



UROMI JDPCI Newsletter

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INTRODUCTION

During the last quarter of 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) advanced its mission of promoting justice, dignity, and inclusive development across Edo Central Senatorial District through integrated, community-centred interventions spanning human rights, migration, and countering-trafficking in person, health, and OVC care, environmental sustainability, custodial centre apostolate, parish mobilisation, and economic empowerment.

In the area of **Human Rights**, Uromi JDPCI strengthened grassroots protection systems through adolescent human rights clubs, paralegal networks, and community sensitisation. Adolescents emerged as active rights ambassadors, applying knowledge to resolve conflicts, resist abuse, and educate peers and families. Paralegals and Human Rights Clubs responded to dozens of cases involving domestic violence, child neglect, sexual violence, widowhood abuses, and denial of education, often working in collaboration with traditional leaders, police, and social welfare actors. These efforts reinforced community trust in lawful dispute resolution and protection mechanisms.

Under **Migration and Countering Trafficking in Persons**, the AACTING Project deepened prevention and response through Child Champion Clubs, community and school-based sensitisation, coordination meetings, and consultation mechanisms with justice actors. Children demonstrated increased capacity to identify trafficking risks, avoid digital grooming, and report abuse, while local and institutional stakeholders strengthened collaboration to

address internal trafficking, sexual exploitation, and child labour.

Through the **Health and OVC (THRIVE) Programme**, Uromi JDPCI improved health outcomes for Children Living with HIV by supporting ART adherence, nutrition counselling, TB screening, and psychosocial support. Community-based care resulted in measurable progress, including viral suppression for beneficiaries and expanded enrolment into comprehensive OVC support.

In response to **Climate Change**, targeted sensitisation promoted sustainable farming and forest conservation, encouraging farmers to adopt tree-based agriculture that supports both livelihoods and environmental resilience.

The **Custodial Centre Apostolate** embodied restorative justice through spiritual counselling, legal support, and welfare assistance at Ubiaja Custodial Centre. Inmates received faith-based counselling, legal guidance, humanitarian support, and Christmas outreach, which culminated in the release of two inmates, skill support, and renewed hope.

Uromi JDPCI also revitalized **Parish JDPC** structures, strengthening Catholic social action across the diocese through training, follow-up, and improved accountability. Meanwhile, the **Micro-Credit Scheme** expanded livelihoods for small-scale entrepreneurs and farmers, particularly women, through access to loans, financial literacy, and close mentoring.

Collectively, these interventions reflect Uromi JDPCI's integrated approach to human development, one that restores dignity, strengthens community systems, empowers the vulnerable, and builds pathways toward justice, resilience, and sustainable peace.

HUMAN RIGHT EDUCATION AND PARALEGAL SCHEME ADOLESCENT HUMAN RIGHTS CLUBS

From Classrooms to Communities: How Adolescents Are Spreading a Human Rights Revolution Across Edo Central Senatorial District

Across Edo Central Senatorial District, a quiet but powerful movement is taking place—led not by adults, but by adolescents determined to build safer, more respectful communities. Between October and December 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace

and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI), through its Human Rights Education and Paralegal Scheme, worked with 463 adolescents (132 males and 331 females) in 28 secondary schools, guiding them through a transformative learning experience on the theme “My Rights and Responsibilities.” What began as classroom lessons has now grown into a ripple effect of awareness, confidence, and positive behaviour spanning families, peers, and entire communities.



UROMI JDPCI CORPORATE FACT SHEET

Name	Uromi Justice Development Peace & Caritas Initiatives.
Owner	Catholic Diocese of Uromi, Nigeria.
Legal Holder	His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Donatus A 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, Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme, Don't Pay With Your Life, Strengthening Community Participation to Prevent Human Trafficking and Integrated Child Health and Social Service Award
Focus Group	The rural populace, the economically deprived, families, children, students, youths, women and widows living among the poorest of the poor in the society. Inmates in Prison and Ex-inmates, persons stigmatized with deadly diseases.
Physical Address	Inside Uromi Diocesan Secretariat at Egbele Quarter, Uromi, Edo State.
Postal Address	P.O. Box 7, Uromi, Edo State.
E-mail	uromijdpci@yahoo.com
Telephone:	+2348053328588, +2348034930414, +2348150822524
Auditors	1. Grant Thornton Nigeria 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 · Zenith PLC · Mission Road, Uromi
Staff Strength	22
Registered Volunteers	72
Project Executed	30

Each session began with reflections on previous lessons. Students spoke not only of what they remembered but how they were applying the knowledge in their daily lives. Discussions on key child rights like right to education, movement, identity, protection from abuse, among others, opened the door to deeper conversations on responsibilities, respect for others, and the legal frameworks that protect children in Nigeria. The message that guided their journey this quarter was “I have rights that must be protected, and I have responsibilities to my family, community, and society.” With this foundation, the adolescents began a remarkable transformation.



This quarter recorded some inspiring outcomes of the Adolescent Human Rights Learning Sessions and the rapid spread of knowledge beyond the classroom. Adolescents enthusiastically shared what they learned with siblings, friends, and even parents, turning learning into leadership.



In Okhuesan, a student taught four friends about child rights, committing to support the one who struggled, while another used her knowledge to engage her parents meaningfully. A third helped a peer understand the difference between discipline and abuse, transforming conflict into understanding. At St. John Bosco College, a student's brave disclosure of forced child labour opened a powerful discussion on reporting mechanisms and social welfare support.

Across other schools, students demonstrated growing confidence in the use of their knowledge. A girl in Agba Secondary School stopped verbal abuse by asserting her rights. In Irrua Girls Secondary School, a student applied the “five convincing skills” to resolve a conflict at home. In Ewatto, one adolescent taught a friend the POCC model, helping her negotiate respectfully with her father.

These stories as replicated across the 28 schools, reflect a growing youth-driven movement.

Adolescents are applying human rights knowledge, communicating more respectfully, standing against abuse, and influencing behaviour within their families and communities. Uromi JDPCI remains committed to nurturing this rising generation of young human rights ambassadors, because when adolescents understand their rights and responsibilities, they help transform the world around them.



QUARTERLY MEETING WITH PARALEGALS AND HUMAN RIGHTS CLUBS

Strengthening Community Justice: How Paralegals and Human Rights Clubs Are Delivering Grassroots Protection Across Edo Central Senatorial District

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) convened its quarterly review meetings with Paralegals and Human Rights Clubs in 36 communities across the five Local Government



Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District. The meetings brought together 425 participants (256 males and 169 females), including trained paralegals from 36 communities, officers of the Nigeria Police Force (Family Units), Social Welfare officials, traditional leaders, and JDPCI legal supervisors.

The review meetings provided a vital platform for reflection, learning, and coordination. Paralegals shared updates on human rights trends in their communities, discussed challenges encountered in case management, and exchanged effective strategies for mediation, referrals, and advocacy. Uromi JDPCI offered technical guidance and mentorship to strengthen case documentation, response pathways, and collaboration with formal institutions.



Across the reporting quarter, 74 human rights cases were addressed by paralegals and human rights clubs. These included 26 cases of domestic violence, 3 cases of rape and 2 cases of attempted rape, 13 cases of child neglect and abandonment, 4 instances of denial of education, 2 cases of child labour, 10 assault, 9 instances of widowhood-related abuses (including ill-treatment of widows through forced oath-taking to prove innocence after a husband's death and denial of rights to inheritance), 1 case of discrimination, 1 incident of arbitrary arrest, and 3 case of violations of fair trial rights.



A particularly significant outcome was the successful protection of widows from forced oath-taking rituals in communities such as Opoji and Ogwa. The human club engaged the community elders in dialogue and sensitization, which led to the reversal of the harmful decisions. They then allowed the widows to mourn their spouses with dignity and without coercion.

Children at risk were also protected, as several out-of-school children, some of whom were migrants

brought from other states to work as house helpers, were returned to school following paralegal intervention. In other cases, fathers who had abandoned their families resumed responsibility after mediation services offered by the Paralegals and Human Rights clubs. Thereby restoring stability to affected households.

The programme also drew strength from collaboration, as many cases were resolved through joint efforts involving traditional rulers, Divisional Police Officers, Social Welfare Departments, and legal partners, while the serious cases, such as rape and sexual violence, were promptly referred by paralegals to the police, leading to arrests, ongoing prosecutions, or suspects fleeing the community. To sustain the collaborative efforts, the Human Rights Clubs conducted seven community awareness sessions and three advocacy visits to police divisions and traditional institutions, to reinforce local accountability and

strengthen trust in community-based protection mechanisms.

These outcomes demonstrate the growing effectiveness of the paralegal and Human Rights Club network initiative, which has built capacity for timely interventions, sustained sensitization, and strong institutional collaboration, which is manifesting in the ability of communities to increasingly resolve conflicts peacefully, protect vulnerable persons, and reject harmful traditional practices.

The work of the paralegals continues to build local ownership of justice, strengthen confidence in lawful dispute resolution, and promote a culture of dignity and accountability across Edo Central Senatorial District. Uromi JDPCI remains committed to supporting these grassroots structures as they advance human rights, social harmony, and protection for women, children, and other at-risk groups.



COMMEMORATION OF THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Breaking the Silence: Communities Across Edo Central Senatorial District Unite to End Gender-Based and Digital Violence

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) mobilized communities across the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District to participate in the global campaign marking the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. The participants who were drawn from 36 communities; made up of traditional and religious leaders, law enforcement officers, human rights advocates, and community representatives, were sensitized using the global theme “Unite to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls.”. The sessions created safe spaces for dialogue on both long-standing and emerging forms of violence, particularly the growing threats that women and girls encounter in the digital spaces.

and avoid behaviours that increase their vulnerability.

Across the LGAs, the interactive sessions generated thoughtful questions and honest reflections. Participants raised concerns about the increasing prevalence of domestic violence, the exploitation of young girls through online platforms, and the pressures that discourage survivors from speaking out. Cultural silence, stigma, shame, and family pressure to settle cases informally were identified as major barriers to justice.

Despite these challenges, participants collectively pledged to strengthen reporting, support survivors through community structures, and sustain awareness efforts to reduce stigma and harmful practices.

Uromi JDPCI further used the platform to reinforce the importance of collaboration among traditional and religious leaders, government institutions, law



enforcement agencies, civil society organisations, and community members in the fight against GBV. Such partnerships were noted to be critical to building environments

where women and girls are safe, valued, and protected, noting that together, communities can break the silence, uphold dignity, and build safer, more inclusive societies for every woman and girl.

COMMEMORATION OF WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Human Rights in Everyday Life: Uromi JDPCI Marks World Human Rights Day 2025 with a Call to Action

On 9 December 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) commemorated World Human Rights Day at the Chancery Hall in Uromi, Edo State, bringing together 153 stakeholders (106 males and 47 females) from across government, traditional institutions, civil society, and local communities. The event, which had the theme “Human Rights: Our Everyday Essentials,” emphasized the relevance of human rights to daily life, dignity, and social cohesion. The participants included representatives of the Office of the First Lady of Edo State, traditional and religious leaders, law enforcement agencies, social welfare departments, the media, paralegals, and human rights advocates. The gathering served as a platform for reflection, learning, and renewed commitment to justice and inclusion.



In his opening remarks, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhede, emphasized that human rights are not abstract ideals but practical foundations for everyday living. He highlighted the role of the stakeholders in ensuring access to justice, protecting women and children, promoting humane treatment of persons in detention, supporting youth development, and strengthening professionalism within security institutions. While acknowledging progress, he drew attention to persistent challenges like gender-based violence, exploitation, social exclusion, and insecurity, and called for collective responsibility in addressing them.

Delivering the keynote address on behalf of the First Lady of Edo State, Barr. Aiwekhoe Iyenoghogho Anne reminded participants that human rights quietly shape daily choices, from freedom of movement and expression to access to education, information, and livelihoods. She stressed that equality and justice must be



felt in real life, not merely guaranteed on paper. A case supported by Uromi JDPCI, in which a widowed woman successfully reclaimed her inheritance and dignity, was cited as a powerful example of how rights-based interventions can transform lives and influence communities.

The guest lecturer, Barr. Onomen Oriakhi, further deepened the conversation by describing human rights as inherent, universal, and legally protected. She highlighted how everyday enjoyment of these rights is often undermined by poverty, discrimination, harmful cultural practices, corruption, and insecurity, burdens that disproportionately affect women, children, and other vulnerable groups. Participants were encouraged to know their rights, respect the rights of others, and actively challenge injustice wherever it occurs.

The interactive discussions raised concerns about harmful cultural practices, access to justice, youth inclusion, and freedom of expression. Participants were urged to strengthen grassroots sensitization, particularly within traditional institutions, to align cultural practices with dignity and justice.

The event concluded with a strong call to action for sustained collaboration and community-level advocacy.

An Award of Honour was presented to the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI and the Guest Speaker by the Medical Women Association of Nigeria (MWAN) in recognition of their contributions to human rights promotion. As participants departed, one message was clear: human rights must be protected not only on special days, but every day, by everyone, everywhere.



MIGRATION AND COUNTERING TRAFFICKING IN PERSON ACT AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING IN NIGERIA (AACTING PROJECT)

SCHOOL-BASED CHILD CHAMPION CLUBS

Raising a Vigilant Generation: How Child Champions Are Turning Awareness into Action Across Edo Central Senatorial District

Uromi JDPCI continued strengthening its Child Champion Clubs across 15 secondary schools in the five LGAs of Edo Central Senatorial District with discussions on legal frameworks



guiding the protection of children. The sessions which had a total of 171 adolescents (38 males and 133 females) served as a platform for practical learning, reflection, and peer-to-peer leadership in the fight against child trafficking, particularly trafficking for sexual exploitation.



The sessions refreshed students' knowledge on the legal frameworks guiding child protection in Nigeria, Edo State, and



at the international level. Students revisited laws that safeguard victims, punish offenders, and outline penalties for traffickers. Facilitators also led interactive

discussions on how traffickers operate by often using deceptive promises of education, jobs, or migration to lure unsuspecting children into forced labour, sexual exploitation, and abuse.

Across the 15 schools, students demonstrated strong retention of previous lessons and an elevated sense of responsibility. Many reaffirmed their commitment to monthly peer-led meetings, while others volunteered to run sensitization sessions during school assemblies. Through these student-driven activities, Child Champions reached an additional 229 people within their schools and communities, including children and adults, with messages on online safety and anti-child-trafficking awareness.



In Okhuesan Secondary School, a Child Champion shared a powerful and alarming real-life experience. She recounted how a former friend contacted her on WhatsApp with an invitation to travel to Libya for a “cleaning

job,” which required her to work for a “madam” without pay for over a year. The proposed travel arrangement meeting in an unknown destination in Uromi, matched the typical pattern of trafficking recruitment. Armed with the knowledge gained from the Child Champion Club, she recognized the danger immediately. She declined the offer, resolved to report any further contact, and committed to educating her peers about similar risks.

At Ebelle Commercial Secondary School, another student bravely disclosed ongoing forced labour and physical abuse under the care of her maternal aunt. Her case, which has affected her well-being and school attendance, was documented for urgent follow-up in line with safeguarding procedures.



This quarter's activities revealed a growing transformation among Child Champions, greater awareness, stronger confidence, and an expanding ability to protect themselves and others. Their testimonies show that

knowledge is translating into real-world prevention, safer decision-making, and peer advocacy.

Uromi JDPCI remains committed to nurturing these young defenders and building a generation equipped to identify, resist, and report trafficking risks, ensuring safer communities across Edo Central.

COMMUNITY CHILD CHAMPIONS CLUB

Children Protecting Children: How Community Child Champions Are Leading the Fight Against Trafficking in Edo Central

Across Edo Central Senatorial District, a quiet wave of child-led protection is taking root. Through the quarterly Community Child

Champion Club

meetings, Uromi JDPCI continued to empower children to understand trafficking risks, stay safe online, and confidently report concerns within their communities.

This quarter, 142 children (34 males and 108 females) participated across 13 communities, including Okhuesan, Ubiaja, Agadaga-Ewohimi, Emaudo, Ogwa, Usenu, Opoji, Iduwele-Ewu, Amedokihan, Obeidu, Ebelle, Igueben, and Ewossa.

Facilitators guided the Champions through

interactive revision sessions on child rights, causes of trafficking, early indicators of exploitation, online grooming, cyberbullying, and safe reporting pathways.

These sessions refreshed the children's memory and strengthened their courage to apply their knowledge beyond the meeting halls.

In one community, a young Champion shared how she escaped an online grooming attempt. She described how a girl she met on Facebook began pushing for an inappropriate relationship. Recognizing the emotional manipulation, she blocked the contact immediately, a clear sign that the training is saving children from digital exploitation.

Two other Champions narrated how they avoided a sophisticated scam after receiving a suspicious call about a “package” from Lagos. When pressured to pay additional fees, they recognised the red flags and refused. Their story sparked deeper conversations about online fraud, trafficking traps, and the power of staying alert.

Children also took their learning into their communities. One Champion used her free period to educate three of her peers on online safety and trafficking. Others shared concerns about underage domestic workers in their communities who were out of school. This prompted the Champions to



commit to sensitizing these vulnerable children and reporting suspicious activities to Child Protection Groups.

Across all locations, children demonstrated confidence, actively asked questions, and explained concepts using English, Pidgin, or local languages which is evidence of true understanding and ownership. Beyond the meetings, Child Champions reached 150 additional community members, made of children and adults, through peer sensitization. This growing outreach reflects a shift from beneficiaries to active protectors.

The quarterly Child Champion meetings strengthened children's knowledge of trafficking, online safety, and reporting processes. More importantly, they nurtured a network of boys and girls who are spotting red flags, avoiding risky behaviour, educating peers, and protecting vulnerable children in their surroundings.

A new generation of Child Champions is emerging, confident, informed, and ready to confront trafficking wherever it appears. Uromi JDPCI remains committed to guiding these young advocates as they help build safer schools, safer communities, and a safer Edo Central.

BI-ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETINGS WITH LGACHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Strengthening Local Leadership for Child Protection Across Edo Central Senatorial District

Between 15 and 21 October 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) convened its bi-annual coordination meetings with the Local Government Child Protection Committees (LGPCs) across the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District. The meetings brought together 171 participants (87 males and 84 females), including government officials, security agencies, community and religious leaders, and civil society actors committed to safeguarding children.

The sessions provided an opportunity to review progress over the past six months, share field experiences, induct new members, and strengthen collaboration in preventing child trafficking while promoting children's rights to education and protection. The induction of Chief Imams from Muslim communities and the Queen of Igueben Kingdom into the Igueben LGPC reinforced inclusive community ownership of child protection efforts.

In his goodwill message, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, emphasized sustained collective responsibility, continuous awareness creation, and education as key strategies for preventing child trafficking.

Reports from the LGAs highlighted encouraging outcomes. Esan Central intensified sensitization in markets, churches, and households, enforced school

attendance by-laws, and supported school re-enrolment. Esan West and Esan South East addressed cases of exploitation and school dropout, strengthened school outreach, and recorded successful rescue operations. In Igueben, advocacy to the Monarch halted the recruitment of underage girls for sexual exploitation, while Esan North East re-enrolled 21 children in school and enrolled three in vocational training.

The meetings concluded with clear action plans for expanded outreach, follow-up on re-enrolled children, and strengthened collaboration with security agencies, reinforcing a shared commitment to protecting children across Edo Central Senatorial District.

QUARTERLY COORDINATION MEETING WITH LGACASE WORKERS

Strengthening Coordination to Protect Children: Partners Reflect and Recommit in Edo Central Senatorial District

On 14 October 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) convened its third quarterly coordination meeting with LGA Case Workers, Child Champion Club Mentors, and Field Officers across the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District. The meeting provided a vital platform to review progress, share field experiences, and strengthen collaboration in the fight against child trafficking and exploitation.

Participants included Directors of Social Welfare and Legal Services, representatives of the Police and NSCDC, Community Child Protection Groups, and field mentors supporting the AACTING Project. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, commended stakeholders for their commitment and emphasized the need for unity, accountability, and coordinated, data-driven action in the fight against child trafficking.

A major concern raised was the growing trend of internal child trafficking, where children from neighbouring states are brought into communities as domestic help and subjected to exploitation and the denial of education. Stakeholders committed to intensifying household sensitization and engaging caregivers and intermediaries to end these practices.

Progress reviews highlighted strong outcomes. In Igueben, advocacy to the monarch led to the dismantling of underage recruitment for sexual exploitation, while in Idunwele, proactive household mapping improved protection for children in domestic service. Field officers reported increased confidence among children to identify trafficking risks and report abuse, with Child Champions



extending awareness to peers.

The meeting concluded with a shared resolve to strengthen referral systems, community vigilance, and stakeholder collaboration in reinforcing a growing, community-driven response to child trafficking across Edo Central.

CONSULTATION MECHANISM MEETING

Strengthening Justice Through Collaboration: Community and Institutions Unite Against Child Trafficking

On 30 October 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) convened the third Consultation Mechanism meeting between community and institutional actors of justice in Edo Central Senatorial District. The meeting brought together 70 participants (32 males and 38 females) from law enforcement agencies, social welfare and health institutions, civil society organisations, and community-based structures to strengthen coordination in the fight against child trafficking and exploitation.

The consultation provided a vital platform for dialogue, experience sharing, and joint reflection on ongoing interventions and emerging protection challenges. A key highlight was a capacity-building session on the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act, 2015, which deepened participants' understanding of trafficking offences and the sanctions attached to them, thereby strengthening accountability and justice delivery.

In his welcome address, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI emphasized that combating child trafficking is a shared responsibility requiring synergy between communities, institutions, and citizens. Participants reviewed progress across sectors. Security agencies called for stronger inter-agency collaboration, while social welfare actors highlighted joint market sensitization campaigns conducted during the 2025 World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. Community groups reported ongoing awareness efforts in schools, churches, and markets, as well as advocacy to traditional leaders.

Participants also identified challenges, including limited victim protection, funding gaps affecting law enforcement response, and difficulties verifying victims' ages. Practical recommendations followed, like expanding collaboration with NAPTIP, strengthening media engagement, and increasing community-level awareness of trafficking laws and penalties.

The meeting concluded with renewed commitment from all stakeholders to strengthen

collaboration, protect victims, and ensure offenders are held accountable, thereby reinforcing a united front for child protection across Edo Central Senatorial District.

TRAINING BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

From Survival to Self-Reliance: Empowering Young Female Returnees Through Business and Financial Skills

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) took another step toward sustainable reintegration by organizing a one-day Business and Financial Management training for seven young female returnees at Chancery Hall, Egbele-Uromi. The training was designed to equip participants with practical skills, confidence, and knowledge to establish and sustain profitable enterprises as they rebuild their lives.

The session was facilitated by a business developer and management coach, who guided participants through interactive learning and experience-sharing exercises tailored to their realities as emerging entrepreneurs.

In his opening remarks, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, commended the participants for their resilience and determination. He encouraged them to apply the lessons gained from their apprenticeships and engagements with Uromi JDPCI to strengthen their businesses. He reaffirmed the organisation's continued support and challenged the young women to remain focused, adopt sound business practices, and become agents of positive change within their communities.

The training covered essential areas critical to business success. Participants were introduced to the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, key qualities of successful entrepreneurs, and factors that influence business growth or failure. Sessions on marketing explored customer needs, branding, promotion strategies, and the effective use of local networks and word-of-mouth to grow businesses.

Participants also learned the importance of proper record keeping, including how to track income, expenses, stock, and profitability, as tools that enable informed decision-making. The session on pricing strategies helped them understand how to price products and



services using approaches such as cost-plus, value-added, competitive, and penetration pricing.

Equally important was the emphasis on financial discipline. Participants were encouraged to develop a savings culture to support business expansion and manage unexpected challenges. The training concluded with guidance on responsible debt management, empowering participants to make wise borrowing decisions and avoid over-indebtedness.

At the end of the session, participants expressed deep appreciation for the knowledge and motivation gained. Many of them expressed joy that the training strengthened their confidence, clarified their business plans, and renewed their determination to pursue entrepreneurship as a pathway to independence.

This training reflects Uromi JDPCI's commitment to supporting young female returnees beyond recovery, toward economic empowerment and lasting reintegration. By equipping them with practical business and financial skills, the organisation continues to transform vulnerability into opportunity, helping young women move from survival to self-reliance.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR YOUNG FEMALE RETURNEES

From Skills to Start-Up: Uromi JDPCI Flags Off Empowerment for Young Female Returnees

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) formally flagged off the empowerment of seven young female returnees who successfully completed their vocational training, marking a major milestone in their journey toward economic independence and reintegration. The ceremony brought together key stakeholders from government, civil society, religious institutions, and development partners, including ECPAT France, represented virtually. In his remarks, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, commended the beneficiaries for their resilience and announced the provision of start-up materials worth over ₦1 million per beneficiary, including one year of shop rent. To strengthen sustainability, each empowerment package combined dual income-generating opportunities, enabling beneficiaries to diversify their

livelihoods.

Partners and stakeholders, including NAPTIP, the Edo State Migration Agency, and Caritas Nigeria, encouraged the young women to remain disciplined, consistent, and focused as they grow their enterprises. The ceremony also reflected on the comprehensive empowerment pathway; psychosocial support, vocational training, and business management, which prepared the beneficiaries for sustainable livelihoods.

The event concluded with the presentation of business start-up tools in hairdressing, makeup artistry,

crocheting, and food services, filling the hall with gratitude, renewed confidence, and hope for the future.

GROUP DISCUSSION WITH YOUNG FEMALE RETURNEES

Healing Together: How Survivor-Centred Counselling Is Restoring Confidence, Connection, and Hope in Uromi

As part of the Act Against Child Trafficking in Nigeria (AACTING) Project, coordinated by ECPAT France and ECPAT Luxembourg, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) continued to provide survivor-centred psychosocial support for young female survivors of trafficking. Two counselling sessions were held in December 2025 at Chancery Hall, Egbele Uromi, with a total of 18 survivors participating in safe, nurturing spaces designed to promote healing, emotional empowerment, and long-term resilience. The sessions reinforced a powerful message: healing is a journey best taken with support. Survivors were encouraged to reflect on their progress, share experiences, and strengthen positive coping mechanisms that support both emotional well-being and economic stability.

Each session began with a participatory reflection, allowing survivors to share how earlier engagements had influenced their lives. Their testimonies revealed remarkable transformation. Some participants spoke of letting go of long-held resentment and finding peace through forgiveness. Others shared how improved emotional control and self-confidence had strengthened their relationships and daily interactions.

Several survivors described tangible improvements in their livelihoods, such as opening businesses earlier, adopting healthier spending and savings habits, eating more consciously, and practicing gratitude. One participant noted that where she once felt isolated and overwhelmed, she now feels hopeful, connected, and motivated.

Guided discussions explored self-improvement across five key areas: cognitive, emotional, behavioural, skill-based, and social/relational development. Survivors were encouraged to take small, intentional steps toward healthier habits, clearer goals, and stronger self-esteem. The sessions also emphasized the theme “Everyone Has a Support System.” Facilitators helped participants recognise that support extends beyond financial assistance to include emotional encouragement, companionship, guidance, and community relationships. Through practical exercises, survivors mapped their personal support networks, identifying trusted individuals they can rely on during difficult moments.

Open conversations about stress revealed that emotional breakdown is a common response to overwhelming challenges. Facilitators affirmed these



Drawing a gratitude box as an art-based therapy

experiences while encouraging survivors to reach out rather than withdraw, highlighting the risks of isolation to emotional and physical well-being. By the end of the sessions, participants demonstrated greater confidence in seeking help, managing stress, and maintaining healthy relationships. They left with practical tools to strengthen their support systems and a renewed commitment to personal growth and independence.

These psychosocial support sessions continue to nurture resilience, connection, and hope by creating compassionate spaces where young women can heal together, reflect, and rebuild their lives.

HEALTH AND OVC – THRIVE PROJECT

Strengthening Care and Hope: Improving Health Outcomes for Children Living with HIV in Uromi Cluster

During the reporting period, Uromi JDPCI strengthened comprehensive care for Children Living with HIV (CLHIV) by combining treatment support, nutrition, counselling, and referrals to ensure improved health outcomes and wellbeing.

To support treatment adherence, 98 CLHIV were mobilised for their Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) refill appointments, with 93 children receiving transport assistance to health facilities across Ubiaja, Irrua, Ekpoma, Irukpem, and Uromi. This support reduced missed clinic visits and strengthened progress toward viral suppression.

Recognising the link between nutrition and treatment success, Uromi JDPCI conducted nutrition assessments and counselling for 281 CLHIV through home visits. Caregivers received practical guidance on balanced diets, hygiene, food preparation, and hydration. In addition, 11 children and three vulnerable households received food support to address immediate nutritional needs.

The cluster also strengthened early detection and prevention through TB screening for 281 CLHIV, enabling timely referral and reducing the risk of TB-HIV co-infection. Adherence counselling sessions were conducted for children and caregivers, addressing barriers to medication compliance and reinforcing caregiver support as a key factor in treatment success.

Four newly identified CLHIV were enrolled into the THRIVE OVC Programme, expanding access to holistic support including ART, nutrition, counselling, and education.

A success story emerged from this effort: a 17-year-old beneficiary saw his viral load drop from 56,000 copies/ml to 89 copies/ml, achieving viral suppression through consistent counselling and adherence support. This is proof that community-based care saves lives. Together, these interventions are restoring health, confidence, and hope for children and families across Edo Central Senatorial District.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Planting Today for Tomorrow: Promoting Sustainable Farming and Forest Conservation in Idoa Community

During the reporting quarter, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI), through its Environment and Climate Change Desk, carried out a targeted community sensitization on deforestation and climate resilience in Idoa community. The initiative aimed to deepen understanding of the causes and consequences of deforestation while encouraging responsible environmental practices that support both livelihoods and long-term ecological balance.

The sensitization session engaged seven farmers (six males and one female) in an interactive discussion on common land preparation practices, particularly the cutting down of trees to increase sunlight for crops. While acknowledging the importance of sunlight for agricultural productivity, facilitators emphasized that indiscriminate tree felling accelerates climate change, soil degradation, erosion, and disruption of the natural water cycle, ultimately threatening food security and community wellbeing.

Participants were introduced to sustainable farming alternatives, including the integration of economic tree crops such as cashew, pear, orange, and oil palm into farmlands. This approach was



presented as a practical solution that restores ecological balance while providing long-term economic benefits.

A compelling testimony emerged from one participant who shared how planting oil palm trees on his family land—despite initial resistance—has made him self-sufficient in palm oil and improved household income. His experience demonstrated that environmental conservation and economic productivity can coexist.

By the end of the session, farmers expressed renewed commitment to tree planting, discouraging indiscriminate deforestation, and promoting environmentally responsible farming practices within their communities. Many pledged to serve as environmental ambassadors, sharing knowledge with fellow farmers and neighbours.

CORRECTIONAL CENTER APOSTOLATE

Restoring Dignity Behind the Walls: Holistic Apostolate at Ubiaja Custodial Centre

As part of its ongoing Legal and Custodial Centre Apostolate, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) carried out a series of structured visits to the Ubiaja Custodial Centre between October and December 2025. The interventions combined spiritual counselling, legal support, and welfare assistance, reinforcing Uromi JDPCI's commitment to rehabilitation, dignity, and reintegration rather than punishment alone.

Spiritual Counselling: Healing, Renewal, and Hope

At the core of the apostolate was sustained spiritual counselling, facilitated by the Assistant Executive Director, Rev Fr Ferguson Ukpebor. Through reflective teachings, scripture sharing, and interactive dialogue, inmates were guided to confront guilt, regret, and despair while rediscovering hope and purpose. Key scriptural reflections included 2 Corinthians 5:17 (“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation”), Romans 8:1 (“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”), Isaiah 1:18 (“Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow”), and Luke 15:11–32 (the Parable of the Prodigal Son), which powerfully illustrated forgiveness, restoration, and new beginnings.

Sessions focused on themes such as personal responsibility, forgiveness, inner healing, and becoming agents of positive change upon release. Catechism and faith-formation classes were also held, helping inmates deepen their understanding of Christian values and moral decision-making. These efforts culminated during the Christmas outreach with the administration of baptism to six inmates, symbolizing renewal, belonging, and a fresh start.



Legal Counselling: Strengthening Access to Justice

Complementing the spiritual engagement, legal counselling sessions were organised to address inmates' anxieties around their cases and to strengthen their understanding of legal rights and procedures. Legal practitioners provided group and individual counselling on fair hearing, case status, communication with families, and preparation for reintegration into society.

Several inmates received personalized legal support, including assistance with contacting relatives, court registrars, and complainants, as well as referrals for further legal representation where necessary. These interventions helped reduce uncertainty, empowered inmates with knowledge, and reinforced confidence in due process and justice mechanisms.

Welfare Support and Christmas Party: Bringing Compassion to Life

The apostolate culminated in a Christmas welfare outreach, combining spiritual celebration with tangible humanitarian support. Holy Mass was celebrated, followed by a festive interaction that brought warmth, joy, and dignity to inmates during the Christmas season.

In a major highlight, two inmates were released after Uromi JDPCI, with support from Caritas Nigeria, paid their fines as part of the activity to end the Catholic Year of Hope. An act that restored freedom to the inmates and reunited them to their families. Uromi JDPCI, in collaboration with the Engr and Lady John Amedu's family, brought food, drinks, and water to celebrate Christmas with the inmates. Uromi JDPCI also provided a sewing machine to support skill acquisition at the custodial center. The Office of the First Lady of Edo State further supported the outreach with a ₦250,000 donation, which was used to procure biscuits, and Aboniki balm for the inmates while sanitary



pads were added for female inmates. This gesture was described as historic, being the first of its kind in JDPCI's Custodial outreach history.

Beyond direct support to inmates, the outreach included the repainting of the Custodial Centre chapel and the Skill Acquisition Centre, aimed at improving the environment for worship, learning, and rehabilitation.

Uromi JDPCI continues to transform incarceration spaces into places of healing,

accountability, and hope. It is affirming that restoration is possible, even behind prison walls, and demonstrating that justice, mercy, and human dignity can coexist.



PARISH JDPC

Revitalizing Parish Justice and Peace Structures Across the Diocese of Uromi

During the fourth quarter of 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) intensified efforts to strengthen Parish Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) structures across the Diocese of Uromi. The focus was on capacity building, revitalising inactive parish JDPCs, and deepening awareness of Catholic Social Teaching as a guide for daily life and community engagement.

With support from the Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN), Uromi JDPCI organised a two-day capacity-building training for Parish JDPC members drawn from 25 parishes. The training reached 98 participants (63 males and 35 females) and equipped them with practical skills in justice promotion, peacebuilding, community development, and effective parish-level intervention. Participants reported improved understanding of JDPC principles and renewed confidence to engage social issues within their parishes and communities.

To reconnect with members and revive dormant structures, Uromi JDPCI conducted targeted follow-up phone engagements across the diocese. These efforts successfully reactivated JDPC activities in St. Anthony Catholic Church, Ewatto, and Annunciation Catholic Church, Irrua, bringing the number of active Parish JDPCs to 22.

Accountability and documentation also improved, with 11 parishes submitting regular monthly JDPC activity reports during the quarter, an encouraging sign of growing participation and coordination.

Despite challenges related to limited funding and weak leadership in some parishes, the quarter recorded meaningful progress. Uromi JDPCI remains committed to sustained training, closer collaboration with parish priests, and continued grassroots engagement to ensure justice, peace, and development remain vibrant realities across the Diocese of Uromi.

MICRO CREDIT

Expanding Livelihoods Through Inclusive Micro-Credit Support

During the quarter, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) continued to advance economic empowerment and financial inclusion through its Micro-Credit Scheme, providing targeted support to small business owners and farmers across Edo Central Senatorial District. The initiative remains a vital livelihood intervention, especially for women and low-income households seeking sustainable income opportunities.

Within the reporting period, 151 beneficiaries, 61 males and 90 females, received micro-loans across 23 groups in 21 communities. The loans enabled beneficiaries to expand existing businesses, invest in farming inputs, diversify income-generating activities, and improve productivity. Many beneficiaries reported increased turnover, improved household income, and greater financial stability as a result of the support.



Beyond access to credit, the scheme prioritized financial discipline and capacity building. All beneficiaries participated in structured financial literacy sessions covering responsible loan use, savings culture, simple record keeping, and basic business planning. These sessions strengthened beneficiaries' understanding of money management, improved budgeting skills, and enhanced their ability to make informed financial decisions that support long-term business growth.

Loan repayment activities were actively monitored throughout the quarter, alongside the regular collection of savings and insurance contributions. Where necessary, savings refunds were provided to beneficiaries to address urgent needs, demonstrating the scheme's flexibility and commitment to supporting members' financial realities while promoting trust and inclusion.

To strengthen accountability and reduce the risk of loan diversion, regular monitoring and mentoring visits were conducted by the project team. These visits allowed for close follow-up on business performance, identification of emerging



challenges, and timely provision of technical guidance. The mentoring approach also strengthened relationships between beneficiaries and the scheme, encouraging transparency, responsibility, and continuous improvement.

The Micro-Credit Scheme recorded steady and positive progress during the quarter. Through a combination of credit access, financial literacy, and close monitoring, Uromi JDPCI continues to promote economic resilience, financial discipline, and sustainable livelihoods, enabling beneficiaries to move from subsistence toward stability and self-reliance.