to ensure a violence free election. The Monarch of Ekpoma remarked that peace is every ones responsibility and that only in peace can we achieve the desired development. He therefore urged everyone to be vigilante and watch out for strangers in their communities during the periods of the election. Some security personnel who were present at the forum advised the people against inciting words that raise tempers and urged the political parties to play by the rules.



A High Chief from Ewohimi kingdom making his contributions during eminent stakeholders meeting

In Esan South East LGA, a High Chief from Ewohimi community applauded the initiative and advised participants to report strange faces in their communities to the traditional leaders so as to find out their motive for being in the community within that period in time. Another Chief from Ubiaja Palace expressed the need for the community leaders to collaborate with the police so as to quickly respond to issues of security and violence within the communities. This suggestion was accepted by all the stakeholders in the local government. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) representative who was present at the meeting used the opportunity to invite the stakeholders to their Commissions voters' education and sensitization after he had highlighted some possible situations that



Uromi JDPCI Director addressing the Monarchs and other participants at the eminent stakeholders' forum in Esan West LGA

lead to violence during election. He further advised all to shun such act and situations as campaigning during election, unnecessary interference among



Group photograph after the eminent stakeholders' forum in Esan North East LGA

In Igueben some participants raised concern about the possibility of card readers malfunctioning or failing to function at all, the Director and INEC officials told the people that INEC has improved on the functionality of the card readers as such the possibility of a card reader failing is very minimal. He added that INEC has made provision for backup for every card reader; in the event that anyone fails the backup will be immediately activated.

In Esan Central Local Government Area, the security agents urged participants to re-echo the message of peace to the youth in the various communities. They noted that the youth were the instruments used by the politicians to perpetuate violence, if the message of peace must be achieved then there was the need to engage them in peace accord. The youth leaders of the two major political parties who were present at the forum made commitment to ensure a peaceful and violence free election within the Local Government Area.



The Director addressing participants during eminent stakeholders' forum in Esan Central LGA

Participants in Esan North East Local Government Area also expressed the need to engage the youths so as to disengage their minds from violence. The former president of Nigerian Union of Local Government Employee Comr. Pat Ukerale noted that the current social economic situation in the country has the potentials to cause violence. He added that lack of Jobs, poverty and money politics were key indicators that pushes violence during election. Another speaker from the health department of the Local Government identified rigging as another factor that can cause violence in an election, he therefore appealed to the community leaders present to guide against rigging in their various communities if there must be violent free election.



Director and Chiefs in a group Photograph after eminent stakeholders' forum in Esan West LGA

In all the local government areas visited one outstanding recommendation was that the stakeholders should work to establish and promote strong institutions that can defend the will of the people and the interest of the communities above personal and selfish interest of the individual.

TRAINING ON POLICY AND STRATEGIC RESPONSE

In line with meeting the objective of the project on community mobilization and capacity strengthening for good governance in Edo Central Senatorial district, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (JDPCI) organized 3 days training on policy and strategic response for the Facilitators, Scribes, Supervisors and key staff of the Organization

The aim of this training was to educate the staff of Uromi JDPCI and volunteers on the processes of policy formulation and analysis to enable them analyze public issues and plan appropriate –

response to the ones that affects their community. A total of 82 persons were present at the training. The facilitator Mr Cosmas Olaniyan took the participants through the process of policy formulation, types of policies among other. He said that the attitude of the people running the government determines the result of the governance, for that reason it is very necessary to elect the right person into positions of authority. He mentioned that, since government is all about check and balance, qualified persons should be elected in key position.

The facilitator also explained the importance of Rule, Policy and Regulations; Rule make those who function to comply with set policies, as a result usually attract penalty of various weights if violated. Policy usually gives direction to work, it tells what should be done, how and for what purpose and what the result should be. Regulation is a further instruction that helps modify, clarify, and makes more practicable rules and policies to meet with new realities. Regulation may not necessarily go through legislative process; it is usually done by a body responsible for implementing a policy (law).

More also, he gave a detailed explanation of the types of policies such as; Economy policy, Health policy, Education policy, Infrastructure policy, Religion policy, Environment policy and Fiscal policy.

He talked about the driver of a government which is the legislator, and the paramount role they play in governance and then encouraged the civic groups to be close to the legislatures at all levels.



Facilitator making a presentation during training

TRAINING FOR TRANSFORMATION

The first phase of this training was held from the 21st to 23rd June 2016 while the second phase was held on the 1st -3rd December, 2016. Both phases were facilitated by Mr. Tunde and Mr Cosmas. They started the training with a simulation exercise that required the participants to express their expectation in a way that it revealed the challenges participants encounter in their various communities as it relate to civic activities. The facilitators aggregated the expectations of the participants and then proceeded to carry out another exercise which was intended to teach communication skills so as to know how to pass effective message in the community. He also told them that for an effective message to be delivered, the following points should be noted:

1. Documentation should be done when the message is sent
2. The carrier should ask for proper clarifications
3. Repeat the message to the sender for the purpose of clarity

4. Listen attentively, not dwelling on personal issues or problem
5. Ask the giver to repeat message until capture, and lastly
6. The giver of the message should be very clear with the receiver.
7. That every message should have a feedback. Listening is also hearing with respect for the giver, message with integrity.



Participants forming square during training

The above exercise followed by another brainstorming session in which participants were grouped into eight with a task to form a square of equal size per person in the group, without the assistance of anybody. They were advised to drop the part of the paper that they do not need at the centre so it can be of use to another persons who may need it.

The purpose of the square forming was to know how individual relate and share ideas in the community, if it is done in the secrecy or open. This exercise was done by participant without talking or share ideas. At the end of the exercise, the following lessons were learnt by participants:

1. Ability to recognize problem and finding possible solutions to it
2. Encourage team work among group member who are working for the same purpose
3. Adjust to help others, for there is no happiness where the group is failing
4. Helping others by making personal sacrifice.



Some participants during a POPO exercise

At the end of the lesson, participants were made to discuss their weakness and suggest what they would do different if given the opportunity again.

A POPO exercise was also conducted with the aim to teach participant how to learn from observation and activities within the community. POPO simply means Participant Observe Participant Observation

At the end of the training participants expressed satisfaction over the training and the methodology used in the training. In all, the training was very insightful, highly educative, and participatory and it ended successfully. A total of 46 persons were in attendance

TRAINING ON ADVOCACY AND LOBBY

Uromi JDPCI organized training on lobbying and advocacy for civic group representatives across Edo Central Senatorial District on the 3rd of October, 2016. The training which was sponsored by MISEREOR as part of the project on community mobilization and capacity strengthening for good governance in Edo Central Senatorial District, was intended to build the capacity of the civic groups on strategies to engage representatives and other relevant stakeholders so as to influence development to their communities.



Esan North East Civic Group Using Problem Tree to Identify Problems in their

The Director, Uromi JDPCI Very Rev.Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo who gave the opening remark enjoined the participants to take the training seriously, as it was part of the efforts to enhance their strategies for community mobilization and capacity strengthening for good governance in their various communities. He told them that they were expected to cascade the training to their various communities and impact the knowledge gained from the training to their group members who were not opportune to attend the training. He added that if the knowledge gained was impacted rightly, it will bring about growth and sustainable development in their community.

The first session of training was on advocacy, the facilitator, Theresa Oriakhi explained the origin and meaning of Advocacy to the people: she said Advocacy originated from the word *advocare*, which means ‘call to one’s aid’ or to speak out on behalf of someone. It involves the effective process of raising voices in an effective manner so as to influence others. This she said was done by creating, educating, or increasing awareness among the general public, government, policy makers or other entities such as private cooperatives on issues affecting or confronting the community and the need to align policies, law, programs and projects to address the needs. She further listed some common examples of Advocacy/Advocacy campaigns to include: Demonstrations, Petitions, Press releases - press conferences, Newspaper articles, columns, Media campaigns, Lawsuits



Presentation of Action Plan by Esan Central Civic Group after Using Problem to Identify their Community Problems

The facilitator added that for advocacy to be effective as well as yield the desired result the people must have a good understanding of the problem. She noted that one of the ways to analyze community problem was through the use of problem tree. The facilitator explained the problem tree and thereafter asked the participants to discuss in groups the major problem in their community using a problem tree. At the end of the exercise the facilitator urged the participants

to always: Settle on the core problem, Identify the core causes and effect, Develop a solution tree and Select the preferred intervention. The second part of the training was on action planning and the participants did a full day's work on action planning using the scenarios from the problem tree.

The third part of the training was on lobbying, the facilitator Barr Onomen Oriakhi defined lobbying as persuading People who have a say in decision making to do what you want. Lobbying' (also 'Lobby') is a form of advocacy with the intention of influencing decisions made by the government, individuals or groups; it includes all attempts to influence legislators and officials, whether by other legislators, constituents, or organized groups." She went further to identify and explain two types of lobbying which were; grass root lobbying and direct lobbying. She then summarized the fundamentals for effective lobbying thus:

Give credit where credit is due, Don't get too emotional, Educate, Motivate and Activate,



Director, the two facilitators and participants in Group photograph after training on advocacy and lobbying

Prioritise concerns, Everything in Writing, Be Fair and Reasonable, Kill them with kindness, Be Realistic and willing to compromise, Never leave in anger, Contact with regularity, Be Actual and Factual.



Esan South East Civic Group Using Problem Tree to Identify Problems in their Community

ELECTION OBSERVATION TRAINING

In a bid to actualize its objective, Uromi JDPCI organized one day training for selected observers across the five local government areas of Edo central senatorial district. Over 80 persons participated in the election observation training which was held on the 7th of September, 2016 and was facilitated by Barr. Cletus Alope from the Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN). The whole idea was to enhance capacity building by sensitizing the participants to comply with the set rules during the gubernatorial election in order to achieve a free, fair and credible election that will enable the voters' decision to be reflected through the polls.



Participants during the Election Observation Training.

The facilitator described election observation as a process whereby, elections in a particular country are observed against set standards by an independent and impartial body of observers with the aim of identifying whether the elections conform to the accepted norms of democracy, identifying flaws and challenges, and also making recommendations on how the process can be improved in the future. He added that Election is observed to ensure that there was credible evidence on the basis of which to evaluate, assess and report on the credibility of the elections in terms of whether they meet the minimum thresholds of democratic participation.



Facilitator anchoring the training session of election observation.

The facilitator reminded the participants that election is a process and not an event as such election observation should cover all the activities in line with the election. He emphasized that election observers were not meant to settle disputes that may arise during election or voting but to record or document such incidence during or after the election. More so, an election observer must be impartial and independent or neutral (not belonging to any political parties) as well as not to take unnecessary risk in a polling unit especially in there was serious crisis in the polling unit. He thereafter shared a checklist to document and report; from arrival of INEC and security officials, Accreditation, Voting, Counting and declaration of result and other incidents with all the observers.

REPORT ON THE GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION IN EDO CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT

Every four years, elections are conducted in Nigeria for eligible voters to elect various leaders of their choice to occupy public offices. These elections are conducted by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) which is the only statutory body mandated by the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to conduct elections in Nigeria. It is based on this that on the 28th of September, 2016 that election for the seat of the Governor of Edo state was conducted across the eighteen Local government areas.

As part of its mission of enhancing justice and promoting integral development, The Uromi Justice, Development and Peace Caritas Initiative (Uromi JDPCI) recruited, trained and deployed 80 INEC accredited election observers across the five (Esan South East, Igueben, Esan North East, Esan West and Esan Central) Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District. The deployments were done based on purposeful sampling of areas with the greatest number of eligible registered voters. The election observers were given check lists to record proceedings at each designated polling unit they were deployed to. For the purpose of having a comprehensive information of events on the field, the checklist was divided into four broad sections, (ARRIVAL, ACCREDITATION/VOTING, SORTING AND COUNTING AND OFFICIAL POLLING RESULTS) each depicting the various stages of the electoral process.

ARRIVAL:

Reports from the field showed that polling officials and election materials arrived at the polling zones/units across the Edo central senatorial district on time for most parts except for wards 3 and 5 in Esan West Local government area where the materials arrived at about 8:20am. There were heavy presence of security personnel and party agents of most political parties fielding candidates for the election in all the polling units.

ACCREDITATION AND VOTING:

The electorates came out en-mass as early as 7am; the polling units were already filled with the electorates who came out to cast their votes.

Accreditation and voting commenced at about 8:00am across all the polling stations in Edo Central Senatorial District and was done simultaneously. The polling stations were well divided into polling units and the ballot boxes to be used for voting were displayed in full view of the public. At each polling unit, averages of three polling officials who were predominantly National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) members were present. The polling units were accessible and easy to locate. The polling officials addressed the voters on the voting process before accreditation and voting began. The voters register for each polling unit was displayed for the eligible voters that registered in the units to check for their names before accreditation and voting. The presiding officer in each polling unit stamped and signed every ballot paper before being given to each voter. In wards one, two, three and six in Esan South East Local government area, the card reader malfunctioned and could not read the finger prints of some voters who queued up to cast their votes.

Reports reaching the Commission also showed that the elderly and physically challenged eligible voters were given preference to cast their votes.

Incidences of violence between party agents were recorded by our observers in wards 5 unit 4 (Girls model Primary School, Uromi). Sporadic gun shots were fired by several detachments of mobile police men to scare mischief makers who had approached polling unit to make trouble. The Army was later called in to quell the violence.

There were also incidences of financial inducement to voters by a particular political party in several polling units across the five Local government areas of Edo Central Senatorial district.

POLLING RESULTS:

Sorting and counting was done in all the polling units by the presiding officers with the various parties' agents present. Our observers did not go to the collation centers to observe the process.

Judging from the reports of the observers in the field, the Commission can say that the election was largely peaceful apart from some skirmishes and financial inducement to sway voters in certain locations. It must be stated here that this conclusion is based on the areas that were covered by Uromi JDPCI Observers.

Some of the major achievements recorded in the Good governance desk are hereby listed below;

- 12 new civic groups successfully inaugurated and are functional
- Some civic groups were able to get their social contract signed by some gubernatorial aspirants
- Ekpon community successfully engaged local representatives and some of their demands were met amongst which were the provision of a borehole, and the construction of a customary court building.
- Four successful quarterly meetings held across the five local government areas in Edo Central Senatorial District.
- Voters' education and sensitization for a violent free 2016 gubernatorial elections conducted in selected communities in Esan land.
- The Commission successfully observed the 2016 gubernatorial election in 52 units within 28 wards across the five local government areas of Esan land with local resources.
- Two eminent stakeholders' fora and peace accord for a violence free gubernatorial election successfully held

Amidst the achievements listed above, some challenges were also encountered during the year, these include;

- The absence of democratically elected representative at the Local government level.
- Poor financial status of the local government council made implementation of projects in the communities' difficulty.
- Inadequate fund to carry out voters' education and sensitization across the five local areas of Edo central senatorial district.
- Absence of sponsors for election observation, limited the coverage of the commission to only 52 units and 28 wards in Esan land

ANTI HUMAN TRAFFICKING CAMPAIGN

In a bid to promote human rights and the dignity of human person, Uromi JDPCI conducted sensitization on human trafficking across communities in four Local Government Areas (Esan West, Esan Central, Esan North East and Esan South East) in the month of June, 2016. The purpose of which was to create awareness of the dangers that trafficked persons are exposed to and the inhuman treatment they suffer in the hands of the traffickers as a way to reduce susceptibility or become prey to traffickers. This exercise was carried out in collaboration with the Anti-Human trafficking Desk Office of the Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN).



Barr Onomen making presentation on trafficking

The desk officer on Anti Human trafficking CCFN, Barr Onomen Oriakhi gave a brief sensitization and enlightenment on human trafficking she described human trafficking as a form of modern day slavery and man's inhumanity to man. She further categorized trafficking into two, internal and external and added that human trafficking is done for one purpose which is exploitation. Exploitation comes in various but two of them are mainly dominant which are domestic servitude and prostitution. She explained the meaning of Human Trafficking, the approaches of Human Trafficking and some of the ordeal and trauma victims of trafficking suffer when trafficked. She said we are all migrants on earth and as such equal opportunities should be given to everyone and no one should be excommunicated as a result of where he/she finds his/herself and that community members should avoid stigmatizing against those that have been trafficked. She added that the Church is not against migration but that the reason for migration must be known and clearly stated. She said Nigeria has become not only a transit point for Human Trafficking but origin and transit and that from available data trafficking of females is higher than trafficking of males counterpart. She went further to say that Nigeria ranks highest amongst others when it comes to Human Trafficking in the Sub-Sahara Africa and that in Nigeria Edo State ranks highest and also in Edo State Benin ranks highest followed by Uromi, the Head Quarter of Esan North East Local Government Area. She advised the people to resist the temptation of being lured or deceived into human trafficking in the name of travelling abroad and that they should note that it is not as rosy as they think, stating that they should be contented and strive to achieve satisfaction in all they do.



Participants asking questions on trafficking

She encouraged families to bring up their children bearing in mind to inculcate in them good morals and parental upbringing, and that they should never pressurize their children by comparing them with their peers thereby pushing them into quest for quick wealth in undignified manner such as trafficking. She mentioned that youths should be bold enough to say no to lofty gestures from traffickers with the promises of making it abroad, instead they should build their capacity by acquiring a skill or hand work like hair dressing, tailoring or automobile repairs so as to be able to earn a meaningful living if they cannot go to school.

She encouraged everybody to be involved and to report anyone who is suspected of recruiting people for trafficking to the appropriate authorities such as the Nigerian Police, National Agency



Barr Onomen addressing participants in Esan South East LGA

for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Person (NAPTIP) and other bodies like the Commission and NGOs that can help in this fight against trafficking.



Barr Onomen addressing participants in Esan West LGA

The Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo thanked the various communities for coming out in large numbers to participate in the enlightenment campaign. He further informed the community members that the team was in their communities to render valuable information on human trafficking which was rampant in the communities due to lack of awareness on the part of those that are regrettably lured into it. He mentioned that the commission had set out to build their capacity in this area so that the hitherto ignorant community members would be well-informed and be less susceptible to trafficking. He urged participants to take the message home and disseminate accordingly

HEALTH

Promoting Healthy Living at the grass-root through the integration of HIV/AIDS services

Uromi JDPCI in a bid to address the rising scourge of HIV/AIDS



Uromi JDPCI staff addressing the people in the market during outreach

in Edo state has over the period of two years deployed diverse strategies through its collaboration with EDOSACA in addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS in three local government Area (Esan



Uromi JDPCI staff addressing the people in the market during outreach

West, Esan Central and Esan North East) by providing services that ranged from Advocacy visit to relevant stakeholders, traditional & religious leader to Sensitization of the various groups of the general population such as reproductive age male and female, PLHIV/PABA. Provision of HCT services to communities that have no access to such services, enrolment of PLHIV and rendering service that ranges from client service, referral service to household prevention with positive HBC kits, water treatment and water vessel. Also outreaches for behavioural changes along side, community dialogue were also conducted for stigma reduction. In the reporting year the project came to a close within the second quarter of the year as target was met.

INTERNATIONAL AIDS CANDLE LIGHT MEMORIAL

This activity was organized by Uromi JDPCI in collaboration with other groups including EDOSACA, (NEPWHAN)and CISHAN to create awareness about HIV and to remember those who have died because of Aids. The ceremony which took place in Uromi for Edo Central Senatorial District had society for family health on ground to support in the screening of interested members of the public.



Candle light memorial for HIV/AIDS

This memorial re-called to mind those that have been lost as a result of infection with the virus. Sensitization on HIV/AIDS and screening exercise was carried out in the course of the publicity. The exercise which took participant round major streets in Uromi lasted for about four hours at the end 82 persons made up of 76 adults (30 male; 46 female) and 4 children (all female) were screened and they all turned out negative to the virus.

This exercise was conducted inform of prayer rally and sensitization campaign and information on prevention and control were also delivered to the people/public.



CiSHAN coordinator addressing the participants at the start of the rally

HIV PREVENTION, CARE AND SUPPORT DESK – SMILE PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining a perfect state of health for all SMILE beneficiaries in the communities where the Commission is carrying out its intervention has always been foremost in the goals of the Commission. This year was not an exception as the Commission embarked on measures to ensure that SMILE beneficiaries in these communities are provided with the health care they need to stay healthy. Health services rendered for the beneficiaries in this reporting year includes HIV testing service (HTS), Tuberculosis screening, Support group meeting for People living with HIV, follow-up for PLHIV and community dialogue for stigma reduction. These services were targeted to reach out to vulnerable households and focused on caregivers and vulnerable children in the communities with the aim of bettering the vulnerability status of the beneficiaries. The Commission also saw the need to intensify efforts in conducting community dialogues in the various communities; this was due to the fact that it had been noticed that there was an increase in stigma and discrimination towards people living with the virus and there was need to educate the community members and in the process discourage this attitude/behaviour.

HIV TESTING SERVICE

One of the core health related services provided by the Commission includes HIV testing service for beneficiaries in the 9 communities (Egbele, Efandion, Eror, Obeidu, Obiyon-Idigun, Obiyon-



Awo, Ivue, Ebhoiyi and Onewa) where the Commission is carrying out her intervention. A total of eighty (80) outreaches were conducted in this reporting



period. In the previous year, the Commission reached out to 1,386 children and 139 caregivers. This reporting year saw this figures doubled (2,658) for children and eight times the previous year (872) for care givers. The reasons for this remarkable success was due to the fact that the hitherto lack of test kits had been resolved as the Commission now have access to test kits for HTS exercises. Also, the commission was able to identify those beneficiaries that have not been screened for the virus so they could be screened; this was an improvement from the previous year where the same persons were screened over and over again which counted as the same people in the NOMIS data base and therefore did not reflect significantly in the numbers of persons reached. The commission was able to identify the persons not reached with the aid of NOMIS and the community volunteers who enrolled these persons were instructed to mobilize these households for HIV testing service.

REFERRALS AND LINKAGES

A total of 3,530 persons were reached with HIV testing service through referrals and outreaches out of which was 8 positive cases made up of 6 care givers (5 female; 1 male) and 2 children (1 male and 1 female). This brought to 15 the total number of people living with HIV that the commission is currently assisted to access health care service. Although 4 (1 child and 3 female care givers) of these people are yet to commence treatment; this is due to the fact that the child and the father have refused to commence treatment with the father denying the fact that they are positive to HIV. The other two care givers have been away from the community for a while now and it is hoped that when they return, they will be referred and retained in care. Services rendered to positive beneficiaries include Anti retro viral drug re-fill, home visit, drug adherence counseling, disclosure counseling and TB screening. The 21 positive beneficiaries are currently in a healthy state and are doing very well.



COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

Three community dialogue meetings were held in this reporting year. These meetings which were put together with the assistance of the community volunteers saw 64 persons (49 male; 15

female) in attendance. The commission made sure that the major stake holders in the communities attended these meetings. Issues relating to stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV



HIV screening for caregivers in Ivue community.

were discussed at length in the various meetings and the community stake holders were tasked with the assignment of passing the message down to their sub-ordinates in the communities as it will be better received from them. Some of the community stake holders promised to notify the project team about their various youth, elders, and women forum so that the Commission can come and educate them on HIV/AIDS. The project team obliged stating that whenever they were called upon, they will always be available for such meetings.

SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

The Commission conducted one support group meeting in this reporting year; this was due to the fact that the Commission's focal person in the Hospital was away for most part of the year. This support group meeting was targeted at reaching out to beneficiaries of the SMILE project and was held on world AIDS day which was perfect timing as the Commission used the opportunity to enforce positive health dignity and prevention (PHDP) and that they need to take a stand to ensure that they add value to their society irrespective of their status. A total of 26 persons (22 female; 4 male) were in attendance and matters relating to stigma and discrimination were discussed at the meeting.

TB SCREENING

The Commission continued in its bid to ensure that all beneficiaries in the project were screened for tuberculosis in this reporting year by embarking on TB screening using the TB screening checklist. The HIV positive child diagnosed as positive to tuberculosis has been placed on DOTS treatment regimen; the child is currently showing signs of improvement and is responding positively to treatment. A total number of 1342 persons were reached made up of 1013 children (432 male; 581 female) and 329 care givers (79 male; 250 female) in this reporting period and none of them was found to be presumptive to tuberculosis.

WORLD AIDS DAY

The Commission in its bid to end the scourge of HIV/AIDS joined the rest of the world to commemorate World AIDS day by embarking on some activities to help foster the fight against HIV/AIDS. These activities focused on beneficiaries of the SMILE project in the various communities where the Commission is carrying out its intervention and also on beneficiaries living with HIV. The theme of this year's commemoration was "Leadership,



Commitment, and Impact” and the Commission used the activities to imprint this theme on the heart of the beneficiaries. The main objective of this exercise was to sensitize members of the communities on HIV/AIDS and also encourage those living with HIV on measures to take in order to live a healthy life and this was attained. 165 SMILE beneficiaries were reached on this day with information relating to HIV/AIDS.

CHALLENGES

The main challenge of test kit availability as reported previously was addressed; it is now a minimal challenge and did little to affect the operations of the commission with regards to outreaches on HIV/AIDS.

One major challenge however in this reporting period was the case of breakdown of the CD4+ count machine in the hospital for screening positive beneficiaries of the Commission. This slowed down the administration of ARV to beneficiaries as their CD4+ counts had to be ascertained before administration of ARV which led to the commission liaising with another comprehensive site. This challenge has however been tackled and the status quo attained.

SUCCESS STORY

This is about a 13 years old double orphaned beneficiary living with HIV who was diagnosed to have tuberculosis. This diagnosis was arrived at with the aid of the TB checklist and a sputum AFBX3 test conducted in St. Camillus Hospital. It was noticed that he had depreciated in his appearance considering that his weight had dropped from 18kg to 17kg; he was looking thin and malnourished.

The commission acted promptly and he was initiated into DOTS therapy and also some nutritional supplements were administered to him from the hospital. The Commission was told to collect a two months post DOTS sputum sample for testing to determine the efficacy of the therapy. This was collected and sent to the hospital for AFB test. The result of the test was received with great joy as it was reported that the test came out negative for TB. In one of the visits to the hospital, the doctor recommended that the DOTS therapy should be continued just to be thorough. It was also noticed that he had regained his weight from the previous 17kg to 19kg over a period of 2 months.

This remarkable turn-around was made possible first with the aid of the TB screening checklist provided by CRS-SMILE project which helped to presumptively diagnose tuberculosis and also with the prompt intervention of the Commission to ensure that the otherwise deadly effect of this opportunistic infection was averted.

NEXT STEPS

The Commission subsequently, is still considering the formation of mini support groups in the community and it is hoped that this long expected action will be implemented soonest. Emphasis also will be on effective service to positive beneficiaries and ensuring that they live a healthy life. A sustainable approach will be employed to ensure that they can access the hospitals without the direct aid of the Commission.

LIVELIHOOD DESK

SUSTAINABLE MECHANISM FOR IMPROVING LIVELIHOOD AND HOUSEHOLD EMPOWERMENT (SMILE) PROJECT:

Uromi JDPCI conducted activities that were geared towards the provision of quality need based services to enrolled children and their households. Some of these services were rendered during home visits to households, such as nutritional counseling and growth monitoring, health education and counseling support among others. School visits were also conducted by community volunteers to monitor performance of VCs in the schools located within their communities. This year also saw increased commitment towards the implementation of Gender Norm sessions in the 9 communities of our intervention using the kids clubs and care givers fora as platforms for the sessions

Psychosocial Support

Kids Club

The kids club is a platform that was organized to create avenue for the vulnerable children from different quarters of the same community to come together, share ideas and most importantly promote psychosocial support by engaging the children in recreational activities, exercise their body and brain and to learn how to take responsibility for each other through games and discussion. It was also expected to aid them develop an understanding of their environment and learn how to use the assistance of others to overcome difficulties so as to be able to fulfill their dreams and aspirations. The children were taught on how to build their self-esteem as well as to help them develop some essential life skill such as; the ability to trust, develop self-confidence, understand the reasons why things happen in their environment, and be able to draw and provide information on both themselves and people they consider to be heroes in their lives. All these avails the children the opportunity to learn new ideas thus and provided avenue for them



to interact with children from different backgrounds within the same community and be able to express themselves. Uromi JDPCI provided this psychosocial support



activities to the children through the assistance of trained volunteers who organized the kids club in their various communities on monthly basis. In this reporting year, a total of 443 kids club were held with 11,110 (5226 male and 5884 female) children in attendance.

Summary of caregiver fora for the year

Caregiver forum was a platform established in eight communities (Obeidu, Ivue, Eror, Egbele, Onewa, Efandion, Ebhoiyi, Obiyon) in Esan North East Local Government Area to promote structured parenting skills adaptation. The essence was to give the caregivers the opportunity to interact and discuss the common interest of their children for the overall development and wellbeing of their households. The forum was also to afford the care givers the opportunity to build their own capacity on important parenting skills and providing quality non material care and support for their



A volunteer facilitating a session in caregiver forum

children. It is intended to help care givers develop a better understanding of their households and facilitate improved relation between parent and children thereby improving care and support.



Discussions during care givers forum in Ivue community facilitated by PM

The facilitation of the care givers' forum was done in collaboration with the community volunteers who were given structured parenting skills adaptation manual to ensure standard and coherence in the various groups. The meetings which were held at the residence of either care givers or community centers focused on issues that concern good parenting skills and possible ways to resolve difficulties that can affect relationships in the



A section of women during caregiver forum

families and households. A total of 221 caregiver fora were held with 3020 (20 male and 3000 female) caregivers in attendance.

Gender norms integration

In a bid to promote gender equality in selected communities in



Esan North East Local Government Area, the Commission began the implementation of the Gender Norms integration in the eight communities of her intervention. The youth club and caregiver forum were used as platforms for



the implementation of the gender norm intervention. The essence was to create opportunity for gender awareness, sensitize the people on the dangers of Gender Based Violence and how it is related to HIV/AIDs, as well as increase knowledge of gender issues within their environment. It also provided an avenue to address harmful cultural practices that were gender related, issues of inequality and inhuman activity melted out on women/girls as a result of their sex. It also provided an avenue for the caregivers and youths to interact, share experiences and educate themselves on the issues of child protection that were related to violence whether domestic or industrial and how to channel/address such issues in the communities. Within a period of six months ten gender norm sessions covering a variety of gender issues were facilitated. A total of 1427 persons made up of 377 male and 1050 female completed the sessions.

A community volunteer addressing

The children drawing the things they like most in their community

SPECIAL EVENT during the kids' club

On the 27th of May, 2016, Uromi JDPCI gathered children from eight communities in Esan North East Local Government Area to celebrate the children's day. The activities featured included; presentations and discussions on key service areas such as HIV/AIDs, nutrition, livelihood opportunity, counselling and gender norm. *Dance competition, Poem recitation, Quiz competition on basic knowledge of HIV/AIDs* were also done. A total of 305 children within 12-17 years were in attendance, also a total of 40 Community volunteers graced the occasion.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT TEAM

Uromi JDPCI has been involved in some major activities with communities to strengthen partnership and networking for VC responses through community volunteers. The LGA VC desk officer was involved in the monitoring visits made to the communities on a monthly basis. The Commission still plans to involve them in the monitoring visits that will be conducted to communities at the next quarter.

A total of three community improvement teams were inaugurated in three different communities (Idigun-Obiyon, Efandion and Awo-Obiyon) within this quarter. A total of 52



persons were present (28 male and 24 females). The essence of the activity was to inaugurate a community improvement team whose members are drawn from different structures and



Director addressing the CQIT members of Awo-Obiyon

institutions within the community with the aim to provide support and ownership to the vulnerable children programme being implemented in their community. The improvement team was to complement the efforts of the community volunteers and promote community ownership for effective vulnerable children programme implementation.

The Director addressing the CQIT members in Idigun - Obiyon

MALE INVOLVEMENT: A COMMUNITY DIALOGUE AGAINST GENDER BASE VIOLENCE

INTRODUCTION

Male involvement is an activity designed to promote the participation of the male folk in gender intervention activities in the community and to sensitize them on some gender issues that they should know so as to effectively promote gender integration and equality with the aim of eliminating Gender Based Violence in the community. From time in memorial, males are seen as superior to females which usually leads to the subjugation of women to all kinds of inhuman activity ranging from various forms of domestic abuse to battering. This attitude has brought about low self-esteem and expectations about women and girls. This intervention was carried out to sensitize and dialogue with relevant stakeholders in the community on the need to protect and promote the rights of women/girls in the community so as to eliminate Gender Based Violence.

To achieve this, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi DPCI) of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi, mobilized relevant stakeholders in Ivue Community to the community square to brainstorm and discuss possible ways to eradicate Gender based violence from the community. The stakeholders were made up of the members of the elders' council, family heads and youth leaders from the various clans that make up Ivue Community. The involvement of these stakeholders was necessary; elders play a key role in policy making, the family heads are responsible for decisions and resolution of conflicts before it is taken to the Elders' Council if unresolved, while the youths implement the decisions of the elders in the community.

The first point of discussion was on the inequalities between the males and the females in the community. The project team made up of the VC officer, M&E officer and the Care and Support Officer took turns to address the participants. The project team identified some characteristics and social behaviour that perpetuate gender inequalities to include access to health, nutrition and economic resources. In most cultures, girls and boys are raised, treated and valued differently from birth and into adulthood. Instances of cultural practices where women and girls are solely care givers and perform household chores were sighted and that these responsibilities are unpaid for and undervalued. These practices affect the girl child's school attendance and performance, as well as women's overall economic status while the boys actively participates in community life. In this case, the boys have increased pressure to be tough, aggressive to their elder or younger sister and free to have multiple sex partners while the adolescence girls, are mostly restricted in their movement and from even taking decisions concerning their health and wellbeing. The girl child therefore having little or no say about their own hopes or decisions, and are pressured to assume specific roles in the society.

The participants argued that males and females have their roles and responsibility which were expected to complement each other and that the performance of these roles are guided by cultural and traditional rules within the community. The team then pointed out some practices that are gender based violence for discussion. Among them were sexual violence, trafficking in person, domestic violence, the injustice of child marriage and then the link between GBV and HIV.

Sexual violence: The participants identified rape and sexual harassment as forms of sexual violence. They added that they have local laws that prohibit these crimes within the community and that offenders are severely dealt with. It was discovered that they treat it more as community issues and as such it was not necessary to involve the police. The team then drew their attention to the law that prohibit violence against person and also tried to persuade them to understand that sexual violence should be reported to the government through the appropriate authorities so as to effectively curb it in the community. The team also told them that women have the right to negotiate sex and that when this right is taken away from them it can amount to sexual violence as her partner is forcefully taking what she did not want to give.

Trafficking in persons: This has become a major issue of concern in Uromi. Some participants condemned and blamed it on poverty and hardship in the country. The team however admonished the participants to be conscious of people including family members who promise lofty life to children outside their immediate environment. Internal and external forms of trafficking were explained to the participants including the dangers and ill treatment meted out to trafficked persons. The stakeholders resolved to build a community safety net to protect their

children from traffickers as well as speak to their children what they have heard from the discussion so as to strengthen them to be less susceptible to trafficking.

Domestic violence: The team also explained to the participants that domestic violence means the maltreatment meted out on women/girls because they are females. The participants were encouraged to desist from wife battering, unnecessary restriction of the girl child because of her biological makeup, depriving women of the right to access facilities and decision making. They were further urged not to see women as mere objects or possessions but should be treated with respect and human dignity.

The participants basically identified cultural practices and belief as well as the way they were raised as the reason for domestic violence. They also noted that with education and enlightenment the trend was gradually rolling away. They added that intense sensitization and enlightenment was required to completely eradicate domestic violence from community life.

The injustice of child marriage: The elders noted that this was not a common practice in the community but that it can occur in the event that a child gets impregnated, still in such situation the child may be given to the man or boy that got her pregnant not necessarily in a formal marriage setting. They all agreed that in their community that there is no specific age for a girl child to marry but that the family size and “male child syndrome” could also determine when a girl child is given out in marriage. They added that a man that has only one male child may want the child to marry early so that he can continue with the family name, the implication of this is that a girl child is given in marriage to the young boy. They however added that this was no longer a common practice in the community. The project team encouraged the stakeholders to protect the children in the community against sexual abuse and exploitation to avoid pregnancy in children. Some possible dangers of child marriage were highlighted to include vesicular vagina fistula (VVF), maternal and child mortality, hardship and other health implications.

Link between GBV and HIV: The team concluded that GBV has a strong link to HIV because sexual abuse can expose a woman to HIV. Domestic violence the team said, could also prevent women from accessing health facilities and because the woman does not have right to negotiate sex they can contract HIV from their husband and still be accused of infecting the man.

The spokesman for the community thanked the project team for the enlightenment, he noted that their community will strive to raise their children to have respect for others and not to treat anyone as less important as a result of biological make up or differences. They concluded by condemning Gender Based Violence and agreed to build a synergy to combat gender based violence. They further promised to mobilize their community for HIV testing services and to support their wives to access services at any time it was necessary. A total of 54 persons were in attendance.



The M&E officer introducing member of the team to the community members



The community spokesman thanking the staff on behalf of the Odionwele



The VC officer giving talk on male involvement



The Care and support officer telling on couples counseling while the volunteer is taking the attendance

NUTRITION

The implementation and coordination of effective intervention and programmes to eliminate or reduce malnutrition which is recognized as a global problem that weakens immune system and retard growth especially in children within the ages of 0-24months requires a wide array of interventions. To achieve this, Uromi JDPCI with the SMILE project was able to reach Vulnerable children in the 8 target communities. This was done via Nutritional counseling to caregivers and carrying out monthly growth monitoring during visit in the communities to enable us pay special attention to those whose growth were faltering. Additionally, community infants and young child feeding support groups were organized as a platform to reiterate the importance of adequate nutrition for both the caregiver and the child especially those within the first 1000 days which is very critical to the child's survival and development. Referrals were made when necessary to the nearest health facility to access basic health care.

NUTRITION EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING:

Nutrition education was given to caregivers to raise awareness on issues affecting infants and young child feeding in the communities. This was done during growth monitoring, mother to mother support group meetings, food demonstrations, Breastfeeding week and global hand washing day. They were also enlightened on the importance of locally available food in the environment. Additionally, the caregivers were made to know the importance of food hygiene in other to prevent food-borne disease which can lead to diarrhea-being one of the known contributor to infant mortality. 1,881 caregivers-(232 males and 1,649 females) were served.



WASH Club in Ivue Primary School

TRAINING AND FORMATION OF WASH

The training was aimed at providing information that addresses hygiene. The three major aspects which were food, environment and water hygiene were addressed during the training thereafter, 3 WASH clubs were established one each in Ivue, Efandion and Egbele communities and they are facilitated by the volunteers serving the communities. 67 participants were trained in addition to 5 older VC.



Participants during Global Hand Washing day

GROWTH MONITORING AND PROMOTION

Growth Monitoring and Promotion is the regular weighing of a child to determine if the child is gaining enough weight or not and using the information generated to make necessary steps when counseling caregivers. During the assessment, the weight, height and MUAC of the children were taken and they were found to be growing well except 2 who were referred to health facility for treatment. 5,760 VC's were served- 2,932 males and 2,828 females.



Community volunteer conducting growth monitoring.



Community volunteer conducting growth monitoring.

Food Demonstration

Four food demonstration were carried out in eight communities (Obiyon, Ivue, Obeidu, Egbele, Eror, Onewa, Efandion and Ebhoiyi) within this year. The aim of this demonstration was to sensitize the vulnerable households within the community on the need to prepare safe, affordable and good nutritious food from available resources in the community to meet the nutritional needs of the children.



Food demonstration in Efandion Community

The demonstration was carried out in selected caregivers' houses of the various communities except in Obiyon where it was done in the house of the Odionwele (head of the community). The caregivers prepared the place, provided firewood, water and other cooking utensils. The nutrition officer carried out demonstration of soya milk and Tom Brown at different times being the choice made by the caregivers during the IYCF meeting as a way to meet the nutritional needs of their children.

A total of 102 caregivers all females enthusiastically participated in both preparation and drinking of the milk/eating of the Tom Brown as well as their children. The milk was flavored with pineapple flavor to enhance the taste. The caregivers thanked the team for coming to teach them how to prepare soya milk drink/Tom Brown, and they promised to put all efforts in making it subsequently.



Community IYCF

The meeting was geared towards creating a forum of interaction with every member of the family responsible for the feeding of children especially during the early years of life with the following objectives:

1. To protect, promote and support exclusive breastfeeding in the first 6 months.
2. To raise awareness on issues affecting infant and young child feeding in the community.
3. To promote the timely introduction of appropriate and adequate complementary breastfeeding up to 24 months and beyond.

The following topics were discussed at the meetings using counseling card.

- Exclusive breastfeeding
- Good hygiene
- Nutrition for pregnant and breastfeeding women
- Food variety



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Community Infant and Young Child Feeding forum

Feeding the sick child less than 6 months of age

- Dangers of mixed feeding
- Complementary feeding
- Good attachment

2,085 caregivers-(374 male and 1,711) females were reached in the 30 functional groups.

SUCCESS STORY 1

A Child whose name is Divine from Ivue community in Esan North East Local Government Area of Edo state lost the mother after 3 days of birth and since then have being living with her aunt, when the house was visited during the growth monitoring, exercise, the following assessment were recorded:



Devine after 2 months assessments

- Weight-6kg
- Height-3m
- MUAC Red : 11.8 (Moderate Malnutrition)

After the baseline assessment, Nutrition counseling and education was given to the caregiver and she was thereafter referred to the Health facility. She was counseled on the importance of the locally available food in the community .During the visit, it was discovered that in the same compound, there was a home garden already in existence , she was counseled to make good use of it, she was also told to add crayfish and soy beans to the child's food.

After two months, another assessment was carried out and the following values were recorded as success story:

- Weight-13kg
- Height-3m
- MUAC Green(Greater than 12.5cm)

She is presently 3 years old.

SUCCESS STORY 2

A Female caregivers whose name is Asotie Justina whose household number is 2,274 is a petty trader from Efandion community in Esan North East local Government area of Edo State. She was present during the food demonstration carried out by the JDPCI team led by the Nutrition Officer in the said community; she actively participated during the demonstration. However, after three days of the demonstration, she decided to carry it out for her children and they appreciated it, this serve as a motivation for her to extend it to other children and caregivers in the community, hence, she decided to prepare it in large quantity to sell in the local market. Being new milk, she got some patronage and at the end, she sold more than half of the product and since then she has been selling the milk in the market. It is worthy of note that not only has she earned herself a source of livelihood, she has also improved the health of customers who patronize her product



Mrs Asoties selling Soya Milk

SUCCESS STORY 3

The 12 HIV positive individuals discovered during the community outreach organized by the organization were giving nutritional counseling in addition to regular visit to the health facility for medical assistance, one of them whose condition was already migrating to AIDS as a result was unable to go to school was assisted with food by the organization in addition to regular intake of Tom brown and escort services, he has gone back to school in a healthy condition.

HES

Household economic strengthening (HES) is one of the core service areas in the sustainable mechanism for improving livelihood and household empowerment (SMILE) project. The goal of HES is aimed at improving household with income generating activities, through value chain analysis, skill acquisition and empowerment, linkage to micro credit scheme as well as other livelihood opportunity. The HES intervention saw the registration of 14 vulnerable children into skill acquisition program, the distribution of Pro vitamin A cassava seeds and improved orange fleshed sweet potato to 668 households, and also 297 caregivers benefitted from the cash transfer exercise which was sponsored by USAID through CRS- SMILE project.

LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITY:

As part of the effort to improve the livelihood opportunity of vulnerable household Uromi JDPCI SMILE team distributed improved seeds to caregivers in eight (8) communities (Ivue, Awo-Obiyon, Idigun Obiyon, Obiedu, Egbele, Onewa, Ebhoiyi and Efandion) in Uromi Esan North East LGA. A sharing formula of 2 bags of Pro vitamin cassava seed was given per household while 2 wraps of orange fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSP) was also given per



Distribution of pro Vitamin A cassava seed in Onewa

household. The HES officer also explained to the caregivers how the orange fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) vines should be planted, this process was supported by Uromi JDPC SMILE project team and community volunteers across the communities visited.



Distribution of Agric Input (OFSP) in Ivue

A total of two hundred and seventeen (217) care givers (35 male and 182 female) benefitted from the four hundred and thirty four (434) Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP) vine brought by SMILE while a total of four hundred and fifty one (451) caregivers (99 male and 352 female) benefitted from The Pro vitamin A improved cassava seedling.

In a nut shell, a total of 668 (six hundred and sixty eight) caregivers of which 534 (five hundred and thirty four) female and 134(one hundred and thirty four) male benefited from the distribution of Pro vitamin A cassava seeds and the improved Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP) across the eight communities.



A caregiver Mrs. Christiana Edewede holding her harvested potato

SKILL ACQUISITION:

Uromi JDPCI through the SMILE project enrolled 14 beneficiaries from the smile project into different skill training of their choice. The smile project team was led by the Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, the program manager Mr. Michael Iyoriobhe and the HES officer Helen Eigbefoh, Visited the various shops/workshops to finalize the agreement between the beneficiaries and the shop owners for those who benefited from the skill acquisition sponsored by SMILE project. The beneficiaries who expressed joy and happiness on the successful enrolment, thanked the Commission for the opportunity given to them to actualize their potentials, they promise to put their best into their chosen skills so as to achieve their dreams.

FOOD DEMONSTRATION

In a bid to reduce the vulnerability status of caregivers, household head and older VCs in project communities and as part of Household Economic Strengthening activities for beneficiaries of the SMILE project, the HES officer organized food demonstration for caregivers and older VCs across seven project communities. The food demonstration was to empower the caregivers economically for the challenges of taking care of their children/wards. The demonstration involved the preparation of snacks like egg roll, OFSP doughnuts and buns, which was intended to give the caregivers a means of strengthening their livelihood and to be able to support themselves and their families. Uromi JDPCI project team led by the HES officer carried out the demonstration in these project communities namely Egbele, Efandion, Idigun Obiyon, Eror, Ivue and Onewa and respectively.

A total of 147 caregivers of which 146 were female and 1 male and 100 older VCs comprising 49 male and 51 female participated in the demonstration.



During food demonstrations in one project community.

CASH TRANSFER

Uromi JDPCI through the USAID/ CRS - SMILE project gave cash transfer to vulnerable household under the SMILE project for the purpose of consumption and graduation. This was made possible with the help of the SMILE team and Uromi JDPCI using Access Bank Plc Ekpoma Branch being the closest Access Bank point as distribution center. The exercise which began on the 1st of November 2016 with account opening for each beneficiary lasted for a period of three weeks. The beneficiaries from each community were taken in turns to the bank for their registration to avoid rowdiness and confusion. A total of 362 beneficiaries were selected within the 8 project communities covered by the Commission, and a total of 297 beneficiaries eventually benefitted as at the 16th of December 2016.

Clothing support

In a bid to improve the wellbeing of household head under the SMILE project, Uromi JDPCI distributed some clothes to selected vulnerable households enrolled under the SMILE project in 4 project communities namely Awo Obiyon, Obiedu, Ivue and Egbele. In each community, a total of 4 Households were served making a total of 8 beneficiaries in all. The clothes were donated to the Commission by a philanthropist, Mr. Ted. Inegbenose from Eror community and Mrs Imanatue based in Benin City.

PRISON APOSTOLATE

INTRODUCTION

Uromi JDPCI prison apostolate/legal Aid in carrying out its good deeds and showing concern to indigent inmates, conducted counselling sessions, reconciliation of inmates to family and victims through series of home visit, accompany groups and private individuals to visit prisoners, Bible studies for inmates and prison officials and provision of medical care to inmates that need intense medical attention as well as providing health talk to both inmates and prison officials.

RECONCILIATION AND COUNSELLING

Within the year the organisation represented by the legal officer visited the prison to give both spiritual and legal counselling to inmates. For the spiritual counselling a member of the Catholic charismatic renewal of Nigeria and a priest on different occasions were invited to counsel them. The inmates were counselled to rekindle the love of God in their heart and to believe and have faith in God because with him all things are possible. The legal officer of Uromi JDPCI conducted the legal counselling and also educate them of their rights as legal representative. 63 inmates made up of 2 female and 61 male were reached.



Individual rights being taught by Legal Officer and Ovienloba.

The reconciliation exercise with inmates families and the victims involved were not left out of this year's activities as the legal officer saw the need for reconciling this group of persons in order to lessen the burden of the inmate as well as provide an avenue for settlement of minor offences outside the court room. The Commission visited the prison to see inmates who needed to reconcile with their family members and victims. Home visit were made to the family members of inmates and the victims.

WELFARE

As part of the organizational plan to mobilize lay apostolate groups in assisting and promoting the well-being of inmates in prison, the prison apostolate officer representing the organization distributed appeal letters to the different lay apostolate groups (Nurses' guild, Catholic Charismatic Renewal Nigeria, Catholic Women Organization etc.) in Uromi dioceses . This was to enable the groups assist organization with financial, spiritual, health talk and any other material needs of the inmates. As a result of out spread Lassa fever that was an endemic disease at that time, the organization invited the nurses' guild to give a lecture on the causes, symptoms and preventive measures of the fever to inmates and prison officials.



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Guest speaker lecturing the inmates

Outreach on HIV/AIDS and Malaria counselling and testing was carried out in Ubiaja prison. This was to avail the inmates in prison the opportunity for them to know their status. At the end of the exercise both the inmates and the prison officials were screened of the virus and a total of 130persons (127males and 3female) were screened for HIV/AIDS virus while 3persons were screened for malaria. After the screening exercise 2 inmates who tested positive to malaria where provided with malaria drugs and two inmates who had skin infection were also provided with anti-fungi cream for treatment. These were done on request and advise of the prison medical team.

The organization represented by the prison apostolate officer provided financial assistance to two inmates; one was suffering from appendicectomy and the other from eye defect.

The organization represented by the prison apostolate officer accompanied the Okpebho Deanery CYON to visit the prison and celebrate the Lenten season with inmates to remind them of the mercy of God. The group provided food items to the inmates as support to their needs.



Group photograph with one of the prison official

Uromi JDPCI as part of their welfare duties to the prison at the end of every year organised charismas party for inmates. This year was not left out as staff of the Commission, friends and well-wishers visited the prison to celebrate the year Christmas party with inmates. The Commission took alongside food items and drinks for the celebration. Both inmates and prison officials took part in the ceremony.

ACHIEVEMENT

- The legal officer of Uromi JDPCI for the first time represented an inmates on trial for assault and conspiracy and did not have money to hire the services of a lawyer. The matter is still on going court.
- Six inmates were assisted with finance to meet their medical needs.
- 4 inmates were reconciled with their complainant and one with his family.
- 130 persons (127 males and 3female) were counselled and screened for HIV/AIDS and 3 persons for malaria (2male-1female).
- 61persons (59male – 2female) were reached during the Spiritual counselling and bible study.
- 30 persons were reached during the health talk conducted in prison.
- 4 families were visited for reconciliation purpose.

Challenges

- Non proximity of some inmates family home who live far away which made it difficult to reach them.
- Some families of inmates are not ready to assist their person in prison.
- Unable to contact the family of some inmates because of the wrong address given to the prison apostolate officer.
- Lack of sponsorship for prison Apostolate.

EMPOWERMENT DESK

This project was designed to benefit vulnerable adolescents that have acquired skills or learnt a trade but have no means to set up their own as well as those who were interested in acquiring any profitable skill of their choice. A total of forty eight (48) persons have been empowered and twenty (20) enrolled into various skills from the five Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District. Among those empowered include: Twenty –three(23) Hair Dressers, Nine (9) Tailors, Five (5)Barbers, Three (3)Caterers, One (1) Cobbler, One (1)Electrician, One (1) Photographer, One (1) Paint producer, One (1) Vulcanizer, One (1)Panel beater, One (1)Refrigerator repairer and One (1) Generator Mechanic. Another group of seven (7) persons were earmarked for empowerment in January, 2017. All those empowered received all equipment needed to start off a standard shop/business.



Handing over of equipments by the Director and BOT of Uromi JDPCI to a beneficiary (tailor)

These beneficiaries were recommended to the Commission by religious and traditional leaders within Uromi Diocese following



Handing over of equipment by the Director and BOT of Uromi JDPCI to a beneficiary (hairdresser)

advocacy visit earlier made to them by the Director and members of the project team.

During the flag off ceremony, some members of the Board of trustees; Barrister Akhidenor, Hon. Uhomoibhi, Chief Dr. Anthony Osawe and Mrs. Momoh expressed profound gratitude for the gesture showed by the Commission towards the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries were admonished not to betray the trust the commission have placed on them but rather count themselves as privileged to be provided with valuable equipment for their business growth and



Handing over of equipment by the Director, staff and BOT of Uromi JDPCI to a beneficiary (Barber)

development. They emphasized that the commission's intention was for the beneficiaries to empower others in their communities and by so doing impact positively on the society.



A cross-section of participants at the ceremony.

After the presentation and advice, one of the beneficiaries by name, Marvelous Erazua on behalf of others expressed profound gratitude to the Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Fidelis Arhedo, and the entire commission. He stated that this kind gesture is not easy to come by especially considering the present recession in the country. He promised that they will neither abandon their business nor disappoint the Commission, but rather, make good use of this golden opportunity given to them.

These proactive measures were to arrest adolescents' vulnerability to human traffickers. Our intervention in this regard are in four folds, which are: providing psychosocial support, skill acquisition, establishment in their trades or skills and follow up and supervision.



The Director, Uromi JDPCI addressing the beneficiaries.

MICRO CREDIT



Handing over of equipments by the Director of Uromi JDPCI accompanied by members of BOT and a project staff to a beneficiary (hairstresser)

INTROODUCTION:

Meeting the basic needs of the vulnerable members of the society has been one of the core goals of the Commission and this has always been achieved through empowerment of these target populations using the Micro-credit scheme as a platform.

The strategy employed by the Commission was through the use of soft loans which is strictly group loans for women and not just women, but active poor women in the society and the scheme is opened to Catholics and Non-Catholics within the diocese of Uromi.

The Commission is currently running the scheme in four (4) platforms namely: Group Micro-Credit, PROMIC 1, PROMIC 2 (for active poor women) and Agric-PROMIC (for active farmers) respectively. A total of seven hundred and four (704) persons are currently benefiting from the scheme.

This scheme has been of great assistance to these women and active farmers in the diocese of Uromi since its inception in the year 2010, these women are assisted with small loans between twenty-five thousand naira (#20,000-50,000) with an interest rate of 3% payable within a period of six (6) months.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

INDIVIDUAL MICRO CREDIT

The Commission officially stopped issuing loans to individual in the month of January, 2015. This was as a result of the increasing numbers of defaulters. Meanwhile, some individuals who are still serving previous loans, number up to one hundred and twenty-three (123) persons. Phone calls and visits were made to most of the beneficiaries to remind them of their repayment and some actually responded.



Micro-credit officer disbursing fund

GROUP MICRO-CREDIT COLLECTION

This group micro-credit scheme was formed from the individual category and currently a total of nine (9) groups comprising of one hundred and fifty-one persons (151) are currently benefiting from the micro-credit scheme of the Uromi JDPCI. They include: Osekhuemen group 1, Oseahumen group, Together we Stand group, Osemudiamen group 2, Onosetale group, Osezele group, Success group, Blessed group and Goodness group with each having a membership strength of fifteen to seventeen persons (15-17) currently benefiting are from the micro-credit scheme.



Beneficiaries confirming their money

PROMIC 1 COLLECTION

A total of two hundred and fifteen (215) persons from fifteen groups (15) are currently benefiting from PROMIC 1. They includes : Glorious group, Osemudiamen group¹, God is one group, Aluriodalo group, Akoamen group, Favour group, Ofure group, Osebhajimede group, St Benedict group, Fifteen sister group, Progress group, Gracious group, Victory group, Peace and love group and Omokhuodion group with each group having a membership strength of fifteen –eighteen persons per group (15-18).

PROMIC 2 COLLECTIONS

The PROMIC 2 scheme being an extention of PROMIC 1 was borne out of the need to support traders in Illushi communities in Esan South East Local Government Area of Edo State, who lost their business to flood in the year 2012 and also in Ujolen community to support the active poor traders. These have been in existence since the year 2013. Presently, eleven (11) groups comprising of one hundred and eighty (180) persons namely: Ojoyin-mi- owo group, Achemani group, God help us group, God is one group, Blessing group, Success group, Future hope group, Ateshi group, Ukpahojogroup, Uyio-Ogwa group, God is great group and Progressive¹ group with each having a membership strength of fifteen (15) persons per group are benefiting from the scheme.

AGRIC PROMIC:

As a measure of enhancing the livelihood of active poor farmers in Edo central senatorial district, the Uromi JDPCI in collaboration with PROMIC has introduced a new scheme strictly for farmers.



Cross section of a beneficiaries chicks

This scheme is to help increase the agricultural produce and also improve the standard of living of these farmers. The scheme was launched in September 2016 with Obeidu community as its first beneficiaries. So far three other communities have benefited from this scheme they include, Illushi, Irrua and Egoro-Amede communities



Coco produce of a beneficiary at Egoro-Amede

CHALLENGES

Response from some of the groups this year was very poor especially from Micro-Credit. They complained of low sales in business, flooding and ill-health but promised to pay up with interest next year.

ACHIEVEMENTS/NEWLOANS & EMPOWERMENT:

Seven (7) new groups comprising of one hundred and five persons (105) was formed this year, four (4) for Promic1, one (1) for Promic2 and two (2) for Micro-Credit. Namely; Ebosetale group Eror, Akhuemoiegbe group Eror, Victory group Oyomon, Progress1 group, Omokhuodion group Efandion, Ekinaduese group Oyomon, Blessed group Sylvernusstreet, Uwalor- Ekpere and Blessed group Udo lane off Ubiaja Road with each having a membership strength of fifteen persons (15) and have also being empowered with a soft loan of twenty thousand naira each (#20,000) after holding three (3) info meetings with them on the conditions, methods of repayment, penalty for defaulters, and size of loan for selected clients. Still in the same year under review, a total of six (6) existing groups comprising of ninety-five (95) persons were reimbursed with different categories of soft loan ranging from twenty thousand to fifty thousand naira (#20,000 - 50,000) respectively, after they have successfully completed their cycle.



Trainings Attended:

Uromi JDPCI encourages continuous capacity building of staff; as such members of staff were fully represented in trainings organized both within and outside the state. Micro credit officer during farm inspection

- *Orientation workshop on new targeting approach for UNAIDS 90-90-90 on SMILE project organized by Catholic Relief Services in the month of April 2016.*
- *Training on project proposal development and fund raising in the month of April, 2016.*
- *Training on Project Management Cycle organized by CORAT Nairobi, Kenya in the month of May 2016.*
- *Training on WASH organized by Catholic Relief Services in the month of June 2016.*
- *Training on Financial Procedure Manual Development Organized by CRS in the month of July 2016.*
- *Training on Project Management Development for Professional (PMD-PRO) organized by CRS in the month of August, 2016.*
- *Training on policy and strategic response organized by Uromi JDPCI in the month of May 2016.*

- *Training for Transformation organized by Uromi JDPCI in the months of June and December, 2016.*
- *Training on Advocacy and Lobby organized by Uromi JDPCI in the month of October, 2016.*

Challenges

Despite the efforts and achievements of the Commission, some difficulties are still being experienced in carrying out some of the Commission's activities, these include:

Inadequate Fund: The commission has been faced with the major challenge of inadequate capital, as we would have reached out to more people during the period under review not for the fact that our source of funding is limited.

CONCLUSION

By the Grace of God, we have achieved great successes in the year under review and it is hoped that even greater achievements will be made in the years ahead.

FRIENDS

Individuals and Organizations wishing to identify with and support the work of Uromi JDPCI are urged become "friends". Friends of the Commission make regular contributions, advice, support and encourage the Commission. They receive some publications for enlightenment free of Charge.

You can assist the work of Uromi JDPCI in the following ways;

- Through prayers
- Bringing human rights cases and developmental issues to our attention
- Giving support and financial contribution to the Commission through;

UBA Nigeria PLC

Account No: 2031144843

Acct name: JDP/Caritas, Uromi Diocese.

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