

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

**UROMI JUSTICE DEVELOPMENT PEACE AND CARITAS INITIATIVES,
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF UROMI,**

FROM JANUARY – DECEMBER, 2021

JANUARY, 2022

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
- Orphans and Vulnerable Children.

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 build the capacity of communities to participate in their own development for peaceful co-existence.
6. To co-operate with international agencies, government and NGOs for integral development.
7. To promote and monitor activities geared towards community growth and development
8. To Promote the well-being and protection of Orphans and Vulnerable Children
9. To promote the protection and empowerment of women
10. Support the Countering of Trafficking in Persons

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CORPORATE FACT SHEET

Name	Uromi Justice Development Peace & Caritas Initiatives, (Uromi JDPCI).
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: 50042 & 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, VC Programming, Capacity Strengthening for Good Governance, Campaigns and Sensitizations Against Human Trafficking as well as Creating Alternatives to Human Trafficking through Vocational Skills Acquisition and Empowerment
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	Catholic Chancery Complex, Uromi Diocesan Chancery, Egbele, Uromi, Edo State, Nigeria.
Postal Address	P.M.B 7, Uromi, Edo State
E-mail	uromijdpci@gmail.com ,
Telephone:	+2348053328588, +2348034930414, +2348071894292
Website	Jdpciuromi.org
Auditors	1. Grant Thornton chartered Accountants Emgn, Benin Branch 2. Edforte, Fortne, Ehiagwina & Associates 141 Benin-Auchi Road Ekpoma, Edo State
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	14
Number of Community Volunteers	67
Project Executed	19

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

This periscope from the desk of the Executive Director, throws light on the compendium of the interventions of Uromi JDPCI in the Year 2021. We want to profoundly and sincerely appreciate God Almighty whose wisdom and insight enabled Uromi JDPCI to successfully carry out all of her interventions in Uromi Diocese which comprises of the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District, Edo State. We also recognize and appreciate other collaborators including our right holders for the realization and successful implementation of our programs through partnerships and direct involvement in this enterprise. The impetus is on me to draw the attention of the readers of this annual report to comprehend our driving force which is from theo-centric transformation for the betterment and well-being of humanity as contained in Uromi JDPCI mandate to justice and peace as well as encourage meaningful development and provide succor for the less privileged.

This reporting year was very eventful due to new approaches employed beyond advocacy in key areas of intervention that focuses on Dialogue with all stakeholders in order to create holistic and mutual acceptable innovations in implementation of program with their participation. Dialogue eliminates suspicion and foster collaboration on the bases of trust that gears towards restoration of peace and further the course of justice in the world. This dialogue with stakeholders flows from the beingness of humanity on perspective of their relationship with God their creator. The ontological existence of every man and woman has bearing from God Himself which enriches human friendship that liberates man from narrowness and self-absorption. This implies that justice must be enshrined in order to establish peace as a resultant impact from genuine dialogue in the perspective that eliminates all forms of 'Gender Based Violence' as well as abuse, neglect and abandonment especially of children.

Furthermore, it is important to note that dialogue seeks to balance the light of reason and the light of faith in a well-tailored comprehension. This helps to eradicate erroneous positions and practices in the communities that are inimical to human development as well as repugnant to natural justice equality and good conscience. The findings of our dialogue continues to aid Uromi JDPCI in holistic interventions geared towards the achievement of her goals in her various thematic areas of engagement as well as generates further programming that addresses the gap noticed from the findings.

The good governance programming for the year 2021 further mainstreamed political activities into community life that strengthens community mobilization and engagement which ensures community participation in her governance as well as demand for transparency and accountability of the elected public office holders that guarantees service delivery to the people. Uromi JDPCI always conscious of her mandate to promote justice and peace amongst the people technically builds the capacity of community on human Right Education, Psycho-social aid as well as how to response to violations of human rights within the communities. This ensures a peaceful and developed society on the bases of peaceful co-existence and promotion of human right as well as encourages empowerment of all for a meaningful living.

Sequel to the dignity of human person, Uromi JDPCI also noticed with sadness the reduction of human persons in the hands of human traffickers and smugglers to mere commodities for transaction aimed at profit making. So, rising to the occasion, Uromi JDPCI is well positioned to restore this lost dignity to the victims of human trafficking as well as prevent vulnerable persons from being trafficked through tailored approach of services that is on prevention, protection referral for prosecution, partnership for

psychosocial support as well as economic empowerment support either through school retention in the form of scholarships and skill acquisition programmes and empowerment with start-up tools for a meaningful living. Uromi JDPCI have created empowerment scheme for returned and potential migrants to serve as an alternative to vulnerability to human trafficking as many attribute lack of economic empowerment and social security for our youth and young men and women that are left with no hope of achieving their dream into being susceptible to irregular migration that eventually lead to deportation or being exploited by traffickers.

It is on this note, Uromi JDPCI has called for more collaborations with constant partnership with Government agents and Commissions to see to the implementation of enacted policies and regulations that would concretely eliminate human trafficking and irregular migration in Edo Central Senatorial District in particular and Edo State in general.

The wholeness of children remains a priority area for Uromi JDPCI. It is on this note that she has an overreaching goal to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS especially in Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and their family to access quality care, protection and support service geared towards improving the capacity of communities to protect and care for OVC and their families in their domain. This is a booster for community general health for all to access developmental opportunities in their environment.

In line with the mandate given to Uromi JDPCI she continues to alleviate poverty through her Micro-Credit Scheme empowerment meant for petty traders and farmers to improve micro entrepreneurship, and promote agricultural productivity among rural farmers from just being subsistence farming to small scale commercial farming. This is ensuring quality life for the benefactors of this empowerment programming of micro-credit facility.

To be candid, the year 2021 was crowned with success as Uromi JDPCI completed programs and commenced others with wider scope of programming.

Finally, on behalf of Uromi JDPCI, I want to express unreserved appreciation to Most Rev. Dr. Donatus Ogun, (OSA) the Legal Holder of Uromi JDPCI for his guidance, support and approval of all the programming. In the same vein, we are highly indebted to the members of Board of Trustees for their sacrificial support for the various programs of intervention in accordance with the Organization's vision.

In a very special way, Uromi JDPCI remains very grateful to all partners and donors both International and local such as Misereor, Aachen Germany, Expertise France, ECPAT France and ECPAT Luxembourg, British Council, United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)'s Telling the Real Story, Us Embassy Nigeria, Association, Reproductive Family Health (ARFH) Swissand Foundation (Open Hand) Caritas Nigeria & JDPC National. In the same vein, she is very grateful to her Collaborators and Networks/Co-illations, National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking



in Person (NAPTIP), Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues, Ministry of Justice, Edo State Task Force Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT), Edo State Police Command, Ministry of Education, FIDA, Church and Society Department of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN), NACTAL, Uromi Diocese Priests/Religious, Edo Development Coalition, Edo State CPU, AAON and those not mentioned here. .

This appreciation will not be complete without appreciating the goal oriented staff and volunteers of Uromi JDPC, and the right holders on whom we plan our interventions. We are indeed very grateful to you all. Thank you too for reading this Uromi JDPCI Annual Report and remain blessed in the Lord.

Very Rev Fr. Dr Fidelis Arhedo
Executive Director/CEO
Uromi JDPCI.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi presents her annual report for the year 2021. Its contents are summary of activities conducted and achievements recorded in the various departments and thematic areas.

Uromi Justice, Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives, Catholic Diocese of Uromi, was established on the 13th of April 2006, as a social arm of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi. It was saddled with the responsibility to promote justice and peace, encourage meaningful development, and provide succour for the less-privileged thereby upholding social justice and equity. Uromi JDPCI does this by identifying and addressing the social ills of our time 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 is part of the national network of JDPC in 57 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.

In the course of the year (2021), Uromi JDPCI steered a number of interventions geared towards positive impact and meaningful development in the lives of the rural populace especially amongst the vulnerable and the oppressed in the society with a lot of successes recorded.

Human Rights Education: to promote and protect the rights and dignity of the vulnerable group, Uromi JDPCI partnered with Misereor in a project on Human Rights Education and Paralegal Scheme in Edo Central Senatorial District to conducted certain activities geared towards raising awareness on the increasing rates of human rights violation and the need to curtail at various levels. Some of such activities include:

Advocacy visit to 9 Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) including security agencies, 5 Traditional/community leaders, and 6 other organizations that are involved in the protection of children and women as well as the promotion of human rights in general. The project also had a **commencement meeting** in which 128 persons (74male and 54female) paralegals, human rights advocates and community representatives were reached. A total of 25 **adolescent school based human rights clubs** were also formed with 363 members made up of 56 male & 207 female. These clubs would form the basis of peer learning among members and the schools in general, thereby promoting a safe school and environment for children. A **peer learning session** was also facilitated within the period for the club members. Uromi JDPCI joined the rest of the world to **commemorate the child protection day** with a total of 205 (93 male & 112 female) persons reached while participants were drawn from community and religious leaders as well as students and their Principals. Uromi JDPCI also commemorated the **World Human Rights Day** with security agencies, religious leaders and community leaders in attendance. A total of 150 persons made up of 98 male and 52 female were reached. **Two capacity building** sessions were held for Paralegals and Advocates within the year. The first was on Psychological First Aid while the second was on introduction to Paralegal scheme. A total of 244 persons made up of 133male & 111 female were trained. Four **Quarterly Meetings** were held within the year. The first was held centrally at Uromi while the other three were held across the five LGAs respectively with a total of 1024 (534M & 490F) persons in attendance. The meeting served as platform for review and experience sharing for the various Paralegals and Human Rights Advocates. Uromi JDPCI conducted 10 **community dialogues** within the year. The dialogue which was used to brainstorm with community leaders yielded some positive impact

reflecting in the deliberations to amend some cultural practices that were inimical to the civil law and human rights. A total of 259 community stakeholders made up of 176 male and 83 female were reached in the 10 communities. Uromi JDPCI also conducted **community sensitization on gender issues and gender based violence** using the Edo State Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law as instrument of sensitization and engagement. A total of 525 persons made up of 290 males and 235 females were reached, with key participant drawn from community leaders, religious leaders and CBOs. **Annual congress of paralegals** was conveyed in the month of April, 2021 to examine the key achievements and challenges of the project in the previous year as well as suggest way forward for possible improvement. It was also an avenue to bring the different stakeholders in human rights intervention together for critical thinking and information management. A total of 350 persons from different works of life were in attendance. Uromi JDPCI participated in the **Edo State sensitization on policies against gender based violence** held in Edo Central Senatorial District. Uromi JDPCI joined the rest of the world to mark the **16 days of activism against gender based violence** with a ceremony to start on the 25th of November, and concluded with the world human rights day on the 10th of December, 2021.

Anti Human Trafficking

Within the Period under review (January – December, 2021), Uromi JDPCI partnered with four organizations (Caritas Nigeria for SMAT-P Project, ECPAT France and Luxembourg for the Don't Pay With Your Life Project, Expertise France for the SCOPPH-T Project and UNHCR's Telling The Real Story Project for Training of Community Anti-Human Trafficking Committees) to implemented a number of activities geared towards prevention, protection, reintegration and the provision of psychosocial and economic support to caregivers, potential migrants and young female returnees. The activities include: **Provision of start up materials for vocational skills** to 30 young persons, the **empowerment of 15 caregivers** to retain their adolescent in school. 7 students in Government Secondary schools also received one year scholarship covering their **educational materials** and other fees. Uromi JDPCI also conducted **Profiling and Assessment** of 15 Young Female Returnees after which **training on Business Start-up, Business Management and Entrepreneurship** were provided for the female returnees and this was followed with the provision of **business Start-up materials and equipment** worth Two Hundred and Thousand (NGN210,000) to each of the 15 young female returnees. A total of 100 caregivers (95 F and 5 ma) were engage in discussion on better parenting while the 15 female returnees were engaged in discussions around resilience building. Community sensitization was conducted in 19 communities with a total of 1058 persons (603M&455F) reached. A total 10 schools were sensitized with 632 students (181M&451F) reached. Community dialogue on Anti Human Trafficking was conducted in 10 communities with a total of 142 persons (88M&54F) reached. Uromi JDPCI also trained 90 persons as community anti human trafficking committee members in 9 communities across three LGAs. A commemoration of the feast of St Josephine Bakhita was done on the 8th of February, 2021.

Addressing Vulnerability Through Vocational Training and Empowerment in Igueben LGA Uromi JDPCI in an OVC project targeted at Igueben community empowered a total of 31 young persons in various vocational skills. The beneficiaries were further charged to train at least three other at no cost as a support to the community. The Project was funded by the United States of America Department of State (US Embassy) and implemented by Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI)

The Integrated Child Health And Social Service Award

Uromi JDPCI is currently implementing the Child Integrated Child Health and Social Service Award (ICHSSA 2) project with coordination by the Association for Reproductive and Family Health (ARFH) with funding from USAID, with a target to reach 1864 OVC from 829 household for the Fiscal year 2022.

Micro Credit: a total sum of one thousand, five hundred and seventy two (1,572) persons from one hundred and thirty three (133) groups have been empowered through the Uromi JDPCI Micro Credit Scheme across the five (5) Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District being the area covered by the Catholic Diocese of Uromi.

Capacity Building: 14 Staff participated in a total of 16 capacity building sessions in this year. This was with the support of different partners who provided the resources and logistics for the various training and workshops. We are immensely grateful to the partners and collaborators that made the capacity building and institutional strengthening possible

Furthermore, We wish to appreciate our partners and Donors; Misereor, ECPAT France and ECPAT Luxembourg, Swissland Foundation, Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria, UNHCR's Telling The Real Story, The British Council, Expertise France, US Ambassador Small Grant-US Embassy, Volunteers and the Monarchs in Esan Land for their support and contributions to our programmes.

Special thanks to the Bishop of Uromi Diocese, Most Rev. Dr. Donatus Aimioshor Ogun for his involvement in all our interventions 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!

Prepared by

Michael Iyoriobhe
Director of Program

HUMAND RIGHTS EDUCATION AND PARALEGAL SCHEME

Advocacy Visit to Instrumental Stakeholders and Communities

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) flagged off activities for the second phase of her intervention on “Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme in Edo Central Senatorial District” with Advocacy visits to her target stakeholders. The visits were conducted between the Months of May and June 2021 wherein a total of 9 Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). These include: The Nigerian Police Force, The Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps, The Department of State Security Services (DSS), Ministry of Education; (both at the state and Local Government Levels), The State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), and Ministry of Justice. Child Protection Network, FIDA and NBA were paid advocacy visits for the purpose of intimating them of the extension of the intervention for another three years and to seek their continuous collaboration and partnership in the implementation of the Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme in Edo Central Senatorial District whose goal is to see that a contribution is made towards improving peaceful coexistence of the village communities and promoting social justice and respect for human rights.

Similarly, traditional leaders and community stakeholders across five target communities; being the additional benefiting communities for the intervention were visited within the period to dialogue on the need to buy into the project and support efforts geared towards protecting vulnerable members of their communities especially women and children who suffer violation of their rights. The visit was also used to seek their participation in the community dialogue sessions planned for the various communities so as to improve their knowledge and understanding of human rights and implications of violations on the community leaders as well as perpetrators. The basis for the additional 5 communities to the existing 25 communities of the project scope was to expand the reach of the intervention due to its relevance to the people in relation to their cultural dispositions that negates respect for human right and dignity which is a major concern of the project.

During the visit to the Edo State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Phillip Aliyu Ogbadu, The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo gave a brief on the mandate and activities of the Organization in encouraging meaningful development and promoting peaceful coexistence. He enlightened the Commissioner about the Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme Project piloted by Uromi JDPCI with funding from Misereor to raise awareness on human right and the need to prevent human right violations in target communities while noting that the first phase of the intervention ran from June 2019 to March 2021. He stated that the intervention has been renewed for another period of three years so as to sustain the protection of human dignity especially that of Women/children in target communities.

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, thanked CP Phillip Ogbadu for the support of the Nigerian Police in the last three years of the project life, particularly on the effective investigation to the many referrals that were made to them by the Project. He sought for their continuous support and collaboration in implementing the second phase of the intervention across Edo Central Senatorial District for another three years. A letter of advocacy containing the above message was presented to the Commissioner of Police and other stakeholders visited

The Police Area Commanders and DPOs also pledged their support and willingness to collaborate with Uromi JDPCI in facilitating the intervention. Copies of the endorsed letter of collaboration from the Commissioner of Police were shared with the Area Commanders and DPOs which they all accepted and acknowledged without reservations.

Similarly, the Team visited the State Commandant of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) as well the Area and Divisional Officers during which they gave their goodwill to the Organisation and accepted to collaborate with Uromi JDPCI in the defense of human rights as it was their core responsibility.

The NSCDC Divisional Officer for Irrua Division specially applauded the Organisation for their efforts in building the consciousness of community members on their human rights and for institutionalizing response structures in the communities. He encouraged that civil matters regarding human right violations be reported to their office for necessary actions as they are always ready to take up such issues without fear or favour.

In the course of the Advocacy Visits to the Permanent Secretary of Edo State Ministry of Education and the Chairman of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to solicit their partnership and request for permission to implement the intervention in the targeted schools; the Team Lead; Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo explained the project rationale alongside its planned strategies which among others include the establishment of human right clubs in 25 secondary schools across Edo Central Senatorial District with the aim of building the capacity of school children on Child protection policies as well as communication skills so as to promote effective reporting and responses to human rights violations, child abuses and gender based violence. The Permanent Secretary of Edo State Ministry of Education while recognizing that the intervention would be effective to instill human right consciousness in school children conveyed the Ministry's approval to carry out the intervention in the proposed schools in the state.

The other stakeholders (From the Ministry of Justice, Child Protection Network, FIDA and the Nigerian Bar Association) consented to sustain their collaboration with Uromi JDPCI on the Intervention and reassured her of their commitment in promoting human rights.

Advocacy Visit to Communities

Uromi JDPCI paid an Advocacy visit to Ahia community in Esan South East Local Government Area to better acquaint community stakeholders about the Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme Project and to reinforce their commitment in the implementation process.

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo while addressing members of the community restated the purpose of the visit and explained to them the goal of Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme project in Edo Central Senatorial District. He noted that the Intervention seeks to contribute to the peaceful coexistence of the village community since peace is considered a catalyst for development. It was noted that one



Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo addressing Community members during the Advocacy visit to Ahia Community.

of the ways to achieve Peace in the Community was to ensure that people's rights and dignity of the people are being respected irrespective of their sex, age and position in the community. He explained that our dignity as humans comes from the fact that we are created by God who bestowed it on humanity. So, it is this dignity that gives credence to the human right for all. As such no human is to be subjected to inhuman treatments which are barbaric in nature, exploitative and repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience.

He laid emphasis on levirate marriage; practiced in most Esan Communities as being inhuman especially when a woman is forced against her will to marry her husband's kinsman upon his demise as well as other inhuman acts melted on widows in the guise of traditional rites including female disinheritance which violates their human rights and dignity, endangering their health and exposing them to penury. He noted that such act were prohibited by the law as captured in the Edo State Law on Prohibition of inhuman treatment of widow and the Violence Against Person Prohibition Law, therefore making culprits culpable by the Law.



The village head assuring the Team of the community's participation and involvement in the project

Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

They were admonished on the need to protect and guide their children aright and fight against all sort of sexual abuses on their children by exposing, shaming and bringing offenders to

book.

The Community elders

were urged to add more persons to the already established human right group in their community so that more hands would be on deck to work towards making the community a peaceful one where the rights of all are respected.

A woman in the community raised an issue relating to burial rites where widows and their children are subjected to provide numerous items for the community and family not minding their financial capacity. Other issues revolving around female disinheritance were raised by Participants during which the relevance of bequeathing properties to female children was stressed. The Community elders appreciated the efforts of Uromi JDPCI and assured the Team of their immense support towards the success of the Project.

In the same vein, Ugbejun Community in Esan Central Local Government Area and Ogwa community in Esan West LGA as well as Ekpon Community in Igueben Local Government Area were visited for the same purpose



One of the community women while raising an issue of concern during the visit

Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI



Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo addressing the Onojie of Ugbejun

In the various communities visited, the Traditional Rulers customarily known as the “Onojie” together with their cabinet members warmly welcomed the Team to their communities and expressed their satisfaction of the kind gesture extended by the organization to their communities. Other Participants also made contributions through questions and comments.

At Ugbejun of Esan Central Local Government Area, a participant asked a question in line with widow inheritance. According to him, he wanted to know the rationale behind illegalizing widows inheritance after referencing the popular case of Ruth in the bible who got married to her late husband’s relative Boaz for the sake of posterity.

In response to the above, the executive director of Uromi JDPCI pointed out the fact that women were not chattels or properties to be inherited by family members of her deceased husbands, stating that unconditional consent of the widow was pre-requisite to such union just as was the case of Ruth in the Bible who had the option to return to her family after the demise of her husband but decided voluntarily to accompany her mother in-law to her home town despite initial incessant appeal by her mother in-law against her decision.



Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo having a handshake with the Onojie of Ugbejun after the Advocacy visit
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

Furthermore, he explained that widow’s inheritance was a violation of the human right of the widow and a fundamental error practiced in Esan Land since there was no such contract in the traditions of Esan people when the customary marriage was contracted.

Lastly, he explained that biblically, such a practice was frowned upon by our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament when a question of such marriage contract was put before him, concerning a widow who married 7 brothers who could not produce a child. He said that the Lord answered that such acts were not recognized in Heaven.

Another participant was of the opinion that the tradition of the people should not be altered since it has been an age long practice of members of the community.

The Executive Director explained that the law states that where the custom of the people was repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience, such customs must be amended, and therefore, the bases of alteration of the traditions of the people rested on that, and not on the long age practices.

Finally, His Royal Highness appreciated the efforts of the Uromi JDPCI to extend the human right intervention to his community. He stated that he understood the fact that the community needed enlightenment on human right issues and their activities and assured the organization of his undiluted co-operation in bringing such moves to light. He said that he was certain that such moves would



During the Advocacy visit at Ogwa Palace



During the Advocacy visit at Igueben Palace

better improve unity amongst community members which would also benefit generations yet unborn.

At Ogwa Community of Esan West Local Government Area, participants were very opened to the development. Worthy of note was the fact that the Traditional Head is the President of the Area Customary Court in Uromi who has as member of his Chief a female. The traditional Head was very delighted to receive the initiative from the organization, stressing that he had men of goodwill who were ready to promote human right movement in his kingdom.

He also informed the organization how he abolished female disinheritance in his kingdom by the verdict he made on behalf of a family with only female children which became an issue after the death of their father. He guaranteed the Team that his community would cease this opportunity by constituting membership of the human right club in Ogwa community. He encouraged participants to join the community human right club, reiterating that community members were needed to pilot human right sensitizations in the community as most members of the community were ignorant on some issues that pertained to human right which when inadequately handled, would lead to anarchy and chaos in the land.

At Ekpon, in Igueben Local Government Area, One of the chiefs



Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo addressing Participants at Ekpon Community
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

stated that the operation of human right activist have been impactful to nationals of developed countries and that it was high time Nigerians as well as the rural populace felt the impact of human right

activism.



Cross section of Participants during the Advocacy visit at Ekpon Community
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

The Royal Highness and everyone present gave their support to form the human right club in the community, stating that it would certainly lead to peaceful coexistence of community members, if human right watchdogs were within the community.

Informative Visit to the Target Schools

Uromi JDPCI visited the 5 Chief Inspectors of Education and 25 targeted schools of the project scope to notify the Principals about the intervention which has been extended to cater for the protection needs of in-school Adolescent children through the creation of human right clubs across the identified schools. The goal is to build the confidence of school children to report issues of sexual assault and gender based violence as well as building their capacity to become peer educators. The Principals of the schools were also informed that the club members will be trained basically on the child right law, child protection policy and communication skills while the composition of the club in each school would be made up of 10 members drawn from both the Junior and Senior section to ensure sustainability. It was stated that the sessions with the club members will be facilitated once in a term, preferably during break time to avoid interferences in learning.

The Chief inspectors of Education and Principals were presented the letter of approval from the Ministry of Education. They appreciated Uromi JDPCI for the various interventions they had implemented in

schools which have contributed in a great measure in retaining vulnerable and indigent students in schools. They noted that the intervention will be a huge support for schools to educate students more on human right issues and laws and as well provide a feedback platform especially on issues of sexual based violence such as defilement and rape. In view of the above, they were acquainted with the inauguration timetable for the club and admonished to appoint a teacher who would be overseeing the activities of the club in school.

Project Commencement Meeting

Uromi JDPCI held commencement meeting for the second phase of her Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme in Edo Central Senatorial District on Tuesday the 6th of July 2021 at Uromi JDPCI with a commencement meeting with stakeholders. The meeting was held to orient project stakeholders with the goals, objectives and planned activities of the intervention while highlighting the achievements recorded in the first phase of the scheme especially for the benefits of the five newly identified communities added to the project scope. Present at the meeting were 128 (74 males 54 females) participants comprising the 5



Paralegal from Uzea making his community situational report Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

Supervisors (Seasoned Lawyers) of the human right clubs across the five local government areas, Advocates and Paralegals

of the various community



The Executive Director giving his key note address Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

human right clubs, Staff and management of Uromi JDPCI.

The Program Manager reiterated that the Startup meeting was to bring project stakeholders to a unanimous understanding on the goal of the project so as to direct their activities towards achieving it. The meeting was also used to appraise the accomplishment of some of the human right clubs who made remarkable impacts in their communities during the first phase which would further serve as a guarding principle for other clubs who were yet to attain their full potential in influencing their communities positively.

The Executive Director thereafter took participants through the goal, objectives, activities and achievements recorded in the first phase of the scheme. He emphasized the relevance of the intervention to the community which necessitated a second phase of the intervention, but this time widened in scope as each local government has additional community where the human rights clubs have been instituted; as well as the formation of school based human right clubs in five schools in each local government area. He expressed optimism in the second phase of the project and encouraged everyone to continue with their good works in the community.

After the key note address, a participant from Uzea Community reported an incident of an arrest of a person who gave refuge to a stranded friend, aged 15, who was sent out of the house by her brother in-law and since she had no place to go, she went to put up with one of her friends. Consequently the said

brother-in-law made a report to the police which spurred them to arrest the friend that sheltered her stranded friend with the accusation of harboring a criminal. The participant then sought advice on how to handle the issue.

The supervisor of Esan South East Local Government Area Bar Mrs Akewe E.C said that the matter had an element of conspiracy between the claimant and the police against the accused. She stated that it was obvious that the claimant used his undue influence to get the police to intimidate the accused even when he violated the child's right to shelter, and frowned at the unjust situation. She advised the paralegals to do a proper investigation of the matter by paying a visit to the DPO who would give correct information about the case and possibly ensure the arrest of the claimant, so that community members could be protected from unjust treatment in the interest of justice. The supervisor of Igueben Community Human Right Club, Bar. Omozogie reiterated that the claimant ought to be arrested since he neglected his in-law who by law is regarded as a child, stressing that the era of encouraging human right violations must come to an end in communities where human rights advocates are domiciled. Community member who reported the case was asked to reach out to the supervisor in charge of Esan North East to immediately resolve the situation. To this end, Uromi JDPCI promised to send a letter to the Police Division and advised the paralegals to pay a visit to the DPO to introduce themselves as advocates of the human right club in the community who are interested in the case at hand. Participants were also advised to always inform the police (if the relevant body was far from them) about harboring a person not related to them, in order to ward off unnecessary complications, indictment and embarrassment.

The participants appreciated the initiative of the organization for carrying out the startup meeting, they were also very joyful over the records of achievements made during the first phase of the scheme; this they said was a great encouragement to continue to do better and make impact in the community. They therefore promised to continue with their good works.

Formation of Adolescent Human Rights Clubs in 25 Public Secondary Schools in Edo Central Senatorial District

As part of efforts to promote reporting of human rights violations and protect children against human rights abuses, Uromi JDPCI project team visited 25 selected schools across the five Local



A session with members at ACC Irrua

Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District to sensitize the students on human rights issues and sued for their participation as ambassadors for the

prevention child abuses. The project



A group photograph with members in Ewatto Grammar school, Ewatto

team thereafter conducted the formation of adolescent human rights clubs in the 25 schools sensitized across the five LGAs. During which the need to form the adolescent clubs in their various schools and importance of the club to the students, their schools and communities were

explained. Some highlights of the basic human and children's rights were made to the students. Thereafter, a brief of the issues that will be covered in the clubs' learning sessions was given to the students. They were also informed that the State Ministry of Education gave approval for the clubs to be formed and facilitated in the selected schools. This they were told gives credence to the importance of the club and its activities within the various schools.

The students in the various schools expressed delight and excitement to have such club in their schools and then noted that they will be available to participate in the sessions as it would help them to protect themselves from abuses as well as report offenders. It will also provide opportunity for them to seek help and support to overcome all forms of abuses. The project team appreciated the students in return and welcomed them as club members. A total of 363 persons



A group photograph with members at Obiaza Mixed Secondary Schools, Ubiaja

made up of 207 female and 156 male registered as members of school based adolescent human rights club in the 25 secondary schools



A group photograph with members at Agba Grammar School, Uromi

across the 5 LGAs in Edo Central Senatorial

District.

Facilitation of Adolescent Human Rights Clubs in 25 Public Secondary Schools in Edo Central Senatorial District

As a follow up to the formation of school clubs conducted in the second quarter of the year, first quarterly learning session with the Adolescent School Based Human Right Clubs across the 25



Agadaga secondary school human right club meeting



Egoro Amede secondary school human right club meeting

targeted schools in Edo Central Senatorial District commenced in the third quarter. It began with the topic

“Introduction to Child's Rights and Responsibilities” the aim was to train them on the relevant laws that protect children and prevent violence against persons and build their capacity to identify human rights violations, avoidance of situations of possible abuses and how to report abuses when they occur. This activity was held between July and September 2021 and a total of

362 students were reached comprising of 214 females representing 59.1% and 148 males representing 40.9%.

During the learning sessions across the various schools, members were reminded of the objectives of the club which includes the education of the school children on the rights of persons, rapid spread of the communiqué amongst children through peer learning as well as collation of reports on human rights violations from peers by members of the school human right clubs for proper action. Here, the members were sensitized on their right to life, right to be named and registered, right to

education, right to protection, right to health care, leisure, respect, freedom of thought, association, religion, movements, freedom from discrimination and the likes. Also, they were meant to understand that in exercising those rights, proper guidance must be obtained from responsible adults such as



their parents and guidance in accordance with the Law and in the best interest of the child. Furthermore, the duties of these children to their parents and the country were also outlined, as well as the responsibilities of parents, the government and the Country at large to them. The students were very receptive to

the lessons and showed good understanding of the lecture by contributing to the topics, making clarifications by asking some questions and responding to questions posed to them by project team members correctly. At the end of the meeting, the participants in the various schools set aside a day in the



Eguare Ekpoma secondary school human right club meeting

school week where club members would hold their meetings. They were therefore encouraged to hold their meetings and assigned to themselves the duty to sensitize their fellow students on what they had learnt before the end of



A session at Ubiaza School, Ubiaja



Okhuesan Secondary school



St John Bosco College, Ubiaja

the quarter as well as look out for their peers who may be facing abuses within their school and community. Their teachers also participated in the session and appreciated the initiative.

Commemoration of Child Protection Day

Uromi JDPCI on the 1st of June, 2021, joined the rest of the world to mark Child protection day with a focus on “The Role of Parents and Caregivers in the Protection of Children against Sexual and Gender based Violence”. The guest speaker was Stella Ojemeh Esq, the coordinator, Child Protection Network, Edo-State. Among other dignitaries present at the event were Legal luminaries, Security personnel, medical personnel, religious leaders, the media, community human right advocates as well as students from various secondary schools within Edo Central Senatorial District. A total of 205 Persons (93 male & 112 female) were in attendance.

The Executive Director, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo in his key note address noted that every 1st day of June was an annual event set outside by some countries to speak against the abuse of children; and Uromi JDPCI, being a human right group deemed it necessary to join the rest of the world to commemorate the day’s celebration as an avenue to encourage parents and duty bearers to publicly and consistently denounce child abuse in all forms and strive assiduously to promote its prevention at home and community including schools and places of worship through the institutionalization of the child protection mechanism in our public areas.

The listed some of the types of abuses experience by children to include: Physical abuse, domestic violence or abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse (Discriminatory abuse), financial or material abuse, servitude or Modern slavery, organizational or institutional abuse and wrong application of authority to impact fear. He said that in all, the most visible form of abuse was physical abuse where it was estimated that one in four children were victims of physical abuse and as a result, is condemned by almost everyone. He noted that abuses in all its forms were a daily reality for many Nigerian children and only a fraction ever receive help as Six out of every ten children experience some form of violence – one in every four girls and 10 per cent of boys have been victims of sexual violence and of the children who reported violence, fewer than five out of a 100 received any form of support. This is because the drivers of violence against children (VAC) were rooted in social

norms, including the use of violent discipline, violence against women and community beliefs about witchcraft, which increase children’s vulnerability to abuses, hence the need to develop Protective factors and conditions in families, Schools and communities to combat child abuses in Nigeria for the purposes of increasing the health and well-being of children and families in the society.

He encouraged participants support the prevention child abuses by:

1. **Volunteering time** to get involved with other parents within their communities to help vulnerable children and their families start a playgroup.



The Executive Director presenting his key note address

2. **Disciplining children thoughtfully** for better impact and using privileges to encourage good behavior and time-outs to help children regain control.
3. **Examining** words and actions used on children, since abuses was not only physical by becoming nurturing parents and showing children and other adults that conflicts could be settled without hitting or yelling.
4. **Educating themselves and others** through Simple support for children and parents which could be the best way to prevent child abuse, by organizing after-school activities, parent education classes, mentoring programs, as well as a voice in support of these efforts in their communities.
5. **Organizing to teach children their rights** for as children are taught that are special and have the right to be safe, they are less likely to think abuse was their fault, and more likely to report an offender.
6. **Supporting prevention programs** rather than wait for casualties because often in the past, intervention occurred only after abuses have been done and reported. Due to this, greater investment in program such as family counseling and home visits by nurses who provide assistance for newborns and their parents that have been proven to stop the abuse before it occurs are needed.
7. **Having Knowledge of what child abuse entails such as** Physical and sexual abuse, neglect, or the failure of parents or other caregivers to provide a child with needed food, clothing, and emotional abuse arising from rejection, battering, or continuously isolation which clearly constitute maltreatment
8. **Understanding and Knowing the signs of abuse**, such as unexplained injuries Depression, fear of a certain adult, difficulty trusting others or making friends, sudden changes in eating or sleeping patterns, inappropriate sexual behavior, poor hygiene, secrecy, and hostility which could indicate that a child was being neglected or physically, sexually, or emotionally abused.
9. **Reporting abuse** to state's child protective services department or local police.
10. **Investing in kids** by encourage leaders in the community to be supportive of children and families, asking employers to provide family-friendly work environments as well as influence local and national lawmakers to support legislation to better protect children and to improve their lives.

He concluded by reiterating that Children were vulnerable dependents who are in need of responsible adults to care, love and protect them and as such Uromi JDPCI urges all participants to heed the clarion call of lending their voices to the protection of children in their various communities and institutions for the purposes of achieving the common good and development of our society.



Participants listening to the guest speaker

Thereafter, the guest speaker Stella Ojemeh Esq, emphasized that the protection of children was the right of every child as such every parents, caregivers and adults were duty bound to see to the safety of every child whether or not, such children were biologically related to the adults. She said that in the course of protecting a child; the best interest of the child was paramount and as such careful and adequate plans should be made for children. She stated that every child deserved the basic needs of life, such as food, clothing, medical care and shelter. She lamented that our communal way of life which was a catalyst to the safe guidance of children had dwindled, declined and fallen due to selfish interest, lack of sense of duty of care resulting to negligence of children in the community and morale

decadence. She concluded by recommending some safety mechanism children and parents should adopt to avoid child abuses, among which were:

- Moving in peers: Children were to avoid lonely route to their destinations rather they should adopt plying the routes often used by people. However she noted that if such lonely routes must be used, it must be with appropriate and reasonable number of good companies.
- Reporting Abuses/Attempted Abuses: Children were to courageously report abuses or attempted abuses to responsible adults close by who would take appropriate steps to ensure the apprehension of the perpetrator of such crime, for the safety of the child as well as other children within.
- Setting Limits: she advised the children to set clear limits to the parts of the body any other person should hold and that when such limits are clearly stated then they would be able to detect when a person seeks to abuse them. She emphasized the need to adopt prompt reporting to responsible adults.
- Vigilance: she also advised them to be meticulous in keeping their drinks and food safe from contamination, so that they would not fall victim of drug abuse and defilement or sexual assault. Also, she discouraged the act of mixing with the opposite sex unaccompanied, going to places secretly because it's a way of endangering oneself in precarious situations as well as accepting invitations from strangers especially through the internet.
- Dressing Decently: She also advised the children to dress decently stating that dressing indecently did not justify sexual assaults however, it could lead to sexual assault, therefore it was better to avoid such occurrence.



A cross section of participants at the event

While for parents; she enumerated and explained thus:

- That parents should be friendly and close to their children, so that the children could easily confide in them
- That parents should move the motion of instituting child protection committees and clubs in the various schools of their children
- That parent should be responsible enough to provide basic necessities for their children as well as become good listeners and communicators.

At the end of the speech, participants especially the students expressed great delight and excitement due to the knowledge received from both speakers. They thereafter asked questions on the issues raised and clarifications were given.

Dr Mrs Irene Akhidenso who is a member of Uromi JDPCI Board of Trustees and member of the Female Medical Practitioners Association, pointed out the unfortunate plight of the male child who are victims of sexual abuse but often do not speak out, seek or get justice due to the societal and cultural stereotypes of male not being capable to become victims of sexual abuse. She appealed to participants to change such

erroneous beliefs so that such victims could boldly seek help and possibly get redress in the Court of competent jurisdiction. Also, one of the security personnel from NSCDC recommended that schools should have separate counselors for both sexes who would handle incident of abuse from children.

One of the Chief Inspector of Education (CIE) present at the event stated that parents in the community had great role to play in the prevention of child abuses and gender based violence. According to her, parents should diligently set their children aright as they bring up their children in the home by openly being good examples to them as well as creating a friendly environment suitable for healthy dialogue. Again, she advised parents to devote their time to attend Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings of the various schools



Cross section of participants at the event

attended by their children, stating that must parents were too negligent in that regard. She informed all participants that a school program called ‘Open Day’ have been approved to commence in all schools where parents are allowed to come to the schools of their children to assess the performances of their children in schools as well as the managements. She encouraged the parents to cease the opportunity to monitor the welfare of the children.

Commemoration of the World Human Right Day

Uromi JDPCI marked the end of the 16 Days Activism against Gender Based Violence by joining the rest of the world to commemorate the World Human Right Day on the 10th of December, 2021. This event was attended by various dignitaries and key stakeholders in Edo Central Senatorial District and beyond,



Executive Director Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo giving the keynote address

amongst whom were; the Area commander NPF Uromi Command, (Guest Speaker) ably represented by the Divisional Police Officer, Uromi Division, The Zonal Commander NAPTIP Edo State who was also a Guest Speaker at the event, representatives of the other Nigeria Security Agencies which includes the NSCDC, DSS, Traditional leaders and Religious Leaders from 30 communities as well as the paralegals and supervisors of the Human Right Clubs within the Senatorial District. The event which was held at the Chancery Complex, Egbele Uromi started at 11:00am with a total of 150 persons (98Males and 52 Females) in attendance.

The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo in his Key note address urged participants to promote the human rights of everyone through the recognition of the equal rights of all and respect for the rule of law. He explained that for true liberty to exist there ought to be equal and equitable respect for all. To further corroborate this position, he cited the provisions of Vatican II which states that everyone was obliged to render assistance to one another in order to achieve improved meaningful living. He critically denounced gender inequality, unfair treatment and disrespect for Human Rights.

The Area Commander, in his presentation as a guest speaker stressed the importance of promoting and protecting the rights of everyone irrespective of status religion or sex. However he noted that each right were not absolute, since there exist limitations to every rights, and those limitations are made to protect



Area Commander NPF, Uromi Command as Guest speaker at the event

the rights of other, as such must be respected else abuse becomes inevitable.

The NAPTIP Zonal Commander Mrs

Chidiebere Ifufu who was also a guest speaker,



NAPTIP Zonal Commander as a guest speaker at the event

vehemently kicked against all activities promoting human trafficking by explaining the nexus between human trafficking and the violation of human rights. She noted that child labour and slavery as well as inhuman treatment of house help where both Human Trafficking offenses and violation of human rights at the same time. On that premise, she shared the NAPTIP hot line to participants, encouraging them to report all



Declaration of zero tolerance for human rights violation and human trafficking

forms of abuses and human rights violation observed or reported to them. She thereafter led the participants in a campaign against human rights violations and human trafficking through the use of the NAPTIP yellow and

red cards connoting the zero tolerance to human trafficking and human



Participants declaring support for the protection of human rights

rights violations.

Participants who decried the increasing rate of maltreatment of children given out as house help in their communities made commitment to support the protection of human rights by reporting all forms of violations to the appropriate authorities as enumerated in the event.

Training of Paralegals on Psychological First Aid

Uromi JDPCI organized and carried out three days training for paralegals on Psychological First Aid. The training was necessitated by the desire to achieve successful case management of incidents reported to the paralegals and advocates of the human right clubs. This training was meant to build their capacity and improve their ability to see through the victims of human rights violation, creating trust for conducive healing and rehabilitation of survivors. The participants at the training were taken through some key terms such as mental health, psychosocial model, Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Pyramid of intervention, identity, crisis, emotional and physical reaction to stress, solution as well as the types and

roles of actors. Other issues treated were; people in need of special attention, people at risk, vulnerability, resilience, coping, key principles in lay counseling, self and team care.

This training which was facilitated by Michael Iyoriobhe took place from the 3rd to 5th of March 2021 at the Chancery complex, Egbele, Uromi. A total of 114 persons (53Females, 61male) made up of the supervisors, the paralegals and advocates of the various community human right clubs in the 5 Local Government Areas were in attendance.

In the opening remark, Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo, acknowledged the participants and appreciated them for their unanimous approach to improve the human right awareness level in their various communities and their effective response to human rights violation through their availability and activeness to activities facilitated by the project.



The Executive Director, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo making his opening speech

He reminded participants that the purpose of the training was to arm them with the techniques needed to assist and rehabilitate victims of human rights violations in their communities. He therefore enjoined them to listen attentively to the presentation as well as participate actively in the course of the training.

The first presentation was on mental health and psychosocial support, which were explained to the participants by the facilitator through a

participatory approach. Mental health was described as the State of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (WHO, 2002). While psychosocial was explained as interrelation of behavioural and social factors... to the interrelation between mind and society” (OED, 1997). It was further stated that mental health was not only the absence of mental disorder, neither was facing a crisis event by a person stipulates that one must develop mental disorder, however, he said that such persons should be aided without agonizing them further.

The facilitator then explained the psychosocial model and the key concept of wellbeing and thereafter proceeded to make a presentation on crisis, crisis cycle, emotional and physical reactions to stress.



Cross section of participants after the day one training

Conclusively, he informed participants of the fact that persons reacted to crisis differently. He said that

while some persons may only be mildly distressed or not distressed at all, other would



One of the participants making contribution

be totally broken. He again stated that most people tend to recover from such distress when their basic needs were restored, receive support from persons, especially those around them as well as get access to psychological first aid.

Thereafter, participants in a role play showed how people reacted, behaved or responded in the local culture, when they were distressed. They showed the emotional reaction to anger, guilt and shame, as well as the physical reaction to stress, health palpitation and extreme fatigue.

Also, participants reacted to the above shown emotional and physical reactions to stress, by becoming the humanitarian actor, a trainer, therapist, interpreter, militant, reformer etcetera.

This was followed with a presentation on vulnerability, after which that of resilience, its factors and how to build it was taken.

Again emphasis was laid on the importance of mastering the art of listening to complainants; because it helped to support decision making, clarify questions and provide relevant practical information, support to identify possible solutions, and try to guard against wrong decisions, as well as

accompany, support and coach rather than direct advice. The need to understand the pointer of view of a help seeker was further emphasized



Cross session of participants after the day two training

A presentation on maintaining self and team care so as to avoid burn out was made and the training was concluded by reiterating the dos and don'ts of PFA which admonish a lay counselor to avoid the use of technical terms, giving false promises and untrue pledges, as well as thinking and acting to solve all the problems of the complainant among others. Participants expressed delight and satisfaction with the presentations and lessons learnt and appreciation to the facilitator and team members of Uromi JDPCI. They unanimously promised to effect the messaged passed in current and subsequent incident cases.

Refresher Training on Introduction to Paralegal

Uromi JDPCI organized a two day refresher training on “Introduction to Paralegal, Human Right and Monitoring and Reporting of Human Right Cases” on the 19th and 20th of August, 2021. The purpose of the training was both to refresh the Knowledge of



The Executive Director addressing participants



Mr. Iyoriobhe welcoming participants

Participants to better understand their roles as Paralegals as well as educate the newly

inaugurated Paralegals and Advocates on their expected duties as Paralegals and how to effectively monitor and report human right cases in their communities. The different sessions of the training were facilitated by; the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev Fr. Dr Fidelis Arhedo who took participants on 'Introduction to Paralegal', Theresa Odion Esq made presentation on the "Concept of Human Rights", and Mr. Michael Iyoriobhe took participants through 'Monitoring and Reporting of Human Right Cases'. Participants contributed brilliantly during the sessions which were highly interactive. The training was held at the chancery hall in Egbele, Uromi with a total of 130 persons (72 males and 58 females) in attendance.

In the Opening remark the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo emphasized the significance of the training; while stating that it was necessary for Participants to be enlightened about human right issues and what they stand for as community based human right advocates in order to effectively influence, impact and reach out to community members. He admonished participants to be focused, attentive and participatory in the course of the training.

The first presentation was on 'Introduction to Paralegal' during which the participants were taken through, the duties, qualities, skills and ethics of a paralegal. Thereafter 'the concept of human rights, its importance, characteristics as well as its instruments both at



A participant asking questions

the national and international levels were explained. The categorization of human rights which include Civil and Political rights, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and



Theresa Odion Esq. taking participants on the "Concept of human rights"

Environmental and Official rights as provided in chapter iv of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended was explained and it was emphasized that only constitutional right on the bases of its category are guaranteed and justiciable

The session on Monitoring and Reporting of Human Rights Violations was then presented by Mr. Michael Iyoriobhe who noted that Human Rights violations were one of the main challenges facing Africans, such as arbitrary arrests, illegal detention, torture and ill-treatment, rape, and murder; where Women, children, and migrants who are normally some of the most vulnerable of all groups, are the most affected.

It was reiterated that Paralegals and Human Right Advocates are Local Human Right Monitors, hence they were taught and reminded of their duties as local human rights monitors who builds contacts, find facts, document, monitor, reports and keeps records of human right violations in the community.



Group Photograph with Participants after the training



Mr. Michael Iyoriobhe facilitating on “monitoring and reporting of cases” Photo credit: Uromi JDPCI

Furthermore, he stated the importance of documentations and how to document cases, and concluded by emphasizing the need for participants to be gender sensitive in the course of carrying out their activities.

At the end of the training, participants acknowledged that their understandings have been strengthened. Paralegals from the newly constituted communities were particularly impressed and expressed gratitude for the opportunities given to them to receive the training.

Quarterly Learning Sessions with Paralegals and Human Rights Advocates

Uromi JDPCI held a total of 4 quarterly meetings with Paralegals and Human Rights Advocates in Edo Central Senatorial District. The first was held on the 15th of March, 2021, and it was the last in the first phase of the project. Uromi JDPCI used it to review the achievements of the project, its challenges and suggestions on the way forward. A review of activities within the quarter was also carried while the plans for the next quarter were outlined. A total of 63 persons (26 females, 37 males) made up of Paralegals, supervisors and staffs of Uromi JDPCI were in attendance



Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, giving his opening remark

The Executive Director Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo in his opening remark expressed joy and happiness over persistence, assiduousness and team spirit portrayed by the supervisors, paralegals and advocates of the various community human right clubs in carrying out assignments towards the achievement of project goal and objectives since the inception of the project. He stated that the project though coming to an end, was not winding up in failure, rather it was concluding with huge success, achievements, positive outcomes, results and impacts made in the various communities where the human right clubs were constituted. He explained that the influencing activities of the paralegals of the human right clubs in the communities showed that they understood all the rudiments and intricacies of being worthy paralegals. He said this was only achieved because of their availability for trainings carried out, and their willingness to practice lessons learnt.

He explained that the team paralegal was an internationally recognized frame that serves as first aid relief to victims of human right violations, within the geographical sphere it existed. He said that constituents of the groups were usually persons of proven integrity, reliability and uprightness, with zero tolerance to evil. He encouraged participants not to relent in their activities as paralegals and advocates of the human right clubs in their various communities especially now that the scheme was drawing close to its end. He explained that services of such rendered in the community were voluntary in nature without payment but propelled by the love of humanity and mankind.

Conclusively, he advised participants to uphold the rights and obligations of each other and to be careful not to prosecute innocent citizens of crimes alleged against them, but conduct proper investigations through best practices.

The meeting thereafter proceeded to review key activities conducted during the quarter. The first in this line was the training of paralegals on Psychological First Aid which was held on the 3rd to 5th of March, 2021. Members expressed satisfaction over the lessons learnt from the training, stating that it was apt and timely for the purpose of effective case managements in intervening in incidence of human rights violations in the community. They thanked the organization for their initiatives in mapping out strategic plans for successful case managements. The project team then reminded the Paralegals that the current



Group photograph of participants at the meeting



One of the supervisors giving report

phase of the project would end by 31st of March while another phase is bid to commence soon. They were encouraged to keep the good work while we await the approval of the second phase. Some participant then asked if the human right advocates could still enjoy the support and assistance from the organization when the current scheme comes to an end. Possible support and assistance from the organization after the end of the current scheme was assured to the participants by the Program Manager Mr. Michael Iyoriobhe, stating that the necessary capacities have been built in the course of embarking on the project and as such the office could still support the movement with referrals to the

Ministry of Justice in the cases related to sexual abuses. Going further, he informed participants of a report made by the Area Commander of Ekpoma Area Command to the organization stating the current state of affairs of a defendant in one of the incident cases of rape intervened by the organization. Also, they were advised to always keep their supervisors informed so that they could easily proffer counsel and assistance.

Thereafter Bar. Dan Akhidenor, supervisor of the human right advocates in Esan Central Local Government Area, in his report, stated that the human right advocates have been diligent with their monthly meetings and sensitizations and that currently two reported incidences were being treated by the

human right clubs in two communities, wherein he was actively involved. He informed participants that so far the activities undertaken were not such beyond his capabilities as well as those of the human right advocates in the community. He therefore assured every one of the existence of peace and tranquility within his jurisdiction.

Barr Dom Okojie, the supervisor of the human rights advocates in Esan North East Local Government Area, reported that the human right advocates in the various communities dutifully observed their monthly meetings within the quarter as well as engaged in community sensitizations. Also he reported that an incidence of defilement was reported in one of the communities which on investigation, it was realized that the allegation was false and as such the case was thrown down. Conclusively, he emphatically appreciated the efforts of the paralegals and advocates of the various human right clubs within his domain. Stating that their enthusiasm, passion and willingness to learn more about human right was commendable and very gratifying. He related that their zest had made his input very easy and also minimal since they were willing to undergo activities in the community as at when due.



Supervisor from Esan North East giving report



The Program Manager of Uromi JDPCI addressing participants during meeting in Esan North East LGA

Barr Akewe, E.C, supervisor for the human rights advocates in Esan South



A paralegal given report during meeting in Esan Central

East

Local Government Area reported, that the human rights clubs successfully carried out their meetings within the quarter, she also reported that the Human Rights Club were instituted in two secondary schools in one of the communities, and ably supervised by one of the human rights advocates in the community, who happened to be the head teacher of the school. She related how supportive the various club members have been to her, how determined they were to continue the cause for justice while seeking for more encouragements to be given to the paralegals by the organization by seeing to the extension of the scheme, in order for it to fully owned and indigenized in the communities. The various community human rights clubs also gave their clubs reports of activities conducted within the period. They were congratulated for the successful leadership and influential roles played while working with the various community human rights clubs and encouraged them to keep up with that standard.

The second meeting was held in the month of June, 2021 across the five LGAs with expanded members. The meeting which was the first in the new project was used to share some expectation from the various human clubs, mentor them on reporting and improvement planning. A total of 325 persons (140 females and 185 males) made up of the Executive Director and team members of Uromi JDPCI, the Supervisors of the five Local Government Areas, Paralegals and Human Rights Advocates of the various community based human rights clubs in Edo Central Senatorial Districts were in attendance at the meetings.

In each of the meetings, the Executive Director, Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo acknowledged the commitments of the community based human rights advocates whose selfless efforts made it possible to realize an achievable outcome in the objectives and goals of the scheme in the first quarter. He praised their co-operation, dedication, enthusiasm and hard work which led to the successful completion of the first phase of the project. He emphasized the need to step up the efforts in this new phase.

He encouraged all to promote social justice and the rule of law that entailed equity and respect for everyone, irrespective of ethnicity, religious belief, economic, social and cultural status or sex. He said that it was on this basis that the human rights advocates were trained to be better equipped with the right knowledge as community surveillance to combat human rights violations and unjust structure in the community; which includes injustice against poor victim of human rights violations in favour of wealthy and influential perpetrators of human rights violations,



A paralegal given report during meeting in Igueben

who see
might as
right.

He
concluded by
admonishing
participants
to be selfless,
reliable,

relevant and
trustworthy



A paralegal given report during meeting in Esan West

in their various communities. He charged them to employ the lessons gotten in the trainings organized by Uromi JDPCI to become impactful in the communities by becoming ambassadors for change, peace, progress, growth and development. The various human rights clubs thereafter gave reports of their activities within the quarter

The various groups thereafter gave reports of their activities within the period as well as reported the incidences that took place in their communities or reported to them and how they intervened on the various issues recorded. The human right club reported that they conducted community sensitization on harmful widowhood practices, child right, abuse and



Group photograph after quarterly meeting in Ubijaja Palace



Group photograph after quarterly meeting in Igueben Palace

protection. As a result of the activities, the Community Heads in some of the communities have begun to disassociate themselves from the coercion of widows to engage in harmful widowhood rites and the practice of widow inheritance against the will of the widows. The meeting successfully accommodated more human rights advocates who conveniently made attendance due to proximity. The reports from most of the human rights paralegals indicate that relevant impacts were shown to be done in their various communities and that reporting of human rights violations is gradually increasing by the day. However, there is the need to permanently internalize the abolishment of some traditional practices that are violations of human rights by the traditional rulers in those communities in order for the scheme to get sustenance. It is our hope that this new phase of the scheme would achieve this objective.

Uromi JDPCI held the third quarterly meeting with Paralegals and Advocates of the 30 community based Human Rights Clubs across the 5 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Edo Central Senatorial District. The



Group photograph with participant after meeting in Esan North East LGA



Participants at quarterly meeting in Esan South East LGA

meetings at the various LGAs were held on the 6th, 7th, 8th, 13th and 14th of September 2021 at Igueben, Esan Central, Esan West, Esan North East and Esan South East Local Government Areas, respectively. It was attended by 332 persons- (155males and 177females). The meetings provided an avenue to highlight key human right issues mediated upon by community Advocates within their communities, the achievements made, challenges encountered and possible solutions and recommendations moving forward.

During meeting in the different LGAs, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo while emphasizing the importance of the quarterly meeting of the Human Right Advocates said that the meeting is a veritable tracking and evaluation system for achieving the overall objectives of the project. He added, that it was a platform to appraise the efforts of the community Advocates, correct and enlighten community Advocates whose approaches might be defective and strategize plans to better impact target communities. He stressed the need for the Advocates to maintain integrity at all times so as to continuously influence community members; least they lose their reliance and relevance in the communities. He advised them to update themselves with new facts in their communities and employ best practices in tackling human right issues. He added, that they must be tolerant, proactive as well as consult their Supervisors who are legal practitioners with expertise knowledge of the Law and make referrals when necessary. He appreciated their turnout and sought their focus and contributions in the meetings. The various groups thereafter gave reports of their interventions in their different communities. From the report of the Paralegals, it was observed that there exist some level of success in penetrating the community to alter some norms that negates the principle of human rights by some community human right Advocates. However, there is need to ensure that human rights laws are officially accepted and proclaimed as the new custom of the people with corresponding sanctions enforced. Therefore, it is

important for the human right Advocates to intensify their influencing efforts on the law makers in the community to institutionalize human right laws in their communities.

The fourth quarter meeting of the community human right club with project staff of Uromi JDPCI of the year 2021 was held in the 5 Local Government Areas of the Edo Central Senatorial District. The meetings at the various LGAs were held on the 29th November, 6th, 7th, 8th and 13th of December 2021 at Esan South East, Esan North East, Igueben, Esan West and Esan Central Local Government Areas, respectively with a total of 304 persons (157males and 147females) in attendance.

In this quarter, the focus report and discussion was based on the achievements or challenges recorded by the community human right advocates and allow the various groups to learn from each other.

The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, in his opening remark expressed gratitude to the various community human right advocates for their assiduous efforts and indefatigability in carrying out their voluntary and humanitarian works in their various communities. He explained that since the community human right clubs were constituted, there had been some

significant impacts in most communities in the aspect of enlightening community members of their rights which has boosted their knowledge and understanding these rights and the need to protect and promote such rights.

The meeting being the last for the year focused on activities carried out by the human right advocate towards advancing the knowledge and consciousness of human rights of members of the community. This he said would make them to willingly report human right violations as well as how their various activities have impacted on community women successfully. He enjoined them to participate fully in the meeting as it would serve as an avenue to share knowledge and provide solutions to challenges in order to combat them subsequently. Finally, he encouraged them not to be relentless in their efforts as human rights advocates, pointing out that there good works would be beneficial to them as well as achieve peaceful co-existence in their various communities.

At the end of the reports, participants at the meetings were appreciated and encouraged to resiliently ensure the protection and promotion of the human rights of community members especially women and children.

They were enjoined to be focused and avoid unnecessary distractions occasioned from issues different from human rights cases. They were also reminded to put the knowledge gained from trainings to appropriate use in their various communities, noting that the impacts made in each communities by the



Group photograph after quarterly meeting in Esan North East LGA



Group photograph after quarterly meeting in Esan Central LGA

human rights advocates were key in ensuring the safety of children, women/girls and peaceful co-existence of all, hence the need to be responsibly active.

Community Dialogue Held in Ten Communities from August to December, 2021

Community dialogue on child's protection and widowhood practices were conducted in 10 communities across the five LGAs in Edo Central Senatorial District. The communities were Egoro-Amede and Ukhun of Esan West, Ewatto and Ewohimi of Esan South, Ekpon and Ebelle of Igueben, Akho and Usenu of Esan Central and Eror and Efandion of Esan North East LGA. A total of 259 (176 Males 83 Females) were reached. The dialogue was aimed at enhancing and promoting the protection of community children as well as challenging unjust traditional structures that stimulates violations of widow's rights in the interior. It bordered on the community stand on child's protection and widowhood practices. This was carefully expanded, deliberated upon and illustrated to cite possible human rights violations imbedded in such practices due to possible lacunas in the traditions and customary enforcement principles existing in the community. The dialogue exposed a lot of cultural dissensions to civilization, advancement and the principles of human rights in some communities visited. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the dialogue was an avenue to straighten understanding of the need to promote and protect human right of children and women for peaceful and meaningful living through the mapping out of plans to eradicate human right violations that were seen to have clandestinely existed within widowhood practices as well as strengthen child's protection network in the community. This community dialogue successfully saw to resolutions that led to the discussions on the need to abolish ill treatment of widows in some communities where it was still in force as well as the establishment of bodies that would monitor and promote the protection of children in the communities, especially their rights to education. In each of the communities, the meeting started with the introduction of the essence of the dialogue which was to establish a discussion with the community leaders in the target communities on child rights and child abuses, widowhood practices that are repugnant to natural justice, equity and fairness and the relatedness of such practices good conscience and the happiness of human person.

In the course of the discussion, in Egoro Amede community, participants showed considerable understanding of what child's protection and child's rights entailed. However, they had a challenge in enforcing child's right to education as well as responsibilities of the child as stated in the 2016 child's rights law in force in Edo-State.

According to the participants, Most Children in the community



The son of the community leader making his contribution during the session
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

have little or no value for education as shown in their lack of interest in acquiring either formal or informal education coupled with the high level of morale decadence, insubordination and disrespect for their parents and elders.



One of the participants buttressing on the issue of moral decadence
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

Several attempts have been made by parents and caregivers including teachers and members of the vigilante group in the community to address and amend the challenge, which ended in futility. One of the root causes of failures pointed out by the participants was lack of co-operation of some parents in the community to correct and chastise their erring children as well as bad parenting of children especially at the cradle, another reason pointed was the issue of negative peer influence. All of which have resulted to having uncontrollable and disrespectful children who have lost the sense of dignity, good values and morals in the community, with little or no regards to persons of authorities in the community.

After much suggestions and deliberations, the community members recommended the need to establish a committee made up of selected elders in the community and some members of the community human rights clubs to checkmate the matter and set sanctions for deviants. Based on this outcome, a decision was reached to call for a community meeting to acquaint every member of the community about the existence of such committee, her roles in the community and sanctions for deviants

In Ewatto community, the Chiefs and community leaders showed good understanding of what child's protections and rights entailed, however, they had no clear cut depiction of the age bracket for persons referred to as children in the community, thus, they saw the need to have a better understanding of who a child is in order to avert child abuse. It was then explained that anyone below the age of 18 was considered a child as universally recognized. Furthermore, the orientation of participants on the justification of rape and defilement due to the indecent dressing of a child was changed as they came to realize and agree that dressing indecently was not an excuse for raping or defiling a person but that perpetrators of such sexual offences were evil minded and as such considered at fault.

They were made to understand that issues of child defilement were incapable of being resolved by any traditional authority in the community through mediation because it is a crime against the State and punishable by Law. Hence, they were admonished to report such issues to the police for necessary action.



One of Chiefs responding to issues raised during the dialogue session
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

Community elders resolved to have an organized structure which would help to promulgate and implement Child

protection by-laws and sanctions that are in consonant with the Childs Right Laws and other enactment in force in Edo-State which would become operational in the community, as well as conscript sexual offences in their Exclusive list there by allowing community members to report such cases to the Police as against cultural laws that prevent community members from reporting issues to the police.



Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo addressing Participants during the dialogue session
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

Participants in Ekpon community explained that Ekpon community grades persons below 15 years of age as children and there exist a low level of publicity about child's rights in the community which has

resulted to the prevalence of violation of child's rights in the community. It was noted that the enforcement and protections of children's rights were done at individual levels as there were no structures in the community that promulgate and implement the protection of children rights in the community and as such, the community members could grace a wedding ceremony of a minor whose family deemed it fit to be married. It was noted that perpetrators even when challenged by some individuals see it as interference to their private lives.



A Widow participant stating her ordeal as a widow Photo credit: Uromi JDPCI

Other issue brought forth by Participants was the negligent of some Parents on their



The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI addressing participants. Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

children's education even when they could afford to enroll their children in school.

Participants were enlightened on the Child's Right Law as domesticated in Edo State and the essence of universal basic education which is compulsory and free. It was reemphasized that anyone below age 18, whether matured or not was considered a child and every negative action done against such a person is seen as a crime against the state. As a community, they were encouraged to pick up the responsibility of ensuring that children are in school learning rather than roaming about the street when they ought to be in school.

On realization that some of their practices promoted child abuse and violations of the rights of children, Participants saw the need to make communal child rights declarations and institute a committee that would see to the enforcement of such declarations by all families in the kingdom.



At the opening of the dialogue session, in Akho community, participants proved to have good knowledge of the activities of Akho Community Human



Harriet addressing Participants during the dialogue Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

Right Club as they have engaged them in plethora of sensitizations as well as intervened in human right issues in the community. Members of the community also showed good understanding of the term 'child abuse' and to further buttress their points, they enumerated the various forms of child abuse correctly. However, it was realized that age and certain experiences/ circumstances of persons between 16 years and below, determined if such persons could be regarded as children or not. According to the community elders, persons within 16 years of age and below

were termed children in the community; nonetheless where a 14 years old male commits offences such as sexual assault, he would be penalized as an adult and where a 16 years old undergraduate in the university who appears matured intends to be married off, such a person would move from the status of a child to that of a community woman.

Notwithstanding the above, community members understood, accepted and adopted the fact that every person below 18 years of age were children according the Law in force in Nigeria and as such should be protected from contracts and practices permitted for adults alone; also, they understood that sexual offences were matters beyond their jurisdiction and as such must be exclusively handled by the State. In order to ensure the protection of children and checkmate the moral decadence that has encroached on some community children making them a threat to peaceful co-existence, elders resolved to make it one of the agendas for discussion in their council meeting for possible ways to solve the problem.

Error community members proved to have reasonable knowledge of child abuse as they were able to translate it in their dialect, explain it and differentiate between disciplining a child and abusing a child. However, they lacked a structured mechanism in the community for protecting children, and this gap has



Mr. Mike Iyoriobhe communicating with participants

permitted incidences of child abuses in the community, ranging



The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI during the dialogue

from physical abuses, sexual abuses as well as child neglect.

Although through the efforts of the human right advocates, community members have good understanding of the criminality in child abuses, especially that of sexual abuses, and the channel to report to in handling cases of child defilement as well as rape. Meanwhile it was revealed that most families still find it very unusual and unwilling to report and prosecute such matters, especially where the perpetrator an influential person.

Also, it was noted by Participants that community members do not provide psycho- social support to the victims and their families. They related a recent case in their community in which a 45 years old man impregnated a 13 years old girl and the child was given to him as a wife while the man was left unpunished for his actions. In the course of the dialogue, participants saw the need for community stakeholders to put strategies in place for the protection of children in the community and ensure the enforcement of such strategies.

On the issue of widows inheritance, participants related that the practice of leverage marriage have been abrogated due to the fact that the male members in the community rejected the practice of inheriting widows of their deceased relatives . However, the widows were still subjected to certain inhuman treatment such as excluding them from partaking in communal cooking during community celebration which is an infringement on their rights to association. The men claimed that one out of every ten widow must engage in sexual affairs with other men and it is a sacrilege in the community to partake of a meal prepared by a widow who may have indulged in sexual activities. It was noted by the female participants

that the male folks were often exempted from issues and penalty on adultery even when it was evident that they were actively involved in it with the widow. The men emphatically stated in the local dialect that “Okpea gboghele” which means that men are infallible in matters of adultery as recognized in their custom and tradition reason being that the men pays the dowry of their wives.

However, participants recognized that such practices were discriminatory, biased and unfair. They saw the need to possibly amend the custom to state that widows be allowed to participate in community cooking provided that sexual activities with persons not their husbands be carried out outside the



Group photograph with participants after the dialogue session
their spouses.

community; as well as admonishing the males in the community not to tempt or seduce the widows into committing such acts and should

be faithful to



The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI dialoging with participants on issues raised

In Ewatto community, it was related that community members respect the rights of the widows by permitting them to engage in any form of widowhood rites in accordance with their individual beliefs and religion.

In Ekpon community, it was apparent that the rights of widows were violated in greater parts of the community as a widow amongst the participants narrated her ordeal to everyone. According to her, she was confined in a room for three months to mourn the death of her husband, subjected to leverage marriage and when she refused to be inherited, she was isolated and accused of killing her deceased husband.

Most of the participants lamented the inhuman treatments meted on widows especially the custom that imposed the widows to cook for the entire clan before she is permitted to re-marry, irrespective of her financial strength and religious beliefs.



Cross session of participants at the dialogue
Photo credit: Uromi JDPCI

However, it was pointed out that the Onojie of the kingdom had abrogated such custom and as such, the continuous practices of such rites were

customarily unlawful. It was resolved that the palace secretary



A project team member addressing participants
Photo credit: Uromi JDPCI

and some community members tour round the entire clans in the kingdom to put an end to such inhuman and outdated tradition.

Participants were very delighted with the resolutions reached in the course of the dialogue and said that such resolutions were mile stones towards achieving greatness in the community.

On the matter of widowhood practices, participants in Akho community explained that it was in their tradition to subject the widow into contracting levirate marriage before being allowed to participate in community activities. To this end, community members were enlightened on the dignity and rights of women (widow) as well as the illegality in subjecting them to inhuman practices especially if it was against their will since they had the right to freedom of thought and association.

Participants were very impressed at the enlightenment and saw the need to amend the traditions and



Participants at the dialogue session
Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI



Community participant making classification of children in the community

imposed on widows and promised to correct the defect of the tradition in their larger gathering. The community head noted that the practice of levirate marriage would be subjected to discussion, possible reviewed and revocation by the community elders in their next meeting. Finally, he said that the dialogue was worthwhile as matters discussed were exposures for better development and peaceful co-existence.

On the aspect of widowhood practices in Eror community, it was related by one of the community leaders, that the act of subjecting the widow to inhuman treatment of levirate marriage or the risk of being isolated completely by community members, had been abrogated however the implementation was defective; because participants stated that such practices were still very much in force in the community and majority of community members were totally oblivious of the abolishment of such practice. On this note, the elders in attendance promised to relate the information to the elders in council; so as to set up enforcement committee to ensure compliance to the former. Participants were happy with the dialogue as it was an opportunity to express their grievances and cruel experiences faced by them. It was also an opportunity to be informed of the abolishment of the inhuman act of inheriting a widow in the community.

At Ebelle, an organized community structure that checkmates compliance to law and order in the community such as child's right to education and protection from abuses was said to be in existence. They also have reasonable knowledge of some forms of child abuses and what constitutes violation of the children's right through the sensitization and training conducted by



One of the participants making contribution during the dialogue

their community human rights club. However, because of their culture orientation, they had difficulties understanding the difference between criminal matters and civil matters that could be handled via ADRs. They were reminded that criminal matters were exclusively handled by the state through the law enforcement agencies such as the police and the court of competent jurisdiction.



Cross section of participants during the dialogue

On the issue of widowhood practices, participants noted that inhuman treatment of widows in the guise of tradition had been abolished, though the widow was duty bound to perform certain rite in the community after the demise of her husband in order to be accepted by the indigenes. On this it was emphasized that such rites should be respecter of the rights of every widow and should not be

forced or compelled by any means less it becomes violation of rights of such a widow. This suggestion was agreed by all stakeholders present. Thereafter, the community representatives led the project team to the palace of His Royal Highness Aikpaojie, the Onojie of Igueben, where the outcome of the dialogue was presented to him by his representative at the dialogue session.

At Ewohimi, a Child was seen as anyone who not matured enough to bear certain responsibilities such as



Project team leading the dialogue

cutting of palm trees and making a small farm of his/her own.

According to their societal



Cross section of participants during the dialogue

practices, a Girl Child who is matured physically and above age 15 is old enough for marriage and can be given out in marriage. It was gathered that community structure for the protection of Children was absent in the community, though the Community recognizes the role of the human right club in the community and often report issues to the club for necessary actions. The Team raised the need for the inauguration of such structure in the community, made up of chiefs in council that will be saddled with the responsibility of addressing child protection issues in the community.

A concern was raised that most Abusers often fled from the community after committing the offence of Rape or defilement and even murder and only return years or months after when the issues must have been forgotten. They were thus enlightened to always report such issues to the Police even when the

culprit absconds as time does not run against a crime committed, hence whenever such Offenders return, they should be arrested and handed over to the Police for applicable sanctions.



One of the community elders making contributions

Participants were admonished not to allow Stigma stop them from reporting issues of child sexual abuse, but they should consciously overlook the shame and bring perpetrators to book for the future of the Child.

On Widowhood Practices in the Community, Participants noted that their culture respects and show empathy for Widows. Their Husband's properties are not taken from them and their Children upon demise neither are they driven out of their husband's house. More so, they do not subject Widows to leverage marriage, however, they are permitted to marry their husband's kinsman if they deemed it fit.

At Ukhun community, there was no age classification of a child. Circumstances determined the grouping of persons. For instance a child could be seen as anyone who is still in secondary school but were usually below 18 years of age, however, where a female below 18 years graduates from secondary school with all the features of biological maturity, such a female could be allowed to be married whenever she signified interest. In the course of the dialogue, it was also realized that the community had cultural understanding



Cross section of participants during the dialogue

of child protection and child abuse in accordance with the community



Participants making contributions during the dialogue

ty understanding of a child but had little or no report of child abuses from victims due to the poor child protection structure in place in the community. Participants saw the need to strengthen the child protection structure in the community as well as protect all persons below 18 years as children in accordance to the Childs Right Law irrespective of the circumstance of any child.

In the aspect of widowhood practices, it was discovered that community stakeholders had earlier made effort to mitigate the harshness of the traditional rites of widows in force in the community, as a result of the underdevelopment and rivalries it caused in the community. Sadly, this mitigation did not arise from the realization of the infringement of the human rights of these widows hence out of the ten clans in Ukhun Community one of the clans is still in the continuous practice of levirate marriage of widows in order to protect her from remaining the wife of a spirit husband, and isolation; irrespective of her opinion or religious belief. In the course of the dialogue, representative of the various clans were advised to read through the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law and see how such actions constitute punishable

offences so as to see to the abolishment of such inhuman treatment of widows in their community while all participants were encourage to protect the rights of widows as human beings.

At Efandion community, the participants could not give a generalized definition of a child in the



The Executive Director addressing participants during the dialogue

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One of the participants making contributions

regarded as a child, according to the dictate of each family. The disparities as to the definition of a child was corrected in the course of the dialogue, so as to enable the community have a generally acceptable definition of who a child was and ensure the equal protection of such children all over the community.

As for widowhood practices, it was stated that widowhood rites were carried out according to the active religious practice of the widow and as such no widow was compelled to perform any rites that amounted to the infringement of her right to religion.

At the end of the dialogue, the community chiefs and leaders appreciated the project team for the selfless services in promoting peaceful co-existence in the community. They noted out that the issues deliberated upon were very relevant in the community because it would help in the achievement of growth, development and peace in the community. They also affirmed that it was possible to amend the traditions of the community pertaining to child protections and widowhood practices as discussed. However, time was needed to accomplish such changes because they were age long practices. They were thereafter appreciated for their presence and response to the invitation which was seen as an indication that the Communities had good and responsible leaders, ready to dedicate their time and effort to improve the status of their community. They were further enjoined to implement their plans to review the inhuman traditions that exist in the communities and come up with a viable plan to secure the welfare of their children and women.

Community Sensitization on Gender Issues and the Elimination of Gender Based Violence

In line with the goal of promoting justice and respect of human right, Uromi JDPCI conduct sensitization on gender issues and gender based violence across the five Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District. The purpose was to intensify enlightenment of village populace on cultural and traditional practices in their various communities that constitute human right violations in the eyes of the law (Edo State Violence Against Person Prohibition Law). Hence the VAPP Law was used as the instrument for sensitization. The event was attended by Community Chiefs, representatives of 30 community leaders, representatives of 30 male and 30 female groups, youth leaders in 30 communities, religious leaders, human rights advocates, paralegals and supervisors of the human right clubs in 30 communities. A total of 525 (290 males, 235 females) persons were sensitized across the five LGAs

In the opening remark, the Executive Director of Uromi



The executive Director of Uromi JDPCI addressing participants

JDPCI,
Very
Rev Fr
Dr
Fidelis
Arhedo,
noted
that
gender
issues



One of the participants asking questions

were social construct of each community that could either enhance or reduce peaceful coexistence and meaningful living in communities. An expository presentation of the concept of gender, sex, forms of gender based violence and the adverse effects of such violence on victims was made. Emphasis was further laid on the criminality of Gender Based Violence and the punishments of such crimes as stated in the recently domesticated Violence Against Persons Prohibition Law (VAPLAW) in force in Edo-State. The sections cited in the course of the sensitization were those which bothered on rape, indecent assault, inflicting physical injuries on a person, coercion, female genital mutilation, frustrating investigation, willfully making of false statements, forceful ejection from home, depriving persons of their liberty, damage of property with intent to cause distress, forced isolation and separation from family and friends, abandonment of children, spouse, and other dependent without means of sustenance, willfully placing a person in fear of injury, intimidation, spousal battery, inhuman treatment of widows and harmful traditional practices. He also informed the participants that High Court and Magistrate Court in Edo- State were Courts of competent jurisdictions.



One of the participants making contributions during the sensitization

Participants were highly elated with the enlightenment from the sensitization and expressed great satisfaction with the topic underscored. They made meaningful contributions which evidenced their attentiveness in the course of the presentation while others raised questions for more clarification.

At Esan Central Local Government Area, one of the participants from Ewu community while appreciating the gestures of the project team in enlightening all participants affirmed the discriminations community women were subjected to; such as intimidations, violation of their religious rights especially at the death of their husband, coercion and the likes. She stated that with the enactment of this VAPPLAW, in Edo-State since July 17th 2021, victims of gender based violence could easily seek redress whenever their rights were violated under the guise of culture or traditional rites.

Also, one of the leading religious leaders from Akho community, pointed out that since Ignorance was not an excuse or justification to a crime in the court of law; it was pertinent that participants of the sensitization disseminated information received to other community members, in order for perpetrators of gender based violence to deter from it.

At Esan West, issues clarified was centered on the right of children to seek redress in court against his or her parents for engraving tribal marks in his or her face at the



The facilitator sensitizing participants

time of birth, or for the purposes of remedying ill health of such child through traditional herbal means, tattoos the child as stated in section 24 of the Childs Right Law

In response to the above, the facilitator reminded the participants that the



One of the elders in the community making contributions

law does not act in retrospect stating that if as at the time the mark was engraved before the enactment of the Law, then the parents would not be held liable except otherwise proven. Furthermore, he emphasized that tattoos made on a child for the purposes of recovering from illness was done in the best interest of the child and since the Childs Right Law stipulates that the best interest of the child was paramount, then the parents would necessarily not be liable for a crime.



Some participants at Esan North East LGA

Another issue raised was the act of limiting a victim of human



The Facilitator sensitizing participants in Esan North East

right violations in seeking reward by the community laid down rules and regulations. Again, the facilitator replied by stating that such limitations were illegal and as such communities who perpetuate such customs should desist from it else, they become accomplices to the crime, for frustrating proceedings.



The Facilitator sensitizing participants in Igueben

At Esan North East, participants who actively contributed during the sensitization addressed



Some Participants at the sensitization in Igueben LGA

preventive measures to gender based violence, especially

sexual based violence. They also lamented the long age customary practice of ill-treating widows and hoped that such way of life would entirely be abrogated. Also, they suggested ways to improve the quality of relationship parents should have with their children so that the rights of the children could be protected and their life style enhanced.

At Igueben, one of the participants reported an incident that led to the victimization of a community member while attempting to aid a victim of human right violation. According to him, the community member who was informed that a young child was defiled commenced litigation process, however, the victim and her family members later disclaimed the incident and as such the kind hearted community member was cited for defamation. To this, the supervisor of the Local Government promised to monitor and intervene on the matter and participants were advised to follow due process while intervening in incidence of such nature, which includes getting the parents and victims of human right violations to sign



Cross section of participants during the dialogue

a document known as consent form before providing support.

Finally at Esan South East, challenges of women in

enforcing their rights against



One of the community leaders making contributions

gender based violence were enumerated which includes the abuse of economic power by the male folks against the female folks because of economic dependence of wives on their husbands who invariably becomes the only source of livelihood in the home. This they said makes the male perpetrators of gender based violence unchecked.

Also, a community leader in one of the communities expressed the need to amend traditional practices that encourages human right violations. He appealed that all participants should address those issues in their various communities.

Conclusively, participants discussed on the need for communities to understand their jurisdictions and boundaries when resolving issues; since criminal matters were exclusive preserve of the state government. Some participants responded positively to the changes this scheme seeks to address and this indicates that sooner than later, the goal of peaceful coexistence and meaningful living through the respect and observance of human rights of community members would be achievable.



A participant making contributions in Esan South East

Annual Congress of Paralegals

The conference served as a closeout dissemination meeting as well as a platform to appraise our efforts and performance and that of our collaborators in the Human Rights Education and Paralegal scheme project which began on the 1st of April, 20219. It also provided opportunity for

our relevant stakeholders to critic the Project and make recommendations for improvement in subsequent interventions.

A total of 350 Participants were in attendance for the conference and comprised: The President of Irrua Customary Court, The Area Commanders of Ekpoma, Irrua and Uromi Commands, Representatives from the DSS and NSCDC, Representatives of the Onojie of Igueben, Ubijaja, Ewohimi and Ewatto, Catholic Priests of Uromi Diocese, Community representatives from 26 communities across the five Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Edo Central Senatorial District, the five Local Government Area Supervisors of the Project, Paralegals, Human Right Advocates and Members of staff, Uromi JDPCI.

The convener of the Conference and Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI; Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo in his opening remark made a detailed presentation of the background, goals and strategic objectives of the project. He also highlighted the various activities that were conducted throughout the span of the project. He noted that the intervention which was aimed at contributing towards an improved peaceful co-existence of the village community and promotion of social justice and respect for



Group photograph with participants at the event

human rights commenced with Advocacy to relevant Stakeholders and line Ministries, selection and identification of Paralegals and Human Right Advocates, inception/ orientation meeting, Capacity building sessions for Paralegals and Human Right Advocates, Gender Sensitization on participation of women in social economic and political life and ill treatment of Widows and widow inheritance amongst Others. He emphasized that the intervention focused on capacity building and training geared towards promotion, protection and prevention of human rights and human rights violations respectively. He thereafter enumerated some of the challenges encountered in the implementation of the project to include

- **Lack of interest** to report human rights violation by community members
- **Exorbitant fees** charged by hospitals to produce medical reports for victims of rape or defilement
- **Inadequate Logistic support** for security agencies to refer cases of rape or defilement to their headquarters in Benin



A participant making contribution at the event

- **Inadequate human rights Lawyers** that provides Pro-bono services
- **Delay in the administration of justice:** some of the cases we are tracking have lingered on for over one year
- **Poor people's perception and understanding** of the justice system
- **Community sanctions** that prevent people from reporting human rights violations including rape and defilement to the Police

He concluded by suggesting the following recommendations as way forward:

- Increase awareness of human rights among communities through dialogues and sensitizations
- Hospitals should be encouraged to



Some Chiefs at the event

assist indigents victims with medical report as part of their social responsibility

- He appealed for regular improvement in the allocation of logistics to the security agencies for effective referrals
- The social welfare department in the various LGAs should be strengthened to assist indigent citizens with access to logistics and other services needed for effective rehabilitation
- He appealed to the NBA and Catholic Lawyers association to give kind assistance to indigent victims who may not be able to afford the services of a Lawyer. This will go a long way to deter abusers knowing that there are Lawyers who would stand for justice irrespective of the economic, political and social status of those involved
- Traditional institutions should avoid interference in criminal cases, as this perpetuates the occurrence of criminality in the communities
- Encourage the sensitization of in school adolescents on the importance of human rights protection and the need to report human rights violations to appropriate authorities



Participants at the event

He thanked all Stakeholders who contributed in one way or the other to the successes recorded in the Project.

ACP Akeke Enimijofa, the Area Commander, Nigerian Police Force Ekpoma Area command who was one of the guest speakers at the event, made a presentation on “the Role of the Police



ACP AKEKE ENI making a presentation

and Citizens in addressing Human Rights Abuses”. He stressed on the need for increase



Mrs Ikhuoria making a presentation

collaboration between the police and citizens in reporting, investigation and prosecution of offenders and then encouraged participants to abreast themselves with basic knowledge of fundamental human rights so as to effectively reduce extortion and abuses. He admonished the people to use the services of a lawyer should they feel their rights were being violated by the Police or any other person. The other guest speaker Hon Gladys Ikhuorah Esq, the president of Irrua Customary Court spoke on “Cultural Practices, Regulation and interference with Human Rights in the Communities (Widowhood Practices, wife inheritance and female right to inheritance)”. She said that widowhood practices and wife inheritance were immoral, barbaric, dehumanizing and degrading traditional practices which should be shunned and expunged from our communities.

Participants expressed their desire for a more committed engagement with key stakeholders to achieve peaceful and more enlightened communities where human rights are upheld and respected.

Monthly Meetings of Human Rights Clubs

The continuous monitoring of human right activities of the community human right advocates forms parts of the activities of team members of Uromi JDPCI in the second phase of the Human Right and Paralegal Scheme. One of such activities



includes organizing and holding community human right meetings by members of the 30 community human right clubs across the 5 Local Government Area, in Edo Central Senatorial District .



Members discussed about how the human right advocates could improve on creating impacts in their various communities since community members always had recourse to them. They expressed joy over the successes recorded by the community human rights advocates in the course of intervening in the community and appealed that all should hold sway in integrity and honesty in order

to keep their good name relevance and influence in the community. In each of the communities, discussions were centered on issues that are particular to the various communities. Some of those issues



Human Rights Club meeting in Efandion with Supervisor in attendance

were harmful traditional practices, ill treatment of widows, unlawful arrest/detention, child neglect and access to education for children among others.

In some of the communities it



Some member during Community Human Right Club Meeting

was also observed that gender based violence seem to have

strong roots in the traditional practices of the people, as such would require long term sustainable measures to achieve the desire change. They praised their achievements and efforts that have been put into the change, which has triggered some discussions among the stakeholders around the various communities on the issues of ill treatment of widow, widow inheritance and the rights of women to inherit the estates of their fathers and husbands at their death. These to them were issues that have remained unchallenged and unquestioned until the coming of this project. According to the



Human Rights Club meeting in Ukhun with Legal Officer in attendance

advocates, “gender based violence was a practice that seemed to be a norm by both sex in the community due to the traditions and beliefs of the people and that was why practices like female disinheritance, widowhood rites, widow



Human Rights Club meeting in Emaudo with Supervisor and legal officer in attendance

inheritance and the likes were melted on the



Human Rights Club meeting in Ivue with Supervisor in attendance

female folks to the exclusion of the male folks”. Members therefore charged themselves with the need to intensify sensitization and awareness campaign in their various



Human Rights Club meeting in Amendokhian with Legal Officer in attendance

communities.

Sensitization on Policies Against Gender Based Violence in Edo Central Senatorial District by Edo State Government

The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo joined other relevant stakeholders in Uromi to participate in a town hall meeting with Edo State Government, on Policies Against Gender Based Violence, a project of Edo State Government in partnership with Nigeria Academy of Science, supported by Ford Foundation on the 29th of November 2021 at Uromi town hall. This meeting which was organized by Edo State Government was attended by dignitaries amongst who was the First Lady of Edo State, Her Excellency Mrs. Betsy Obaseki, wife of



the Deputy Governor of Edo State, her Excellency, Mrs. Mary Jane Shaibu,



Hon. Mrs. Maria Omozele Edeko, Honourable Commissioner for Social Development and Gender Issues, Permanent Secretary of Social Development and Gender Issues, Mrs. Dorcas Idehen, Resource Person, Dr. Mrs Njoku , Religious Leaders, Traditional Rulers, Community Men, Women

and Youth leaders, as well as Community School Children.

Her Excellency expressed great concern on issues concerning Gender Based Violence and stated vehemently



that Edo State Government greatly frowns



against such acts with zero tolerance, hence the domestication of the Violence against Person's Prohibition

Law in Edo State on July 17th, 2021.

The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI while appreciating the organizers of the meeting, intimated the participants of the efforts of Uromi JDPCI to tackle the menace since 2019 by establishing Human Right Clubs in 30 communities and Adolescent Human Right Clubs in 25 Schools across the LGAs, with thanks to the Ministry of Education for the approval to have the clubs in the selected schools. He also expressed challenges faced during such interventions, laying emphasis on the medical aspect of getting Medical report for evidence in the Court of Law and the provision of health care for the victims as well as the hinges faced from Security personnel of the Nigerian Police Force in terms of logistics to convey suspects to force headquarters in Benin City.



He appealed to the Edo State Government to use their weight to tackle the issues raised so as to ease up referral and improve access to justice for victims. The event was anchored by the Michael Iyoriobhe the Director of program, Uromi JDPCI

ORANGE THE WORLD-‘STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN NOW’

Uromi JDPCI joins the rest of the world to mark the 2021 International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women tagged Orange the world, stop



A participant making contribution

violence against women now. The 16 days activism against gender based violence

which usually



The Executive Director Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo giving the key note address

commences every 25th day of November -10th day of

December annually was attended by 20 persons (9 males, 11 females) representing membership of the parishes JDPC within Uromi Diocese.

In a paper presentation by the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, the purpose of the activism was to raise awareness of Gender Based violence happening globally wherein



Nigeria was not an exception. He pointed out the fact that research showed incidence of Gender Based Violence growing astronomically from forced and early marriages to physical mental or sexual assault against women, where nearly 3 in 10 women had experienced physical violence by age 15 in Nigeria. He

then added that the activism was an avenue to unite with partners around the globe to reflect on what could be done in our own communities and in our own lives to eliminate the disproportionate violence faced by women and girls. He explained that by reflecting on our own biases and challenge gender stereotypes as well as educating the youths about healthy relationships and the importance of consent in relationship, we would become ambassadors of change, working for a better, peaceful and developed society that promotes equal rights and justice for peaceful coexistence in the community. He further emphasized the need to promote policies and practices that foster a safe school and safe community climate.



Group photograph with participants at the event

Conclusively, he called for the encouragement of youth leadership and involvements in the change to end gender based violence and intervene to prevent harm and assist survivors to report offenders to the appropriate authorities to promote the human right of all as well as fostering the ‘well-being’ of the victims of Gender Based Violence.

ANTI HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Within the Period under review (January – December, 2021), Uromi JDPCI partnered with four organizations (Caritas Nigeria for SMAT-P Project, ECPAT France and Luxembourg for the Don’t Pay With Your Life Project, Expertise France for the SCOPPH-T Project and UNHCR’s Telling The Real Story Project for Training of Community Anti-Human Trafficking Committees) to implemented a number of activities geared towards prevention, protection, reintegration and the provision of psychosocial and economic support to caregivers, potential migrants and young female returnees. The activities include: provision of start up materials for vocational skills, empowerment of caregivers to retain their adolescent in school, Profiling and Assessment of 15 Young Female Returnees who were selected after conducting Family Tracing and Reunification as well as series of Home Visit. Uromi JDPCI also conducted training for Business Start-up, Business Management and Entrepreneurship for the female returnees and the provision of business Start-up materials and equipment to the selected 15 young female returnees. Awareness creation was also conducted in communities and schools as well as community dialogue to raise awareness on the dangers of human trafficking.

Sustainable Measure Against Trafficking in Persons (SMAT-P)

Presentation of Start Up Materials to Beneficiaries

As part of efforts to reduce the susceptibility of vulnerable Children/youth and women to human trafficking and irregular migration in Esan land, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI), Catholic Diocese of Uromi presented Start-Up materials to 30



Beneficiaries standing by the items received

beneficiaries of the Sustainable Measure Against Trafficking in Person (SMAT-P) project. The beneficiaries include those who were trained in Tailoring, Hair Dressing, Welding, ICT, Carpentry, Diesel Mechanic, Machine Mechanic, Building and Auto Craft, among others. The objective of the project is to see that Persons vulnerable to human trafficking are supported to live a more meaningful and productive lives within target communities.

Uromi JDPCI partnered with Caritas Nigeria to implement this intervention tagged Sustainable Measure against Trafficking in Person (SMAT-P) which was sponsored by the Catholic Bishop Conference of Italy. The focus of the intervention was on the prevention of human trafficking, protection and the reintegration of victims of human trafficking in Esan South East and Esan Central LGAs. The intervention was also designed to improve the livelihood opportunity and living condition of vulnerable households by creating alternatives for them.



Beneficiaries standing by their items

The project which had in the previous year strengthened the livelihood of 96 households by supporting them with the sum of fifty thousand naira each to setup income generating activity of their choice, took a step further to empower 30 youths who have successfully completed their vocational skills acquisition training with startup materials and six months store rent. This start up materials are to enable them setup their own trade for improved livelihood and meaningful living thereby making them less susceptible to human trafficking and irregular migration.

The Executive Director Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo, in his opening remark gave a rundown of the project achievement which include the sensitization of sixty one communities, fifty nine schools, eleven markets, eight churches and 2 mosques on the dangers of human trafficking and irregular migration. He added that one hundred and thirty eight secondary school students and six tertiary education students were also given one year scholarship by the project.

Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo on behalf of the Right - Holders, expressed his gratitude to all the partners for this great intervention in Uromi Diocese and admonished the beneficiaries to be committed to making judicious use of the equipment given to them



A beneficiary receiving gift from the Vicar General Very Rev Fr Francis Omonlumen

The Business startup equipment/materials presented to the beneficiaries include the following:

Tailoring Beneficiaries: Butterfly Sewing Machine, Peacock Charcoal Iron, Kamage 2200 Generator, Wooden Table And Stool and Sewing Kit (needles, 12 thread, a pack of office pins, a pack of needles, tape, scissors, elastic, tailors chalk)

Welding Beneficiaries: Maxmech Inverter Welding Machine, Filing Machine, Vase, Hand Saw (Poland), Maxmech) Drilling Machine, Sledge Hammer (Skyer), Chizle and Pouch

Diesel Mechanic Beneficiaries: Complete Tool Box (Unior) and Grinding Machine (Angle Grinder)

Hair Dressing Beneficiaries: Equator 3000 Hair Dryer, Elepaq EC.5800CXS, Wash Hair Basin, Plastic Table and Plastic Chairs

ICT Beneficiaries

1. Hp 15.6” Pentium 4GB/500GB Laptop-Scarlet Red

Building and Auto craft

1. HP Laptop 15-bs 130nia

Machine Mechanic Beneficiaries: Complete Tool Box (Unior), Vase and Drilling Machine

DON'T PAY WITH YOUR LIFE (DPWYL)

Profiling and Assessment of Young Female Returnees

Uromi JDPCI commenced the reintegration support for 15 young female returnees with profiling and Assessment of the intended Beneficiaries across Edo Central Senatorial District.

This was done in collaboration with the Victim support groups in Esan West and Esan North East and Esan Central Local Government Areas to get the most vulnerable female returnees who have never been supported by any other organization that would be provided Psycho-social and economic support so as to contribute positively to their reintegration process in order to avoid their re-victimization. At the end a total of 35 young female returnees between the ages of 20 and 25 years were recommended to Uromi JDPCI by the Support



One of the Returnees introducing herself

Groups for profiling and assessment out of which 15 persons were selected using some set criteria to determine their eligibility for the project which eventually qualify them support.

Family Tracing and Reunification for Don't Pay With Your Life Beneficiaries

Sequel to the outcome of the assessment of the Returnees, The Project Team conducted Family visitation and Reunification for 9 out of the 15 selected beneficiaries. The purpose was aimed at meeting and getting acquainted with the Families of the Returnees, assess their family and socio-economic situations as well as facilitate their reunification in order to foster tolerance, re-establish trusting relationships, forgiveness, acceptance and a safe environment void of



One of the Returnees with her Family during the Family Tracing and Reunification

stigmatization.

Business Management and Entrepreneurship Training for Young Female Returnees

As part of the preparation process for the provision of economic support to the young Female Returnees, Uromi JDPCI organized two days training on Business Management and Entrepreneurship for the young female Returnees with the objective to equip the beneficiaries on how to be enterprising, start and manage businesses for profitability and sustainability.

The sessions which had 15 Beneficiaries in attendance covered such topics as: Introduction to Business and Entrepreneurship, the concept of Marketing and its relevance in Business, the Basic Marketing Steps, Pricing Strategies, Keeping Business Records and Building Savings Culture. Also during the training, the Participants were guided to develop a life plan for their chosen businesses and they also signed a memorandum of understanding with Uromi JDPCI for the purpose of documenting the expectations from both Parties



Participants during training

Empowerment of 15 Young Female Returnees

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives empowered fifteen (15) Young Female Returnees in business activities as part of the reintegration assistance for Survivors of human Trafficking under the project; “Don’t Pay With Your Life” (DPWYL). This support was geared towards empowering young female returnees with start-up materials in their different skills/trade. The 15 trained returned migrants were empowered with business Start-up materials and equipment worth ₦210,000 inclusive of six months shop rent respectively with the aim of contributing to their economic reintegration in order to prevent risks of re-victimization.



Some beneficiaries in a group photograph with GERA president and Uromi JDPCI ED



Some participants at the presentation

In a remark presented by Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo,

beneficiaries



Presentation of start up materials to beneficiaries

were encouraged to be focused, disciplined and diligent in their various choice of businesses. He

explained that once they employed integrity, diligence, meticulous and assiduous approach to the business, it would strive and stand the test of time; and as such becomes relevant and essential personnel in their immediate environment which would metamorphose into a larger opportunity due to recommendations from satisfied customers.

He reminded them that the businesses they were to embark upon were not imposed on them by the organization, but were choices made by themselves. He therefore stated that on that note, the organization would expect to see nothing other than fruitfulness in their business.

The president of the Greater Esan Returning Association (GERA) thanked Uromi JDPCI and her partners who provided the support for the beneficiaries and promised to assist in the monitoring of beneficiaries for effective utilization of the opportunity.



Presentation of start up materials to beneficiaries

Economic Empowerment of Caregivers

Uromi JDPCI also awarded the Second Tranche of Grant for Income Generating Activities to 8 of the Caregivers who had satisfactorily put to use the first grant of One Hundred Thousand Naira only (NGN100,000) that was given to them. Each of them again received the sum of Fifty Thousand Naira (NGN50,000). The purpose was to improve the livelihood opportunity of some vulnerable caregivers to sustain their adolescent girl child in school, thereby preventing their susceptibility to human trafficking. In the same vein, Uromi JDPCI engaged another set of 7 Caregivers of school age adolescent girls whose households were assessed in the previous quarter on a 3-day Income Generating Activity training focused on business management and Entrepreneurial skills. While in the training, the Caregivers were guided to develop a life plan and they equally signed a grant contract with Uromi JDPCI which later saw them being supported to implement their life plan by awarding them a grant to the tune of ₦100,000 being the first Installment for income generating activity. This brought the total beneficiaries to fifty (50). This effort was geared towards improving their financial situations so as to ensure that the beneficiaries and other children in the household are retained in school, thus reducing their susceptibility to human trafficking.



Beneficiaries with the Executive Director, Uromi JDPCI

Educational Empowerment to 7 In-School Adolescent Girls

Uromi JDPCI under the Don't Pay With Your Life Project provided educational support to additional 7 (Seven) in-school Adolescent Girls whose Caregivers were economically empowered in September, 2021; for the purpose of encouraging their retention in school and ultimately reduce their susceptibility to human trafficking. This therefore brings the total number of children supported in school by the Project to 50.

The activity which took place at Uromi JDPCI Office Complex had in attendance the 7 Children with their Caregivers as well as the 4 Project Staff. Out of the 7 Children supported, 1 is in JSS3, 3 are in SSS2 while the remaining 3 are in SS3.

Each of the Children received a complete set of text books for Secondary schools in line with their subject areas and classes, 15 branded exercise book, a pair of sandals, a school bag and the sum of seven



During the presentation of the school materials

thousand naira (7,000) being payment for School development Fees and other levies payable in schools. Also, Uromi JDPCI



Very Rev. Fr. Fidelis Arhedo addressing the children during the event

paid SSCE (Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination) enrolment fee to the tune of ₦25, 000 for three of the children in SS3 while another in JSS3 was enrolled for Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination.

Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI admonished the Children to commit themselves whole heartedly to their educational endeavors by always studying their books, attending school regularly, being obedient to their teachers and achieve improved academic performance in school.

He also encouraged the Caregivers to focus on their businesses so that they can subsequently and continually meet the educational needs of the beneficiaries and other children in the household. He stated that they should see the opportunity as a privilege to help their children and families since they were chosen by merit and not due to any affiliation. The Children were told to assist their Caregivers in their



One of the benefiting Children being presented her school materials

businesses during weekends or holidays and cautioned that no child should be seen selling in the market during school



Group photograph with the benefiting children and their caregivers

ought to be in school.

hours when Children

He urged the children to have excellent spirit and reminded them and their Caregivers that their successes would act as a motivation to solicit for more funds and opportunities to reach out to more persons.

The Children were thereafter received their educational materials and support and appreciated the Project, her Donors and Partners for the opportunity given to them to thrive in their educational pursuit and promised that they would study their books, be obedient and come out with good grades in their various schools.

Caregiver Discussion on Parenting Skills Adaptation

Uromi JDPCI held her sixth group discussion session with the caregivers of the Don't Pay with Your Life and the PACKING projects across the five Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District in the months of September, 2021

The group discussion which was geared towards promoting better parenting skills among the caregivers featured the topic "Being a good Example to my children and Dealing with Anxiety and Anger"

The sessions in the various LGAs were facilitated by two of the project staff; Michael Iyoriobhe and Erhabor Harriet and involved participatory approaches with a total of 100 persons (95 females and 5 males) reached.

The session in the different locations started with an introductory remark by the Facilitators. A participatory recap of what was learnt in the previous session was carried out during which some of the Caregivers stated that the disciplinary measures learnt had yielded positive result in their children's behaviour as opposed to their former ways of punishing children. Participants were reminded never to deprive a child of the basic necessities of life in a bid to discipline them as that was tantamount to punishment which could send them away from the home thereby exposing them to human trafficking and child prostitution.



During the support group discussion at Esan North East



Cross session of participants during the group discussion at Igueben

The need to be good examples to children was extensively discussed wherein Participants were made to understand that "being good example" entailed living an exemplary life by showing good qualities and behaviours that can inspire children towards meaningful lives. It was emphasized that children learn faster through observation as they easily copy what they see others do; hence, the caregivers were admonished to always act responsibly in the presence of their children because Parents are regarded as the first teachers of their children. Consequently, they were taught how to be good role models to their

children while they in turn tried to identify role models for themselves and those they would like their children to emulate giving reasons for their choices of role models. The caregivers also did not fail to mention some people in their community and the society whom they perceive as bad examples to children. They also noted some things they intend to do differently in order to be good examples to their children such as avoid quarrelling with their husbands in the presence of their children, keeping good friends, live peacefully with their neighbours, being very hardworking, learn to manage their anger and maintaining integrity at all times.

Progressively, Participants were enlightened about how difficult or negative emotions (such as anger, frustration, anxiety and the likes) could affect their relationship with their children if not properly managed thus preventing them from being good examples to their children. It was also stressed that severe or excessive anxiety could negatively affect their health, thus, they were taught to manage anger and anxiety. It was reiterated that controlling negative emotions may take time, but was achievable through practice and conscious efforts.

The caregivers were taken through some Relaxation exercises such as (inhaling and exhaling and imagining a relaxing scene) for stress management and relief.

Finally they were admonished to spend quality time with their children as it helps to build quality relationship with children and makes them feel good and function properly.

One the Caregivers at Esan Central LGA while recognizing the impact of the session narrated that she felt very relieved after the discussion from the severe anxiety she has had for months due to the unfortunate demise of three of her siblings, adding that her sad disposition had affected her children and husband. She promised to henceforth let go all anxiety and fears, see the positive side to life so that she can relate better with her family.

At the end of the discussion, the Caregivers were assessed on the various lessons learnt and imbibed from the different sessions attended. From their responses, it was gathered that majority of them have learnt better ways of parenting their children as many who were authoritarian and strict were now friendly to their children. Others explained that they were now involved in their children's life by drawing very close to them and being sensitive to their needs



Cross session of participants during the discussion session at Esan West LGA

Focus Group Discussion with DPWYL Beneficiaries (Young Female Returnees)

Uromi JDPCI held the first phase of focus group discussion with 15 of her young female returned Migrant. The activity was conducted on the 24th of June 2021 at Uromi JDPCI office complex and had all the beneficiaries in attendance.

The topic discussed was on Resilience and was facilitated by Michael Iyoriobhe and Harriet Erhabor with

the
aim of



The program Manager addressing participants

providing emotional healing and practical support to returnees and as such enhance their coping skills through mutual support and information sharing



The M&E Officer facilitating a session

The facilitators explained that the reason for the session was to make them act as support toward each other as they have all gone through a similar ordeal hence will be able to boost the confidence of each other when the need arises.



Participants interpreting their painting



A participant making her painting

In commencing the discussion, an art therapy was administered to help the participants feel relaxed. The activity entailed painting a gratitude treasure box in which they expressed their gratitude to for the things and people in their lives. The box contained varieties of things which could be used to represent whatever they were grateful for and thus painted with any colour of their choice.

Some of things they were grateful to God for as described by them in their paintings included: Their ability to regain focus in life after the various ordeals they passed through en-route Europe, for their lives that were preserved despite the many deaths in the Mediterranean Sea and the Desert, providing them with a means of livelihood through the support from DPYWL program, which came to them as a blessing when all hope was lost.

Feedback of the participants from the activity were characterized by feeling of relief, joy, sadness etc. as the painting brought to their memory both good and bad moments. Some of them shared tears while recounting their sad moments which they expressed in painting.

After the exercise, the topic RESILIENCE was extensively discussed by the Facilitator during which they were told that resilience has to do with bouncing back, not giving up despite the challenges one might be going through. The participants were made to understand that resilience was not about avoiding the stress, but learning to thrive within it. It was described as the ineffable quality that allows some people to be knocked down by life and come back stronger than ever.

They were taken through the types of resilience which are the natural, the adaptive and the restored resilient. In describing them they were told that the natural has to do with the resilience that one is born with. This natural resilience was said to protect us and cause us to play, learn and explore the world without any form of reservation.

The adaptive resilience was explained to be the “trial by fire” kind where challenging circumstances causes one to adapt and grow. The saying “when the going gets tough the tough get going” was said to apply to this type of resilience, which is the reason some people who have been faced with certain circumstances become stronger and more resilient because of what they have faced. Then the restored resilience which was described as the learned resilience where one learns techniques that can restore his/her natural resilient to what it was when he/she was born. This type of resilience was said to be very important as it helps in the prevention of past, present and future trauma.

The participants were taught some of the things that could lower their resilience such as trauma which was explained as the response to a deeply depressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual’s ability to cope and causes feelings of helplessness, diminishes one’s sense of self and the ability to feel a full range of emotions and experiences. The common symptoms or responses of trauma were listed as sadness, anger, denial, fear, shame and could lead to nightmares, insomnia, difficulty with relationship, emotional outburst etc.

One of the participants shared with the house how she was able to overcome the pains and discomfort she went through at a point in her life when she was broken down as a result of the betrayal by a trusted friend. She told her fellow participants that her being able to forge ahead was achieved only by her personal resolution to do so. Hence she advice other to always resolve to be successful and move ahead in



A section of participants

spite of the
challenge life
brings their way.

The participants
expressed
satisfaction and
joy with the
session and some
of them said that it
was a source of



A section of participants

motivation to them who taught all hope had been lost. They

expressed appreciation and anticipation for more of such sessions in the future

Monitoring Visit

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiative (Uromi JDPCI) Partnered with ECPAT France and ECPAT Luxemburg to prevent the susceptibility of adolescent girls in Edo Central Senatorial District to human trafficking and prostitution by promoting school retention among 50 in- school adolescent girls through the empowerment of their caregivers in Income Generating Activity (IGA) in order to meet their school needs and general welfare. Within the reporting period (January-December 2021), Uromi JDPCI carried out monitoring visits to the supported caregivers to measure their performance in business, provide them mentorship, assess possible challenges in their businesses and proffer solution for the survival of the supported businesses. A total of 50 beneficiaries – 10 in Esan West, 10 in Esan South East, 8 in Igueben, 10 in Esan Central and 12 in Esan North East Local Government Areas were visited and it was observed that some of them had made significant improvements in their businesses. It was discovered that they were all in business and their children were all in school except two who said their children were taken to the city by their older sibling for education due to the remote nature of their communities coupled with the absence of teachers in their village schools. Some remarkable improvement were also observed in the businesses of the various caregivers visited as all of them were seen to have added value in one way or another to their initial investment.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION TO PREVENT HUMAN TRAFFICKING (SCOPPH-T)

Community Sensitization

As part of efforts to ensure that Community members are aware of the high risks of trafficking associated with irregular migration and are in capacity to inform others, Uromi JDPCI engaged intensive sensitization and awareness creation in communities and schools to take message of the dangers inherent in human trafficking to the people in the communities and students in schools. The purpose was to enlighten community members about the menace of human trafficking and Irregular Migration so as to reduce their susceptibility of falling prey to human traffickers as well as discouraging them from supporting and facilitating irregular travels. In the course of the sensitizations in the various



During the community sensitization at Eror Community

communities, The Project Team raised the need for Participants to stop human trafficking and irregular migration. They were made to understand the exploitative nature of human trafficking, the types of human trafficking, its effects and consequences on the individual, their families and the community at large and their roles in preventing the menace as well as a call to action to end human trafficking in their communities, shaming and bringing Traffickers to book. A total of 19 communities have been sensitized with 1058 persons were reached (603 males and 455 females).

Community Dialogue

The project also engaged in community dialogue with stakeholders in 10 communities so as to ensure that Local authorities, Communities and child protection services have improved understanding of causes and

issues associated with human trafficking/irregular migration and are better equipped to contribute to prevention strategies. This effort began with advocacy visits to 20 relevant stakeholders across the selected communities, LGAs and State Government, thereafter the dialogues were conducted. Some of the critical issues raised were on the community understanding of human trafficking, their perception of victims and returnees and whether the communities have any mechanism for supporting victims or returnees. The responses from the various communities showed that the community leaders were yet to come to terms with the reality of human trafficking as they still perceive it as a form of assist from the trafficker to the victim while the disputes that follow are basically blamed on the victims. In all the communities, it was also observed that there was no any form of community support for any returnee or survivals of human trafficking. The number of returnees and victims of trafficking that were supported were through the efforts of Nongovernment Organisation or international organization. The stakeholders were thereafter sensitized on the reality of human trafficking as modern day slavery while distinctions were made between human trafficking and the form of assistance for knowledge transfer that the people were used to. The dangers inherent in human trafficking were further elaborated and the forms of exploitations exposed. The link between human trafficking and irregular migration were also drawn while the people opted for the option of safe migration. The people expressed willingness to support the reintegration of victims of human trafficking but noted that they did not have the economic capacity to meet their needs as most of them (stakeholders) were subsistent farmers. The participants noted that the dialogue has come to open their eyes to the reality of human trafficking, in that regard, they will ensure that their children were not re-victimized them due to the wicked ploy and deceptions of the human traffickers. One of the elders particularly warned and noted in local dialect “eleakhian eavade, ede kemare” meaning let them (traffickers) go and come back here (to report our children) they will meet us



Community Dialogue at Ekpon Palace

School Sensitization

The project engaged in sensitization visits to 15 schools to enlighten them on what they can do to protect themselves against human



School sensitization

traffickers as well as emphasis the need to report any attempt to lure them by traffickers or their agents. There was a further collaboration with schools to form anti



Anti Human Trafficking Club in a School

human trafficking clubs in 10 schools to support the sustainability of awareness creation in the target schools. A total of 632 students made up of 451 females and 181 males were reached

Assessment of Vulnerable Students for Education Support

To support an improved socio-economic reintegration of Vulnerable persons, potential victims, Victims and Returnees so as to prevent the risks of re-victimization, Uromi JDPCI commenced the identification and assessment of vulnerable students, potential migrants, returned migrants and victims of human trafficking for economic support. While the school assessment have been concluded the other assessment are still on going. So far a total of 502 students have been assessed out of which 75 will be selected for educational support and their caregivers will be empowered with income generating activities to promote school retention and improve livelihood opportunities, thereby reducing their susceptibility to human trafficking.

TRAINING OF ANTI HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMITTEE

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (UROMI JDPCI) in partnership with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHCR's) Telling the Real Story Project organized a 2 day training course for Anti human Trafficking Committees in three Local Government Areas namely; Esan West, Esan Central and Igueben respectively as part of her efforts to strengthen the prevention of Human Trafficking and Irregular Movement in Edo State.

These committees were formed as an outcome of the community leaders' dialogue sessions on prevention of human trafficking and irregular movement held in the month of November 2020; which was a follow up on the results of parents-caregivers dialogue session on the prevention of human trafficking and irregular movement held in March, 2020. The purpose of the training was to strengthen community



NAPTIP representative making a remark at the training in Igueben LGA



Community Anti Human Trafficking Committee members being inaugurated in Esan Central by NAPTIP and ETAHT

structures with the necessary capacity to effectively respond to human trafficking and irregular movement issues within their communities. The community antihuman trafficking committees were trained to sensitize parents and equipped them with the right information on the menace of human trafficking and the reasons they should avoid the trafficking of their wards as well as assist in the tracking and reporting of human tracking cases within their communities to the appropriate authorities such as the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in persons and Edo State Taskforce against Human Trafficking (NAPTIP and ETAHT).

Content of the Training include the concepts and definition of Human Trafficking, the trends and types of human trafficking in Nigeria, National and State responses to Human Trafficking in Nigeria, the Trafficking in person ACT of 2015 and Edo State Trafficking in Person prohibition Law of 2018, the key elements, Stages and indicators of human trafficking, Human trafficking and related concepts, prevention,

protection, reintegration, rehabilitation and Prosecution mechanisms, the forms and reality of human trafficking as modern day slavery, the code of conduct/standard operating procedures for the committees and referral pathways for cases identified. The trainings also featured the inauguration of the Committees by NAPTIP and ETAHT in each of the Local Government Areas

COMMEMORATION OF THE FEAST DAY OF ST JOSEPHINE BAKHITA: PATRONESS SAINT OF VICTIMS OF SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Uromi JDPCI marked the feast of St Josephine Bakhita with a sensitization on the 8th of February, 2021. The event was held to raise awareness on the dangers of human trafficking and irregular migration as well as pray for those who are victims of slavery or human trafficking and those who lost their lives in captivity as victims of slavery or human trafficking. Key stakeholders from selected communities and Members of the Great Esan Returnees Association (an association of returned migrants) among others were present at the event.

In the key note address, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo noted that despite the serious campaigns, awareness creation and sensitization of the general populace on the ills of human trafficking, irregular migration and child labour, the menace still persists because of economic hardship in the country. He admonished participants not to allow the precarious economic situation expose them to human trafficking because of the dangers inherent in it. He recounted some of the efforts that Uromi



Fr Arhedo addressing the participants

JDPCI in collaboration with her partners have made to ameliorate the harsh economic situation of victims and vulnerable youth so as to make them less susceptible to human trafficking and irregular migration. He added that this support will continue until the desired situation is achieved

He thereafter gave a brief history of St. Josephine Bakhita who triumphed from slavery to the dignity of a child of God and bride of Christ unto sainthood. A young girl, who was born in Sudan, captured by slave traders, sold and resold severally that she could not remember her name anymore until she fell into the hand of an Italian Master where she was given the name Bakhita and at baptism she got the name Josephine.

Rev Fr Fidelis Arhedo urged all to emulate the virtues of Bakhita who even in her predicament upheld human dignity and demonstrated extreme kindness by always and all times caring and praying for the oppressed. She allowed love to heal her heart such that she refused to kill her oppressors even when she had the opportunity, because of her kindheartedness.



Participants praying during the feast

Her encounter with the Canossian Sisters of Charity further drew her heart to God and consumed by her love for God she lived her life for the service of the oppressed, lonely, rejected and abandoned. She conquered slavery and oppression and became a shining advocate of genuine emancipation and a bride of Christ. It was emphasized that it was her care for other people that made her a saint not merely because she was a Rev Sister.

Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo concluded that the history of the life of St Bakhita should inspire us not just for passive acceptance but the firm resolve to work effectively to free girls and women from oppression, human trafficking and violence and return them to their dignity in the full exercise of their rights.

Prayers and hymns led by Rev Fr. Ferdinand Ovielonba were thereafter offered for victims to find solace, Perpetrators to have a change of heart and embrace repentance and strength for those fighting against the crime, so as to be resilient in their efforts. A movie on the life and time of St Josephine Bakhita was shown to the participants who watched with keen interest the humane qualities of the person of St. Bakhita who conquered and overcame the difficulties and sufferings of slavery and human trafficking. A young girl, who progressed from a zero position in life to that of a hero and from slavery to Sainthood.

Participants thereafter expressed firm trust in their ability to overcome whatever difficulties the economic situation of the country may put before them and resist all forms of enticement to this modern day slavery known as human trafficking.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY THROUGH VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPOWERMENT IN IGUEBEN LGA

The project Addressing Vulnerability through Vocational Training and Empowerment is aimed at providing household economic strengthening for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) with the Objective to support vocational skill acquisition and business start-up for 30 Persons comprising OVC, OVC Caregivers and Older OVCs in Igueben Local Government Area of Edo State as well as to secure vocational skill training free of charge or in part for additional 90 persons by the 30 beneficiaries of the Program.

The Project was funded by the United States of America Department of State (US Embassy) and implemented by Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI)

Some of the activities implemented in the project includes: Advocacy/Sensitization to communities, Identification/ Selection of Beneficiaries, verification/Assessment of Beneficiaries, Signing of Memorandum of Understanding with Beneficiaries, Meeting with the Beneficiaries and the Community Implementation Team/Volunteers and Empowerment of Beneficiaries with start-up materials.

Empowerment of Beneficiaries in Igueben with Start-Up Materials

On the 20th of January 2021, The Executive Director and staff of Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives went to the town of Igueben after several months of preparations, to empower twenty



The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI giving the welcome address

five (25) out of the (30) Beneficiaries of the intervention with startup materials for



During the Opening Prayer for the event

different skills previously acquired to enable them kick start their own businesses. The empowerment was to aid and support their means of livelihood, encouraging them to make use of their God given talent by engaging in honest labour to earn a living for themselves. This feat was made possible via the Federal Assistance Award by the U.S Department of State (US Embassy).

The event was graced by the king of Igueben kingdom; Zaiki Ehizojie Eiluojerio, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI; Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, Staff of Uromi JDPCI, President and Executives of the Igueben Progressive youths, Members of the Community Implementation Team and the Beneficiaries. In the opening speech, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo thanked the King for taking out time to be present and expressed gratitude for all his previous efforts towards ensuring a better life for the youths; not just of Igueben kingdom but also Esan land at Large and for being a very strong and reliable pillar of the people.

He illustrated that a hungry Child who has no livelihood opportunities would be forced to thread on the part of irregular migration or fall prey to human traffickers in a bid to be like his fellows who just travelled out of the country without any job or business security but comes back with a lot of money. He recounted the efforts of Uromi JDPCI in combating this ugly trend across Esan Communities when in



HRH making presentation to a beneficiary

2014, Uromi JDPCI created a skill acquisition platform which enrolled youths to learn different skills such as tailoring, hairdressing, soap making amongst others and 14 of those youths were empowered by Caritas Nigeria in



Very Rev. Fr. Dr Fidelis Arhedo making presentation to one of the tailoring beneficiary

2016. Again through ECPAT France, the Organisation empowered 125 vulnerable households with livelihood support for the Caregivers and Educational support for their children. He noted that the reason he was talking about human trafficking on a day like this was because it has been observed that OVC are more susceptible to human trafficking.

Furthermore, he explained that the Award Provisions was indirectly planned for the empowerment of 90 persons. This is because the 30 persons that will be empowered were expected to train at least three other persons for free or at 50% discount as their own contribution to the project, by so doing the target of 90 persons will be met.

Consequently, he said that we were gathered to present the Start-up materials to the Beneficiaries and also pay their rent for six months to enable them start their businesses which would keep them busy and help them find bearing in life. He called on the King to help admonish the Beneficiaries to use these support judiciously so as to create a livelihood for themselves and have a brighter future which would mean a more prosperous land.

His Royal Highness, Ehizojie Eiluojerio in his reply asserted that all his efforts have been to make sure that his kingdom grows for the better. He appreciated the Bishop of Uromi Diocese and the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI for their continued support to the Igueben people in different aspects and prayed God for continued zeal to do more, not just for the people of Igueben but the land of Esan at large. He also acknowledged that some the Beneficiaries were the youths he had earlier sent for training.

The Royal Highness cautioned the beneficiaries that the palace would not have been involved in this empowerment if it was not genuine. Thus, he urged them to not disappoint him and Igueben community.

He advised the beneficiaries to continuously work hard to remain at the top as well as secure God's lifting, adding that no matter how little the empowerment is, it was left to them to work hard to be able to double it and make it bountiful. He illustrated that just like the parable of the king in the bible, he would sit in his palace to watch and monitor from afar how each person will use the materials given.

He further admonished them to give back to the community what has been given to them, by not just training two persons for free as requested of them but they should train three persons, so that these 30 would not just be the beneficiaries alone but also their families and the entire Igueben at large would be the beneficiaries.

He expressed his profound appreciation to the donor agency for this gesture by saying thank you to them in Igueben language. Thereafter the presentation was made to the Beneficiaries



HRH presenting Start-up materials to a Barbing Beneficiary

THE INTEGRATED CHILD HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE AWARD

Uromi JDPCI is currently implementing the Child Integrated Child Health and Social Service Award (ICHSSA 2) project with coordination by the Association for Reproductive and Family Health (ARFH) with funding from USAID. The ICHSSA 2 project is a three year Orphan and Vulnerable Children Intervention implemented across 13 LGAs in Edo State and clustered into 3 geographical areas comprising Benin, Auchi and Uromi Clusters with the Uromi Cluster made up of 4 LGAs namely: Esan North East, Esan Central, Esan South East and Esan West and this cluster is covered by Uromi JDPCI. The Project has an overarching goal to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and their families with the objectives to increase access of orphans and vulnerable children and their households to quality care, protection and support services, to improve capacity of communities to protect and care for OVC with specific focus on their rights, to improve organisational and technical capacities of CSOs/CBOs, Local and State Government to offer basic services to OVC and their families and to detect and respond to child rights' violations as well as to utilise priority services targeted at specific OVC Sub populations - HEI, CLHIV, CPLHIV, CKPS,GBV/SVAC survivors etc. Uromi JDPCI has a target to reach 1864 OVC from 829 household for the Fiscal year 2022.

Within the period under review, Uromi JDPCI ICHSSA Project Team participated in and carried out the following activities in meeting the project objectives:

Stakeholders Engagement Meeting

Uromi JDPCI on the 9th of November, 2021 participated in a one-day Stakeholder Engagement Meeting alongside other critical stakeholders on the ARFH ICHSSA 2 Project including Line Ministries, Partners, and networks; for a smooth project kick-off and implementation in Edo State.

The meeting was carried out to formally introduce the Project to relevant Stakeholders in Edo State and to seek their collaboration for the successful implementation of the AFHA ICHSSA 2 Project in Edo State whose goal is to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on Orphans and Vulnerable Children and their families.

The event which took place at Prestige Hotel, Ihama GRA had in attendance; the Honourable Commissioner, Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues (MSDGI) Barr. M O. Edeko, representatives of Honorable Commissioners of Ministries of Health, Budget and Economic Planning, Education and Police, Permanent Secretaries, Acting Local Government Chairmen, treatment IP- AHNi, Sub Agreement Partners- Community-Based Organizations, representatives from Edo SACA, Health Insurance Commission, NPoC, Medical Directors of Health Facilities, State GBV unit, NEPWAN, the ARFH ICHSSA 2 Team among others.



Group Photograph with Stakeholders during the Stakeholders engagement meeting

Goodwill messages were presented by the various stakeholders including Uromi JDPCI who appreciated the programme intervention and affirmed to give in the required support towards the achievement of the project goal.

Case Management Step Down Training for CBO Staff and Facility Case Managers

In a bid to strengthen the technical capacity of the CBO staff implementing the ARFH ICHSSA 2 project on OVC Case Management Approaches as well as on the development, implementation and tracking of care plan so as to ultimately achieve effective and quality service provision for the enrolled beneficiaries, a 3 day (10th -12th of November, 2021) step down training on OVC case management and care plan development was Organised by ARFH for CBO Program Staff and Facility



Cross section of participants during OVC case management step down training in Benin

Photo Credit: Uromi JDPCI

Case Managers implementing the ICHSSA 2 project in Edo State. The Program Staff made up of the Program Manager, the Program Officer, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and the Admin. /Finance Officer from Uromi JDPCI, WJF and DHSP respectively. In all, a total of 24 participants were in attendance.

The training content included an overview of case management process, Overview of tools used for identification, assessment and enrollment, care plan development, branding and marking among others. A practical session on Care plan development using a case scenario was undertaken by Participants and action plans were jointly agreed upon at the end of the training.

Introductory/Courtesy Call to Facility Management

Uromi JDPCI Program Staff for ICHSSA 2 Project paid introductory/ Courtesy visit to the management of 2 Facilities within Uromi Cluster, namely Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital and Central Hospital Uromi on the 16th of November, 2021 respectively to acquaint the Program Staff and Facility Case Managers with the Management of these Facilities.

At the respective facilities, the team were taken round the different units relevant to the project and were adequately introduced to the Staff of the (units) who promised to provide the needed support for the smooth implementation of the programme. The Courtesy call to ISTH yielded positive result because prior to the visit, the Facility case managers were denied access to the Facility until the Team intervened by visiting the hospital focal person who represented the Facility at the stakeholders engagement meeting held in Benin. He then used his good office to allow temporal access to the Facility pending when an official mail or letter is sent to the management of the Hospital from the prime implementing partner- ARFH stating her desired collaboration with the hospital.

One Day Seminar on Gender Based Violence in Commemoration of the 2021 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence

Uromi JDPCI participated in a one day seminar on Gender based violence at Vichi gates hotel on the 7th of December, 2021. The seminar was organized by the ARFH ICHSSA 2 Edo State Office to commemorate the 2021 16 days of activism against gender based violence.

The Seminar had in attendance the Executive Directors of partner organizations, the Program Managers of the 3 CBO implementing partners, Edo Office ARFH ICHSSA 2 project Team and the ICHSSA 2 Project Management Team led by the deputy Chief of Party including the Director of Finance and Operations, Director of Programs and the Director of Strategic Information.

The essence of the seminar amongst other things was to build the capacity of participants on basic concept, definitions types and effects of Gender Based Violence, prevention and responses to GBV, Gender Integration in OVC programming as well as Provide Information on what constitutes GBV and Bullying at the work place, provide information on ARFH GBV policies and Reporting channels and outline GBV response centers across the clusters in Edo State for easy referral. The sessions were very interactive and involved some role play exercises to better drive home the message and to raise awareness about GBV, talking about it, supporting survivors to have access to support services to ensure their challenges are addressed and bringing those perpetuating violence to book.



Group photograph with participants after the seminar

Rally/Road Walk to Raise Awareness on the Prevention and Elimination of Gender Based Violence

As part of the lined up activities to commemorate the 2021 16 days of activism against gender based violence; Uromi JDPCI together with other CBO implementing partners joined the ARFH ICHSSA 2 State Office on a rally/road walk to raise awareness on the prevention and elimination of gender based Violence. The activity which was held on the 8th of December, 2021 in Benin City was hosted by the ARFH ICHSSA 2 State Office in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Gender Issues and Vivian Ogun GBV centre. A number of Civil Society Organisation within Benin metropolis also participated in the rally.

The road walk kicked off from the Edo State Secretariat complex through NBA road to the office of the Nigerian Union of Journalist (NUJ); Edo State Chapter where a press conference was briefly held; with the State Programme Coordinator; Barr Gift Williams taking the lead. She reiterated the urgency to put an end to gender based violence while emphasizing that all must show commitment to stop the menace of GBV in Edo State. The representative of the Chairman of the NUJ in response gave the goodwill of the Union to support the fight against gender based violence.

Participants with their placards bearing key messages on GBV moved on from NUJ to Ring road axis, the State House of Assembly and back to the secretariat sensitizing the masses about GBV and echoing an end to Gender based violence.

Rally/ Road Walk Held on The 9th Of December 2021 By Uromi JDPCI In Commemoration Of The 16 Days Activism Against Gender Based Violence

In a similar manner, Uromi JDPCI on the 9th of December 2021 embarked on a road walk within Uromi



The CBO staff, facility case managers and the community case managers after the

metropolis to create awareness on the need to put an end to Gender Based Violence amongst the people of Esan communities with participants comprising the project staff, the



The CBO staff together with the facility managers after the rally

community and facility case managers and other volunteers.

The road walk/rally which kicked off at about 10:00am from St Anthony Cathedral, Uromi was preceded with a brief orientation on the essence of the rally to Participants. The Program Manager – Harriet Erhabor explained to participants that the rally was part of Uromi JDPCI / ARFH ICHSSA 2 activities to commemorate the 16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence which is an annual campaign taking place between 25th of November to 10th December 2021 with the theme “Orange the world: End violence against women now”. She admonished participants to join their voices with the rest of the world to speak up against Gender Based Violence and as such put an end to it.

Thus, Participants rallied from St. Anthony Cathedral through mission road to the Palace of the Onojie of Uromi bearing Gender based violence messages and raising awareness on the

need to stamp out GBV in Esan Communities.



Awareness creation on GBV at its peak

Uromi JDPCI Review Meeting With the Community and Facility Case Managers

Uromi JDPCI in collaboration with ARFH conducted her first review meeting with her 12 community case managers and 4 facility case managers at the chancery hall situated at the Catholic chancery complex on the 15th of December 2021. This review meeting was carried out in order to know the progress made thus far on the field with regards to enrollment of target beneficiaries, note challenges experienced in the field, render



Dr Chidinma addressing the Case Managers

technical support as required and also share learning and best practices moving forward. In all a total of 25 persons were in attendance.

The project team also used the meeting to acquaint the



Case Managers with the new target for the quarter which is 186 CLHIV as against the previously shared figure which was 386 CLHIV out of which Uromi JDPCI has enrolled a total of 117 CLHIV with 69 CLHIV outstanding. Strategies were further suggested to meet the remaining of the target

MICRO CREDIT

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives is a social arm of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi with a vision to contribute towards peaceful coexistence and promotion of human rights and empowerment of the people for meaningful living. To this end, Uromi JDPCI established the Micro Credit Scheme to support the poor active women in Edo Central Senatorial District with soft. The scheme, with from SWISSHAND Foundation (Foundation Open Hand) later expanded to include PROMIC 1, PROMIC 2 and Agric PROMIC. In a bid to reach out to more beneficiaries, UROMI JDPCI in its magnanimity, created another scheme called Micro Credit Scheme which is in three (3) platforms i.e. Individual Micro Credit, Group Micro Credit and Agric Micro Credit. These schemes were established to provide soft loans for enterprise development and promote agricultural productivity among rural farmers who wish to move from subsistence farming to small scale commercial farming.

The soft loan under the PROMIC 1, PROMIC 2 and Group Micro Credit schemes are given to groups who are into active economic activities and consist of poor active women/men. The loan ranges from forty thousand naira (N40,000) to sixty thousand naira (N60,000) at three percent (3%) interest rate to meet the logistics needs of the schemes and repayment is made on installment for a period of six (6) months. Till date, the PROMIC 1 scheme has empowered two hundred and seventy (270) persons from twenty two (22) groups. The PROMIC 2 scheme has empowered four hundred and thirty seven persons (437) from forty one (41) groups. The Group Micro Credit scheme has empowered two hundred and sixteen (216) persons from seventeen (17) groups. These scheme put together has therefore reached a total of 918 persons from 80 groups



Monitoring visit to beneficiaries

The soft loan, under the Agric PROMIC and Agric Micro Credit schemes ranges from fifty

thousand



Micro credit officer with a group of beneficiaries

naira (N50,000) to one hundred and fifty thousand naira (N150,000) and repayment is made in full at the end of the agreed period (6 months or not more than 10 months) depending of the type of crop cultivated. Till date, the Agric PROMIC scheme has empowered three hundred and thirty one (331) farmers from thirty three (33) groups while the Agric Micro Credit scheme has empowered two hundred and four (204) farmers from twenty (20) groups, making a total of 535 persons from 53 groups reached by the agricultural schemes in Edo Central Senatorial District. The Individual Micro Credit Scheme on the other hand, has empowered a total of one hundred and fourteen (114) persons.

Summarily, a total sum of one thousand, five hundred and seventy two (1,572) persons from one hundred and thirty three (133) groups have been empowered through the Uromi JDPCI Micro Credit Scheme

across the five (5) Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District being the area covered by the Catholic Diocese of Uromi.

Success Story



Some of Mr Alexander Okhilua yam produces after harvest from one of his farms

In the course of the year, the micro credit officers paid a visit to



Mr

Mr Alexander Okhilua and Micro Credit Officer during inspection of one of his farms at Obeidu

Alexander Okhilua, a resident of 126 Obeidu, Uromi, Esan North East, Edo state, Nigeria who is a member as well as the leader of Dominion Group, Obeidu empowered under the Agric PROMIC scheme. According to him, before joining the scheme 5 years ago, he was a subsistence farmer and was unable to meet up with his personal needs as well as that of his family. He noted that after joining the scheme 5 years ago, his narrative changed as he has moved from subsistence farming to commercial farming where he now systematically cultivates yam, maize, cassava, tomato and cucumber for commercial purposes. While adding that he uses Dyna vehicles and sometimes bigger trucks to convey his farm produces after harvest to Benin City, Abuja and Port Harcourt, he affirmed that his means of livelihood has tremendously improved via the expansion of his farm as a result of the loan and agropreneurial training from Uromi JDPCI. He mentioned emphatically that effortlessly, he can now pay the tuition fee of 2 of his children who are still in the university, send money to some of his children who are residing in other



Mr Alexander Okhilua newly built 4 bed room bungalow house



Mr Alexander Okhilua old House

states and also enrolled one of his children who picked interest in learning a vocational skill in his chosen center. More so, he acknowledged that from the proceeds from the sales of his farm produces, he started and just completed a modern building project (4 bed room bungalow) as he has always desired to live and die in a good house. Going forward, he

expressed his profound gratitude to Uromi JDPCI for the continuous support via the loan and agropreneurial training which has helped him thus far.

PRISON APOSTOLATE

Medical Bills Paid for an Inmate

Uromi JDPCI assisted an inmate who was anaemic with the sum of twenty two thousand naira which was the sum needed in the hospital to access medical treatment. The inmate has recovered and has been discharged from the General hospital

Cathedraticum Items

The welfare and support of prisoners forms parts of the humanitarian services of Uromi JDPCI through her prison apostolate work. Consequent upon the above some items from the yearly Cathedraticum were presented by Uromi JDPCI to the Ubiaja Correctional Center on behalf of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi. This presentation was made on

the 22nd of March 2021 at Ubiaja Correctional Center. The items include:

1. 1 Pineapple
2. Twelve litres of palm oil in 3 gallons of 4litres each
3. 2 bags of 250g of salt
4. 6 tin tomatoes
5. 48 pieces of onions
6. 4 bags of garri
7. 55 tubers of yam

These items were delivered to the Ubiaja Correctional Centre and received by the welfare officer who appreciated the bishop of Uromi Diocese and the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI for the kind gesture to assist the inmates with the food items and prayed God to bless the work of Uromi JDPCI.



The welfare officer receiving the food items on behalf of the inmates



Collaboration

Uromi JDPCI also collaborated members of St Vincent De Paulm St Patrick Chaplaincy, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma on the 27th of November 2021 to visit the inmates of Ubiaja Correction Center. The students who were accompanied by Uromi JDPCI Legal Officer noted that they came to share with the inmate and also support them



The students of AAU introduced to the inmates



The officials , students of AAU St Vincent the poor and team from Uromi JDPCI

in their little way. The students interacted with the inmates to understand their plight and offered some words of encouragement and prayers for them. The students thereafter shared with them some items for their daily needs, among which were:

- 4 cartoons of Indomie
- 2 packs of olive paste
- 2 Rolls of WAW Detergent
- 4 Izal
- 7 cabin biscuits
- 10 soaps

These items were received by the Welfare Officer on behalf of the Ubiaja Correctional Centre.

The inmates in return expressed their appreciation to the students for their kindness towards them at this time of their needs.

Christmas Party for Inmates

Uromi JDPCI in her usual manner celebrated the Christmas party for inmates in Ubiaja Correctional Center. This time, it was with the support of the family of Engr and Lady John Amedu. The party started with praise and worship which was led by the inmates, thereafter a brief



Christmas message taken from the gospel of Matt 12 vs 13 was

The Executive Director delivering the Exaltation delivered by the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo. In it, he encouraged the inmates to treat each other with fairness as well as strive to avoid actions that could cause harm to others. He encouraged the inmates to see the officials as their formators and be obedient to them as aggression towards them would only increase their frustration. He admonished the inmates to always try to make a difference in their little ways, so as to make their stay in the Correctional Center bearable.

The Amedu family also lent their voice to wish the inmates a happy Christmas and prayed for the grace to find forgiveness and remission for their offences while praying for those wrongly accused to find justice and solace in the Lord. They thereafter offer the inmates gifts of food, water and soft drinks to celebrate the season. The representative of the Correctional Centre appreciated the kind gesture which to them was an annual event. Recounted some of the support they have received from Uromi JDPCI and further requested for assistance to provide washing and bathing soaps to the inmates. This was immediately approved and Two Hundred and Forty Eight (248) bathing soap and Two Hundred and Fifty (250) washing soap were supplied to the Correctional Center the next day.



The Executive Director Blessing the Food



Welfare Officer receiving soaps for the inmates

CAPACITY BUILDING

Uromi JDPCI participated in several capacity building sessions across various thematic areas in the development sector; ranging from Communication and Media Engagement, Advocacy Action Planning and Integrating Human Right Based Approach to Development/ Advocacy Programming, Resource mobilisation and Fundraising Activities, Gender and Social Inclusion, Project Cycle Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Knowledge management, and Social Research and Analysis. Others were institutional funding and project design, Art based intervention among others. The capacity building sessions were sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project, IOM, Misereor, Promic, JDPC Benin Province and Caritas Nigeria and ARFH. Some of the trainings are presented below

Training on Communication and Media Engagement Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

Two staff of Uromi JDPCI (Michael Iyoriobhe and Harriet Erhabor) participated in the training on Communication and Media Engagement which was held from the 16th -19th of March, 2021 in Benin City with the objective to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to confidently use their words, voice and tone to deliver compelling messages as well understand the roles and importance of communication in development work. A total of 13 CSOs including networks and coalitions attended the training



Cross session of participants during the training on Communication and media engagement

Training on Advocacy Action Planning and Programming Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

Two staff of Uromi JDPCI (Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo and Harriet Erhabor) participated in the training on Advocacy Action Planning and Integrating Human Right Based Approach to Development/ Advocacy Programming took place between the 12th -14th of April, 2021 in Benin City and was aimed at building collective and individual knowledge about Advocacy Action planning, Human Right Based Approach to Development/ Advocacy Programming and Stakeholders analysis and mapping. In attendance for this training were 19 CSOs with 2 representatives each



Cross session of participants during the training on advocacy action planning

Training on Knowledge Management Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

One staff of Uromi JDPCI (Michael Iyoriobhe) participated in this virtual training on Knowledge Management which was held in the month of April, 2021. The objective to strengthen the capacity of CSOs in the management of data collection and utilization as well as content development, the importance of knowledge transfer and retention in the organization. The training also focused of promoting organizations' visibility communication of knowledge and learning for development. Several CSOs including networks and coalitions from the South and the Northern region participated in the training

Training on Monitoring and Evaluation Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

Two staff of Uromi JDPCI (Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo and Michael Iyoriobhe) participated in the training on Monitoring and Evaluation which was held from the 18th to 20th of May, 2021. The objective to strengthen the capacity of CSOs in the development of M&E frame works, M&E plans, indicators and tools for data collection as well as hoe to measure program achievements against set goal. It also improved the capacity of participant in data management and utilization for effective decision making. Participants were also taken through the development of result chain or causal pathway for a better understanding of the relevance of inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact in a project design. Some basic techniques for data collection and development of tools for data collections were also x-rayed.

Training on Resource mobilisation and Fundraising Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

Two staff of Uromi JDPCI (Harriet Erhabor and John Akporowhe) participated in this training on Resource mobilisation and Fundraising Activities which was held from the 31st of May -3rd of June 2021 and was geared towards raising the understanding of CSOs on the basis techniques of fundraising and how to effectively prepare and structure fundraising proposal to meet donor's expectations. It was also intended to expose CSOs to the EU-ACT specific fundraising methodology. The session was facilitated by Dr. Mike Aigbiremolen with 20 CSOs in attendance



During the training of resource mobilisation and fundraising activities

Training on Project Cycle Management Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

Two Staff of Uromi JDPCI (Michael Iyoriobhe and Harriet Erhabor) participated in the training on Project Cycle Management held from the 30th of June to 2nd of July 2021. The training on Project Cycle Management was held with a view to help participants understand project cycle management in the context of international development and be able to use each of the phases of the project cycle for effective project design, planning, monitoring and implementation. 20 CSOs participated in the training.



Uromi JDPCI in a Group Work with other CSOs

Training on Social Research and Analysis Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

Two staff of Uromi JDPCI (Michael Iyoriobhe and Harriet Erhabor) also participated in the Social Research and Analysis training which was held from the 26th -28th of July, 2021 at Golden Tulip Hotel, Benin City with a total of 9 CSOs in attendance. In the course of training, Participants were equipped with the basic knowledge and skills of conducting social research including methods of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in participatory processes of development work.

Training on Financial Procedures and Management Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project

The European Union and British Council Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation (EU ACT) Programme organized a three (3) days (13th – 15th October, 2021) training on Financial Procedures and Management for CSOs in Edo State under the ACT programme in which the Finance Manager, Akporowhe John and Finance/Procurement Officer, Agbonmwanre Maxwell O. participated. The



Figure 1: The Finance Officer and Manager during the Financial Procedures and Management Training

training was aimed at strengthening the capacity and understanding of CSOs on Financial Procedures and Management. The training was facilitated by Innocent H. Philip, MBA, FCA, a skilled accountant and financial professional as well as consultant from Abuja and had in attendance at least two representatives each from CSOs in the ACT programme. The three (3) days training which was on financial procedures and management in NGO context, focused on overview of financial management, fraud and fraud awareness, financial manual, accounting system, financial documentation, internal control, budgeting, auditing and auditing process, fundraising

strategy and accessing EU funding.

Training on Gender and Social Inclusion Sponsored by British Council EU-ACT Project



Figure 2: Cross section of participants and facilitator after the Gender and Social Inclusion Training

The finance officer (Agbonmwanre Maxwell) and Assistant Legal Officer (Barr Agatha Aletor) participated in a three (3) days (16th – 18th June, 2021) training on Gender and Social Inclusion organized by European Union and British Council- Agents for Citizen-Driven Transformation (ACT) Programme for CSOs at Randekhi Royal Hotel, Benin City, Edo State. The training was geared towards providing basic understanding of Gender and Social Inclusion in program design, strengthening the capacity and understanding of CSOs on Gender and Social Inclusion mainstreaming in organizations. The training was facilitated by Diana Agabi, a gender and social inclusion expert from Abuja and had in attendance at least two representatives each from

CSOs in the ACT programme.

Training on institutional funding and project design organized by JDPC Benin Province

A four days training on institutional funding and project design was organized by JDPC Benin Province for JDPCs in the various Dioceses under Benin Province at Lumen Christi Pastoral House, Uromi, Edo State. The training was aimed towards providing basic understanding of institutional funding and building staff capacity to participate effectively in and lead project design processes. The training was facilitated by Vincent Egoro Pramme Manager: Institutional Capacity Strengthening, Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN), Abuja and had in attendance 7 participants from Uromi diocese, 4 participants from Issele-Uku diocese, 3 participants from Warri diocese, 2 participants from



The Facilitator and participants at the end of the Institutional Funding and Project Design Training

Bomadi diocese, 3 participants from Auchi diocese, 2 participants from Sacred Heart, 1 participant from DHSP Benin and the provincial secretary.

PROMIC Coordination Meeting

Uromi JDPCI Agric PROMIC and PROMIC 2 officers participated in a one day Southern Regional PROMIC Coordination meeting on 26th March, 2021 organized by SwissHand Foundation at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, West-End, Asaba, Delta State. The meeting was a feedback mechanism for PROMIC partners to share the effect of COVID-19 Pandemic on their PROMIC beneficiaries for recommendations and support from SwissHand Foundation. The meeting was facilitated by a representative of SwissHand Foundation, Mr. Benedict Kaahwa, Regional PROMIC Coordinator, Hoima Diocese, Uganda and had in attendance the Regional PROMIC Coordinator (Southern Nigeria), Mr Emmanuel Itanwu, the Regional PROMIC Coordinator (Northern Nigeria), Mrs. Tse Susan as well as representatives from Auchi PROMIC, Warri PROMIC, Benin PROMIC and Issele-Uku PROMIC.



Figure 3: Cross section of participants and Facilitator after the meeting

Annual Workshop/Meeting with PROMIC Partners

PROMIC Officers, Arhedo Joseph and Agbonmwanre Maxwell participated in a one day Annual workshop/meeting with PROMIC partners organized by Southern Regional PROMIC (SWISSHAND FOUNDATION) on 26th November, 2021 at Domus Sancti Spiritus, Holy Ghost Cathedral, Enugu. The workshop was aimed at strengthening the capacity of PROMIC partners on approaches to handling the effects of COVID 19 and Farmers-Herders Conflict on PROMIC programs. The training had in attendance the Southern Regional PROMIC Coordinator, Mr Emmanuel Itanwu and 22 participants across the region. The meeting was facilitated by Mr Ojiabor Emmanuel Unique, an educationist, researcher and public speaker.



Cross section of participants at the end of the Southern Regional PROMIC Annual Workshop/Meeting

Financial Management and Quickbooks Accounting Software Sponsored by ARFH

Uromi JDPCI Staff participated in a three (3) day (3rd – 5th November, 2021) training on Financial Management and QuickBooks Accounting Software together with the other 2 CBOs project staff implementing the ICHSSA 2 Project in Edo State. The training was aimed at providing information and necessary guideline to implementing CBOs on financial management as it applies to the project, internal control, safeguard and prevention, administration and procurements,



Mr Asonibare, Compliance Manager during his presentation at the Financial Management Training

reporting requirements and IT Policy as well as on the deployment and utilization of the QuickBooks accounting software.

A total of twenty one (21) project staff from Uromi JDPCI, Department of Health Services Providers (DHSP) and Willi Johnson Foundation (WJF) attended day one and two of the training while the remaining day had in attendance the three (3) Finance/Admin Officers from the three CSOs who underwent practical sessions on the use of QuickBooks in posting different transactions.



The DFO, ARFH addressing participants during the Financial Management and QuickBooks Accounting Software Training

Training on Art Based Intervention Sponsored by IOM

Uromi JDPCI also participated in a 5 -day training on Art based intervention organised by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for NGOs and Government institutions that provide a



The participant from Uromi JDPCI grossly engaged in her mask painting during the training

wide- range of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for vulnerable migrants including victims of trafficking with the aim of strengthening the capacity of these Partners in providing psychosocial support through Art- based activities to Returned Migrants who are exposed to violence, exploitation and abuse. This activity was held in Benin –City from the 15th- 19th of February 2021.



During one of the group presentation at the training

Southern Regional Dialogue on promoting Human Right Sponsored by MISEREOR

Two staff of Uromi JDPCI (Michael Iyoriobhe and Agatha Aletor) participated in a two days Southern Regional Dialogue workshop on promoting Human Right and the Implementation of Administration of Criminal Justice Act. This workshop was organized by MISERERO and it was held in Dover Hotel Lagos State, on the 1st and 2nd of December, 2021. The workshop focused on making comparative impact assessment of the ACJ Law among the states in southern Nigeria as well as the prospect and challenges therein, reviewing the performance of the stakeholders in the sector in their different and complimentary roles in order to ascertain what needs to be improved by them and finally examine how the ACJ Law / Act have enhanced access to justice in view of increasing violation of human rights Nigeria.



Participants at the work shop

Certificate in Social Justice sponsored by Uromi JDPCI

Seven Staff of Uromi JDPCI participated in the short course certification programme on Social Justice organized by the Institute of Theological Studies, of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi. The one year programme was concluded on the 21st of August 2021, with a convocation ceremony held at St. Gregory Catholic Church, Ekpoma. This acquired knowledge has relevantly aided the participants to better appreciate the value of human being as and the need to uphold the dignity of the human person.



The reporting officer in group photograph with other graduates