



UROMI JDPCI Newsletter

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INTRODUCTION

At Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI), the second quarter of 2025 was marked by remarkable progress in advancing human rights, countering trafficking, supporting vulnerable groups, protecting the environment, and fostering economic empowerment across Edo Central Senatorial District. This edition of our newsletter captures the breadth of our interventions and the tangible impact they continue to create in communities.

Human Rights: Our Human Rights Education and Paralegal Scheme deepened grassroots engagement through adolescent Human Rights Clubs, community sensitizations, targeted advocacy visits, and collaborative interventions with local authorities. In schools and communities, paralegals worked with relevant institutions to address rights violations, resolve disputes, and prevent abuses. A total of 55 rights-related cases were handled by paralegals through mediation, counselling, and formal referrals. These initiatives not only strengthened institutional cooperation but also empowered women, children, and vulnerable persons to speak up and seek justice.

Migration and Countering Trafficking in Persons: Under the AACTING project, our fight against child trafficking intensified. We convened bi-annual Local Government Child Protection Committee meetings, uniting government agencies with religious and community actors. Child Champion Clubs and community groups carried out prevention campaigns, peer education, and direct interventions that led to the rescue of young girls from the risk of trafficking. Young female survivors of trafficking were identified, profiled, and enrolled in vocational training programmes, marking a significant step toward their psychosocial and economic reintegration.

Health and Orphans & Vulnerable Children (OVC): Through the USAID-THRIVE project, we continued to provide holistic support to children living with HIV and their caregivers. Services ranged from home visits, counselling, and treatment adherence support to referrals for medical care and financial literacy training. These interventions improved health

outcomes, reduced stigma, and strengthened household resilience, ensuring that both children and caregivers can live healthier and more secure lives. **Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability:** Marking World Environment Day on June 5, 2025, we rallied 70 stakeholders made up of government officials, traditional rulers, waste managers, and faith leaders. Our message during the event, which had the theme “Ending Plastic Pollution,” emphasized reducing single-use plastics, promoting recycling, and adopting eco-friendly practices. We also carried out community sensitizations on bush burning, climate-smart farming, and waste management, reinforcing the message that environmental stewardship is both a civic duty and a moral responsibility.

Correctional Center Apostolate: Our outreach to the Ubiaja Correctional Center offered 28 inmates spiritual counselling, legal guidance, and renewed hope. The session to mark the International Day of Conscience encouraged personal reflection, reconciliation, and commitment to positive change. We also offered material support, made up of food donations to further drive home our message of dignity and compassion for all.

Parish JDPC: We strengthened parish-level JDPC structures through training, mentorship, and the inauguration of new units, enabling them to take ownership of justice, peace, and development efforts. **Micro Credit Scheme:** Our Micro Credit Scheme supported 77 beneficiaries (60 females, 17 males) across 12 groups in 10 communities, helping them grow small businesses, expand farms, and improve household income. These interventions, grounded in financial literacy and solidarity, continue to enhance dignity and economic independence for rural entrepreneurs, especially women.

Across all thematic areas, this quarter demonstrated that lasting change is built through collaboration, community ownership, and a shared commitment to justice and human dignity. Together with our partners, we remain resolute in building a society where every person can live free from exploitation, empowered to achieve their full potential.

UROMI JDPCI 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 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	Faith-Based Non-Governmental, Non-For-Profit, 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, Correctional Center Apostolate and Legal Aid services, Peace Building, Micro-Credit, and Caritas, TB and HIV/AIDS care and support, HIV Counseling and testing, Livelihood and Food Security, Migration and Countering Trafficking in Person, and OVC programming
Project steered	Conflict Management, Training of Electorate, Election Observation, Budget Monitoring, Community TB Care, HIV/AIDS Awareness Creation and counselling, 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, Galvanize Action for Effective Trafficking in Persons Response, Act Against Child Trafficking in Nigeria
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.
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Bankers	· UBA BANK PLC · ECOBANK PLC · FIDELITY BANK PLC · UNITY BANK PLC · UNION BANK PLC · ZENITH PLC
Staff Strength	21
Registered Volunteers	72
Project Executed	30

HUMAN RIGHT EDUCATION AND PARALEGAL SCHEME

Strengthening Grassroots Justice: Uromi JDPCI Hosts Quarterly Human Rights Club Meetings Across Edo Central

In a powerful demonstration of grassroots collaboration and community-led justice, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiative (Uromi JDPCI) convened its quarterly meetings with Community Human Rights Clubs in the 35 communities across the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District from June 17 to 19, 2025. These strategic meetings brought together paralegals, human rights advocates, officers from the Nigerian Police Force (Family Unit), representatives from Social Welfare Departments, and Uromi JDPCI's legal supervisors. 425 participants (234 males and 191 females) gathered from 36 project communities to share knowledge, report progress, and strengthen the collective fight against human rights violations at the grassroots level.

In the opening remark, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, emphasized the role of paralegals and human rights advocates as changemakers in their communities. He applauded their courage, unity, and tireless efforts, urging them to continue standing up for justice, defending the vulnerable, and being examples of moral leadership.

The Queen of Igueben Kingdom graced the quarterly meeting at Igueben Local Government Area and pledged her support to the Human Rights Club in her domain. She acknowledged the disturbing frequency of child abuse, rape, and neglect in the community and encouraged families to foster peace and harmony in the home, reminding everyone that the family is the bedrock of society.

In the engagement across the five Local Government Areas, paralegals presented detailed updates on human rights trends in their communities. They shared the challenges they faced in mediating cases, the strategies they adopted, and the outcomes achieved. These presentations sparked peer-to-peer learning, as Human Rights Clubs drew valuable lessons from one another's experiences. Uromi JDPCI provided technical support, mentorship, and practical guidance, equipping paralegals with tools for effective case handling and documentation. Participants also received updates on best practices for rights-based advocacy, mediation, and referrals.

One of the most promising outcomes of the sessions was the growing institutional cooperation. In many communities, paralegals worked hand-in-hand with

community leaders, local authorities, and security agencies to address cases.

Real Cases, Real Impact

During the quarter, the Human Rights Clubs collectively handled 55 case-based interventions, using Alternative Dispute Resolution and formal referrals to law enforcement when needed. The cases ranged from child neglect, domestic violence, sexual abuse, forced child labour, and child trafficking, to widow disinheritance, assaults, and degrading treatment. These cases reveal the depth and diversity of human rights concerns affecting communities in Edo Central.

The data include: 2 cases of forced widow inheritance, 2 cases involving the ill-treatment of widows through forced oath-taking or separation from their children, 3 cases related to the denial of widows' inheritance rights, 9 cases of child neglect and abandonment, 1 case of attempted rape and 1 case of rape, 10 cases of domestic violence, 4 cases of forced child labour, 8 cases involving denial of children's right to education, 2 cases of arbitrary arrest and detention, 4 cases of assault and threat to life, 1 case of violence against a person, 2 cases involving torture and degrading treatment, 2 cases of child trafficking for sexual exploitation, 3 cases concerning the violation of freedom of expression, association, and assembly, 1 case involving violation of the right to fair trial. These statistics not only illustrate the scale of abuse but also emphasize the critical role that grassroots actors play in bridging the justice gap in rural communities.

Behind each case are real lives impacted by injustice, and real responses led by the Human Rights Clubs. In Usugbenu, a widow was rescued from forced inheritance after the widow, with support from Akho Human Rights Club, rejected the harmful custom. They engaged the community leader with the

position of the law, and he reneged on his initial position to coerce the widow to remarry a member of the deceased husband's family, though some other persons in the community kicked against his new position, he stood his ground. In Opoji, another widow was spared from being compelled to swear an oath following her husband's death. In Ewu, a widow separated from her child was supported by the Club, which escalated the matter to the police. In yet another case, a woman's right to association was restored in Ahia after she and her husband reached a peaceful agreement through mediation. These stories reflect not only legal victories but also a gradual shift in community attitudes, social norms, and institutional collaboration.

The Clubs also conducted 11 community sensitization sessions and 3 targeted advocacy visits to traditional rulers and security agencies, amplifying local awareness and deepening institutional commitment to protecting the rights of women, children, and other vulnerable groups.

The quarterly meetings provided a much-needed



Group photograph with participants at Esan Central LGA



Quarterly meeting at Igueben LGA



Group photograph with participants at Esan West LGA



Group photograph with participants at Esan North East LGA



Group photograph with participants at Igueben LGA



Quarterly meeting at Esan South East LGA

space for reflection, dialogue, learning, and solidarity among human rights defenders at the grassroots level. The sessions strengthened collaboration, enhanced skills, celebrated success stories, and affirmed the power of community-led justice. As Uromi JDPCI continues to invest in the capacity and courage of these paralegals and advocates, one message rings clear: when communities are empowered to defend their rights, real and lasting change becomes possible.

One Right Choice at a Time: Uromi JDPCI Empowers Adolescents Through Human Rights Learning Sessions

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) deepened its commitment to adolescent empowerment by hosting Quarterly Learning Sessions across 28 secondary schools in the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District.



Adolescent Human Rights Club at Gift Day Secondary School, Ubiaja

The learning session which reached a total of 416 students (128 males and 288 females), centered on the timely and transformative topic: “Making the Right Choices.”

Using the Problem, Options, Cost, and Choice (POCC) model students were taught how to approach decision-making with clarity, self-awareness, and responsibility. The aim was to help adolescents navigate the complexities of peer pressure, identity, education, and personal development with a structured, thoughtful approach.

The sessions were far from ordinary lectures. Through interactive storytelling, group discussions, and reflective exercises, students explored real-life scenarios using the POCC model to weigh consequences and outcomes. One fictional yet relatable story served as the anchor for discussions, allowing participants to critically engage with difficult choices in a safe, and supportive setting.

At the heart of each session was a simple but powerful truth that every choice we make carries consequences both immediate and long-term. Students were encouraged to reflect on this message and repeat it aloud, reinforcing its relevance to their daily lives and future aspirations.



Adolescent Human Rights Club at Obeidu Secondary School, Uromi

The impact was immediate and visible. Across participating schools, facilitators observed that students were not only engaged, but deeply reflective with many leaving the session with a renewed sense of purpose. A number of schools also recorded a surge in new Human Rights Club members, as younger students stepped in to replace outgoing JSS3 and SS3 leaders.

In most of the schools, students embraced the POCC model to analyze choices and align them with personal goals to arrive at improved decision making. Discussions also led students to think more seriously about their life paths and the consequences of risky behavior leading to greater personal responsibility. The interactive format encouraged self-expression and critical thinking thereby increasing their confidence and engagement. With this, the students became more open, thoughtful, and confident in raising their voices.

What made the sessions even more powerful were the real stories of impact:

At Idunwele Girls Secondary School, a student previously denied her right to education was reintegrated into school following intervention by Uromi JDPCI's Child Protection Group. Today, she attends regularly and is thriving.



Adolescent Human Rights Club at Agba Grammar School, Uromi

At Ewossa Secondary School, a female student who had learned about the right to education used her voice to encourage a struggling friend not to drop out due to financial pressure. This is a strong testimony to the ripple effect of peer advocacy.

At Egoro Amede Secondary School, the principal initiated extra engagement efforts with the students to boost their chances at success in subsequent human rights competitions. Manuals are now



Adolescent Human Rights Club at Opoji Commercial College Opoji

being used more intentionally by an instructor assigned by the school to help club members strengthen their understanding of key human rights issues. This is a clear sign of school ownership of the human rights club and sustained commitment.

Sacred Heart and Egoro Amede also witnessed a revival of inactive clubs. With new members stepping in and coordinators actively supporting their activities, Human Rights Clubs in these schools are now more vibrant and effective than ever.

Schools across the board are showing stronger ownership, with many assigning club coordinators, adjusting schedules to accommodate club meetings, and actively supporting student-led initiatives. These efforts highlight the growing recognition that empowered adolescents lead to empowered communities.



Adolescent Human Rights Club at Arue Secondary School, Uromi

These quarterly learning sessions are a testament to Uromi JDPCI's belief that adolescents are not just future leaders, but present changemakers. With the right tools, encouragement, and support, they can make decisions that uplift themselves, their peers, and their communities. Through the POCC model, young people across Edo Central are learning that the power of choice is the foundation of personal dignity and social justice. Uromi JDPCI remains committed to walking this journey with them, one right choice at a time.

Protecting Their Future: Uromi JDPCI Marks International Day Against Child Labour and Abuse

On June 11, 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) joined voices across the world in commemorating the International Day Against Child Labour and Abuse. Held through its Human



The Executive Director giving his opening remark

Rights Education and Paralegal Scheme, the event gathered 201 (Males - 110, Females - 91) participants made up of community and religious leaders, law enforcement agencies, school authorities, healthcare professionals, students, and human rights advocates at the gathering dedicated to child protection. The theme for this year, “Progress is clear, but there is more to do: Let's speed up the efforts!” echoed powerfully throughout the day as attendees reflected on both the strides made and the challenges that remain in safeguarding children across Nigeria.

In his welcome address, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, delivered a stirring message. Citing Matthew 19:14, he emphasized that child protection is not optional but a shared and sacred responsibility. He called on religious institutions, government bodies, and communities to foster safe environments, enforce accountability, and protect those who speak out against abuse. His words anchored the day's event in both faith and action.

The event featured goodwill messages from a broad spectrum of partners: Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) hailed children as divine gifts and praised Uromi JDPCI's continued commitment to their protection. Representatives of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and NSCDC stressed community vigilance, encouraging the public to “see something, and say something.” The Head of Social Welfare and Chief Inspector of Education urged collective prioritization of education and active community involvement in child protection. A representative of the school principals emphasized the importance of positive parental role-modelling the protection of children. One of the Lawyers present at the event called for the wide distribution of the Child Rights Act (2003) in schools to build awareness,



Group photograph with student participants at the event

especially regarding the role of Family Courts in child justice system.

Delivering the keynote address, Prof. Elakhe O. Abraham addressed the persistent challenges of child labour in Nigeria, calling for systemic reforms and a multi-sectoral response. His presentation outlined practical steps forward, from stronger legal frameworks and compulsory education to community-level child protection structures and improved reporting mechanisms. Prof. Elakhe stressed the need to depoliticize social protection, alleviate poverty, and promote decent work for adults to eliminate the economic triggers that push children into labour. He also encouraged young people to learn their rights and speak out boldly.

Adding a health dimension, Dr. Irene Akhideno, President of the Medical Women Association of Nigeria (Edo State Chapter), warned about the long-term psychological effects of abuse. She encouraged parents to be emotionally present in their children's lives and to seek professional help when needed.

During the interactive session, participants raised critical issues affecting children in rural communities to include:

- Parental neglect, especially in cases of teenage pregnancy due to abuse.
- Cultural acceptance of child farm labour, which becomes abuse when it disrupts education.

Sexual abuse of boys, highlighting the need for equal protection regardless of gender.

Child street hawking during school hours, identified as a failure of adult accountability rather than a child's fault.

Facilitators clarified legal provisions and stressed that under Nigeria's Child Rights Act, every child has the right to protection, education, and dignity, regardless of circumstance.

A special highlight of the day was a quiz competition featuring students from six schools where Uromi JDPCI runs Adolescents' Human Rights Clubs. After a spirited contest, Egbeyan Matilda of Idunwele Girls claimed first place, followed by Eghenlen Barnabas of Annunciation Catholic College in second position and Osagie Gracious of Opoji Commercial in third position.

All winners received prizes including cash, school bags, notebooks, plaques, and educational materials. Every participating student received a customized notebook and pen from Uromi JDPCI. To further demonstrate solidarity, the Medical Women Association of Nigeria donated sanitary pads, soaps, tissue rolls for girls and slippers for boys. These simple but significant gifts reinforced the day's message of dignity and care.



The Prize winners at the quiz competition

This year's commemoration was more than a one-day event. It was a rallying cry and a bold reminder that child protection demands sustained action, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and community vigilance. Uromi JDPCI continues to champion the rights, dignity, and future of every child through education, advocacy, and direct community engagement and remain committed to ensuring that no child is left behind.

Building Peace from the Ground Up: Uromi JDPCI Trains Community Actors on Conflict Sensitivity and Resolution

On May 8th and 9th, 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) hosted a transformative two-day workshop on Conflict Sensitivity, Management, Resolution, and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) at the Chancery Hall of the Catholic Diocese of Uromi. The purpose of the training was to equip frontline actors with the knowledge, tools, and mindset to be conflict sensitive, resolve community-level disputes peacefully, ethically, and effectively. The training brought together 100 (66 males, 34 females) participants, which include community paralegals, child protection actors, social welfare officials, and representatives from law enforcement agencies across the five Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District. Each participant brought their own field experiences to the table, enriching the training with real-life case discussions and peer learning. The sessions emphasized the role of paralegals as frontline peace actors, entrusted with neutrality, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity in addressing disputes.



The Facilitator making presentation during training

The training which was facilitated by the Director of Program of Uromi JDPCI Dr. Michael Iyoriobhe,



A participant making contribution during training

adopted interactive, reflective, and practical learning methods. Conflict was metaphorically presented as a tree, with its roots representing causes, its trunk symbolizing the core issue, and the branches depicting its effects on people and communities.



Group Photograph with participants

Participants explored the nature, types, and drivers of conflict, and learned how to distinguish between conflict sensitivity, conflict management, and conflict resolution. Through this, they developed a deeper understanding of how to analyze tensions within their local contexts and adopt strategies that promote healing and de-escalation rather than harm.

The “Do No Harm” principle was introduced as a guiding framework for conflict sensitivity, urging actors to be mindful of the local context and avoid actions that could unintentionally worsen tensions. Conflict response styles such as avoiding, accommodating, competing, compromising, and collaborating were analyzed, alongside core techniques like active listening, neutral language, ethical decision-making, and conflict mapping.

During the Q&A segment, participants raised critical legal concerns around female inheritance rights and the status of adopted children in family conflicts. Legal experts provided clear guidance: female children have equal legal rights to inheritance, especially when supported by formal documentation. On the question of adopted children, it was affirmed that they remain the legal responsibility of their adoptive parents, irrespective of family dynamics, although broader family acceptance may depend on cultural discretion. Such clarifications deepened participants' understanding of the legal and emotional dimensions of family-related conflicts, equipping them to navigate sensitive issues with both confidence and care.

Participants were tasked with applying what they had learned to real-world conflict scenarios in their communities. They were encouraged to submit feedback during the next quarterly meeting on how these new skills enhanced their mediation efforts and outcomes. Practical assignments and scenario-based learning helped embed the training content, ensuring that participants would carry these lessons well beyond the event itself.

Airwaves for Justice: Uromi JDPCI Expands Radio Outreach on Human Rights Awareness

As part of its continued commitment to promoting justice, equity, and human dignity, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiative (Uromi JDPCI) sustained its weekly radio programme Tagged Uromi JDPCI Human Rights Half Hour on A'S 99.9 FM.. This bold and far-reaching public sensitization effort continues to educate listeners across Edo Central Senatorial District on fundamental human and beyond on rights, gender justice, and cultural transformation.

Thirteen new episodes were aired during the reporting period, bringing the total number of episodes to nineteen since the program's inception. Each episode was designed to break down complex human rights issues into accessible conversations that empower communities with knowledge and voice. A broad range of pressing human rights issues were tackled. Many of which reflected everyday struggles faced by vulnerable groups



Discussants at a Radio sensitization programme

in the region. Some of the themes discussed include: Understanding Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Common Forms of GBV and their impact on individuals and communities, Prevention strategies for addressing SGBV, Child abuse, neglect, and abandonment, Human rights and harmful cultural practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage, and widowhood rites, The effects of harmful traditions on women, children, persons with disabilities, and widows, The intersection between cultural preservation and human dignity, The role of community leaders in driving cultural reform, Codification of Customary Law in Esanland, Women's rights in the context of African Traditional Religion, Forced oath-taking and the need to protect abuse survivors through legal and not cultural means



Discussants at a Radio sensitization programme

In response to listener feedback, Uromi JDPCI also introduced a monthly Pidgin English summary to make the content more inclusive and understandable for all audiences and callers who expressed interest in simplified explanations. One particular call during the quarter reported a disturbing case of child sexual abuse being addressed through a cultural rite rather than through legal channels. Uromi JDPCI seized the opportunity to emphasize the importance of formal legal processes and the risks associated with relying solely on traditional methods for resolving such serious crimes.

These conversations underscored the importance of grassroots education and highlighted the crucial role of traditional and religious leaders in fostering lasting cultural and legal change.

Uromi JDPCI is changing narratives, challenging norms, and empowering everyday people with knowledge that protects and uplifts by taking human rights conversations directly into people's homes, markets, farms, and workshops. As harmful practices persist and justice gaps remain, Uromi JDPCI's radio advocacy continues to remind communities across Edo Central Senatorial District and beyond that every voice matter and that every right counts.



Discussants at a Radio sensitization programme

Taking Human Rights Education to the Heart of Edo Central Communities

Between April and June 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) deepened its grassroots human rights work through town hall meetings and community sensitization sessions conducted in 8 communities across the five LGAs in Edo Central Senatorial District. These engagements, held under the Human Rights Education and Paralegal Scheme Project, reached a total of 351 persons (257 males and 94 females). It brought together traditional leaders, elders, women, and youth to address harmful cultural practices, promote peaceful coexistence, and align local customs with the Nigerian Constitution and the Edo State Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Law.



Human Rights sensitization at Egbele Community

From Egbele to Ohordua, each community meeting



Human Rights Sensitization at Ekeken Community in Iguebun

neglect, and other violations. Participants learned that while customs hold cultural value, they are not above the Constitution, and that every person, regardless of gender, has equal protection under the law.

The meetings were anything but one-way lectures. Elders challenged long-held beliefs, such as the gender imbalance in adultery accusations, or the practice of compelling widows (but not widowers) to swear oaths of innocence. In Ekehen and Ukoni, the discussion turned to the tensions between burial traditions and religious beliefs, while in Idumebo and Amedokhian, residents



Human Rights Sensitization at Uhe community in Iguebun

sought clarity on widow inheritance, inheritance rights and the role of community leaders in ensuring fairness. In Ebelle, concerns about police misconduct and family disputes opened dialogue on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a way to address conflicts without violating rights.

sparked open conversations on issues that cut to the core of daily life, such as rape, domestic violence, widowhood rites, early child marriage, indecent assault, female genital mutilation, spousal battery, child

A recurring theme was the need to end the culture of privately settling criminal offences, particularly rape, which must be reported to the police for prosecution. Uromi JDPCI also stressed that both men and women can be victims of domestic abuse, and that child protection is a collective community responsibility.

In Ohordua, community leaders pledged to replicate the sensitization in all quarters, while in Ukoni, elders committed to taking the message to every section of their large community. Across the board, participants expressed renewed commitment to

reforming harmful customs and upholding human dignity. Copies of the VAPP Law were distributed to serve as a constant reminder that justice and human rights are not abstract ideals; they are enforceable protections.

Uromi JDPCI is using these town hall meetings to inspire discussion on outdated traditional practices and building bridges between the law and local realities. The effort is creating safe spaces for dialogue to foster a culture where respect for human rights becomes a shared value, embedded in both leadership and everyday community life.



One of the elders in Ukoni, responding to sensitization message

MIGRATION AND COUNTERING TRAFFICKING IN PERSON

ACT AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING IN NIGERIA (AACTING PROJECT)

Uniting for Child Safety: Edo Central Committees Step Up the Fight Against Trafficking

In April 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) brought together child protection champions from across Edo Central Senatorial District for its bi-annual Local Government Child Protection



Group Photograph after meeting in Uromi

Committee meetings, held under the Act Against Child Trafficking in Nigeria (AACTING) project. A total of 160 participants (82 females, 78 males), including 4 males with disabilities, gathered from the five Local Government Areas to share progress, address challenges, and strengthen the united front against child trafficking for sexual exploitation. The room was a diverse mix of voices: Social Welfare and Legal Department heads, officers from the Nigeria Police Force Family Unit, NSCDC, National Orientation Agency, Christian Association of Nigeria, market women leaders, community-based child protection groups, field officers, and Uromi JDPCI project staff. The meetings were used to provide updates and showcase results from the various groups. In Usenu and Ubiaja, vigilant community watch groups spotted warning signs and provided early intervention by counselling the individuals at risk and helping them avoid the dangerous paths. In Opoji, committee members exposed patterns of internal trafficking and exploitation, and committed to implementing targeted actions to dismantle them.



Group Photograph after meeting in Iguebun

In Ebelle and Ewossa, child protection groups led operations to free victims from brothels where they were being exploited. Both survivors were safely reunited with their families in their various locations (one in

Benue State, the other in Onitsha). These rescue stories proved the life-changing impact of quick, and coordinated action. In Esan West LGA, a child who had dropped out of school was successfully reintegrated, thanks to persistent follow-up from the Social Welfare Department. In Ivue, the committee turned concern into action by sensitizing families about the dangers of keeping children out of school, reducing their vulnerability to traffickers.

Uromi JDPCI used the sessions to reinforce the message that collaboration is a non-negotiable factor in the fight against child trafficking. In acknowledging the critical role of grassroots child protection committees, the security agency noted that "When we share information, resources, and strategies, our communities become safer for children" and then expressed their commitment to continued collaboration.

By the close of the meetings, the commitment was clear, whether through community sensitization, counselling,



Discussion at the meeting in Irrua

rescue operations, or school reintegration, Edo Central's child protection network is building a shield of vigilance and care around its most vulnerable members. And with every intervention, they're proving that a united community is the most effective defence against child trafficking.

Raising Young Defenders: Strengthening Child Champion Clubs in Schools and Communities

This quarter, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) deepened its work with the next generation of anti-trafficking advocates by holding 60 quarterly learning sessions with Child Champion Clubs in 15 secondary schools and 15 communities across Edo Central Senatorial District. The



Child Champion session in Opoji

sessions, which were delivered in two series in April and June 2025, were designed to empower children and adolescents with knowledge and skills to recognize, resist, and report

trafficking. The first series introduced participants to the warning signs of trafficking and their fundamental rights to be free from exploitation. The second series built on this foundation, guiding them to recognize traffickers by their behaviours, adopt prevention strategies, and connect with local child protection structures when reporting cases.

The sessions were not just lectures, but interactive, child-led, and anchored in real-life examples drawn from local and global experiences. Games, group discussions, and recap activities kept the learning dynamic, while storytelling brought the dangers of trafficking into sharp focus.

From Learning to Action



Child Champion session at Eguare Ekpoma

The sessions reached 318 students (71 boys, 247 girls) in schools and 315 children (71 boys, 244 girls) in communities. The impact was immediate; children began speaking up, reporting eight cases

ranging from attempted trafficking scams to denial of education and child maltreatment.

One case from one of the Secondary Schools highlighted both the challenges and the power of these clubs. A female member shared her experience of neglect and emotional abuse from her grandmother, which had driven her to consider running away. With the encouragement of her peers, she



Child Champion session in Obedu Secondary School

opened up during the session. Her case was referred to the local Child Protection Group, which intervened, counselled her guardian, and placed the family under monitoring. Today, her welfare has

improved, and plans are underway to involve her grandmother in the CPG to strengthen her understanding of child welfare and protection.

Some members also recounted being targeted with suspicious online job offers and travel opportunities. Thanks to earlier digital safety training, they quickly identified these as potential trafficking attempts and avoided them.

Spreading the Word

The ripple effect of the clubs' work is tangible. Through peer

education activities, members reached 307 people, made up of 240 children (92 boys, 148 girls) and 67 adults (30 men, 37 women) with trafficking prevention messages. These efforts are building a stronger community shield against exploitation.

Measuring Change

Pre- and post-tests with 30 randomly selected champions revealed promising results. 64% of boys and girls now feel able to assert their rights, and 68% report feeling more empowered to have their voices heard. By the end of



Group Photograph with some Child Champions at Obijon Secondary School, Uromi

the quarter, one thing was clear: these Child Champion Clubs are more than discussion groups; they are breeding grounds for young leaders who are already making their mark. With ongoing mentorship and community collaboration, these champions are helping create a safer, more informed communities in Edo Central Senatorial District, one peer conversation at a time.

A Fresh Start: Empowering Young Female Survivors of Human Trafficking

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) took a bold step in rebuilding the lives of young women who survived the harrowing realities of human trafficking. Through a carefully structured process of identification, profiling, and needs assessment, the organisation ensured that reintegration support reached those who needed it most.

Working with the Edo State Migration Agency, Caritas Nigeria, and the Great Esan Returnee Association, Uromi JDPCI received 19 referrals of potential beneficiaries. Of these, eight young women met the eligibility criteria: female returnees aged 13 to 30, repatriated within the last three years, and with verified experiences of exploitation.

Their stories were strikingly similar—lured with false promises of jobs in Italy, the USA, and Burkina Faso, only to be trafficked to Libya, Ivory Coast, Mali, Dubai, and Russia. There, they endured sexual exploitation, forced labour, and unlawful imprisonment. Most returned with children, little to no income, and urgent needs ranging from vocational training and start-up support to child re-enrolment in school, accommodation assistance, and daily sustenance.

From Survivors to Skilled Entrepreneurs

On 30 April 2025, at the Chancery Complex Hall in Uromi, the

selected beneficiaries attended an orientation and pre-vocational skill workshop under the Act Against Child Trafficking in Nigeria (AACTING) project. The session was designed to introduce them



The Executive Director addressing the beneficiaries during the orientation meeting

to the project, outline available opportunities, and prepare them for vocational apprenticeships that would lay the foundation for sustainable livelihoods. A total of 13 persons participated in the orientation session, including project staff and facilitators. Each of the eight beneficiaries was matched to her chosen vocational path, like tailoring, hairdressing, hair installation, makeup, trading, and catering. Their choices were prioritized to ensure their personal interest and commitment to the learning process.

In his welcome remarks, Arhedo, Executive Director

of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis, commended the young women for their resilience and determination to rebuild their lives. He urged them to embrace focus, discipline, and integrity, reminding them that the skills they were about to acquire were not just a means of income but a gateway to dignity, independence, and renewed self-worth. “The road ahead may be demanding,” he said, “but every stitch, every dish, every service you offer will be a testament to your courage and your choice to rise again.”

The holistic reintegration approach was thereafter outlined to include:

- Economic Empowerment through vocational training, business management coaching, financial literacy, and start-up kits.
- Psychosocial Support to address emotional healing,

rebuild confidence, and equip them with coping strategies.

Ongoing Monitoring to ensure steady progress, troubleshoot challenges, and guide sustainable reintegration.

A Path Forward

With their training now underway, these young women are not just learning trades, they are reclaiming their futures. They carry with them the hard lessons of the past, the tools to create better tomorrows, and the hope that their stories will inspire others to choose safe and legal pathways to opportunity. The journey of reintegration is not an overnight process, but with the commitment of Uromi JDPCI and the support of the AACTING project, these survivors are writing a new chapter that is defined not by exploitation but by empowerment.

HEALTH AND OVC – USAID-THRIVE PROJECT

Supporting Hope and Health: Uromi JDPCI Reaches Over 220 Children Living with HIV

In a remarkable show of compassion and commitment to community health, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) continued its vital outreach to Children Living with HIV (CLHIV) and their caregivers during the second quarter of 2025. Through coordinated home visits, referrals, treatment support, and nutritional aid, the organization touched the lives of over 220 children and their families, delivering hope and essential services when they were needed most.



The Executive Director addressing beneficiaries during food support

Household Visits: Bringing Care to the Doorstep

Recognizing the complex and sensitive challenges faced by CLHIV and their caregivers, Uromi JDPCI conducted 102 household visits across Edo Central Senatorial District. These visits were designed to offer tailored, home-based support that went beyond medical needs to address emotional and psychosocial barriers to well-being.

During each visit, the team, including community case workers, provided personalized counselling aimed at helping children manage stigma, anxiety, trauma, and the emotional toll of living with HIV. These sessions created a safe space for CLHIV to express themselves, learn coping strategies, and regain confidence in their ability to live healthy and fulfilling lives.



A case worker during home visit

At the same time, the team ensured that these children were not just emotionally supported but also clinically linked to the services they required. Eight CLHIV households were successfully enrolled into the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) programme, a critical step in promoting consistent treatment and achieving viral suppression among CLHIV.

Supporting Adherence to ART and Viral Load Monitoring

Treatment adherence is the cornerstone of successful HIV management, and Uromi JDPCI was diligent in its effort to ensure no child was left behind. During the quarter, 102 CLHIV were mobilized and supported to attend their Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) refill and viral load sample appointments at

designated health facilities.

The team provided targeted counselling for both children and their caregivers, emphasizing the importance of consistency in ART and empowering them with tools and strategies to stay on track.

A notable success of this quarter's outreach was the re-engagement of 11 children who had defaulted on their treatment. Through strategic tracking and persistent follow-up, Uromi JDPCI team located 15 CLHIV who had missed previous appointments and successfully reconnected 11 of them with their treatment providers. This effort not only restored vital care to the children but also strengthened community health outcomes by reducing the risk of HIV transmission.

Food Support for Vulnerable Households

As economic challenges deepen across communities, nutrition remains a major concern for vulnerable families, particularly those affected by chronic illness. In response, Uromi JDPCI provided nutritional support to 36 CLHIV and their households, helping to ease the burden of food insecurity.

This initiative served both physical and emotional needs: ensuring children had access to nutritious food while also affirming that they are not alone in their journey. For many families, these food packages were a lifeline, not just materially, but as a tangible sign of care, solidarity, and dignity.

A Lasting Impact on Health and Hope

The second quarter of 2025 stands as a powerful testament to Uromi JDPCI's commitment to children and families living with HIV. Through multidimensional interventions that include home-based counselling, clinical referrals, treatment adherence support, re-engagement of defaulters, and nutritional aid, Uromi JDPCI made significant strides in improving health outcomes, strengthening resilience, and restoring hope to children living with HIV and their Households. These efforts are not only transforming individual lives but also contributing meaningfully to the global UNAIDS 95-95-95 goals: ensuring that 95% of people living with HIV know their status, 95% of those diagnosed are on treatment, and 95% of those on treatment achieve viral suppression.

Uromi JDPCI remains unwavering in its mission to protect the most vulnerable, promote community health, and build a future where every child, regardless of their HIV status, has the opportunity to thrive.



Food items distributed to beneficiaries

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

GREENING EDO CENTRAL: UROMI JDPCI CHAMPIONS CLIMATE ACTION



The Executive Director giving a keynote address

In our continued commitment to climate justice, Uromi JDPCI marked major environmental milestones this quarter by commemorating World Environment Day and

expanding our Tree Planting Initiative across Edo Central Senatorial District.

World Environment Day: Rallying for a Plastic-Free Future

On June 5, 2025, Uromi JDPCI joined the global call to action on World Environment Day, themed "Ending Plastic Pollution." The event, held at Chancery Hall, Egbele, Uromi, brought together 70 stakeholders, including government representatives, traditional rulers, religious leaders, waste managers, and JDPC members from across the diocese.

In his keynote address, the Executive Director, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo, emphasized the urgent need for collective environmental stewardship. He urged participants to move beyond awareness into action geared towards reducing single-use plastics, promoting recycling, conducting clean-ups, and pushing for policy enforcement and eco-innovation. "We are not just called to live in the world, but to care for it," he reminded attendees.

The event concluded with a unified commitment to environmental responsibility, as participants shared goodwill messages calling for stronger political leadership, the enforcement of environmental laws, and grassroots engagement in the fight against plastic waste.



Some seedlings distributed to people

Tree Planting: Sowing Seeds for Climate Resilience

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) continued to champion tree planting across various communities

in Edo Central Senatorial District. The Tree planting is a strategic response to the increasing environmental challenges facing local communities, including deforestation, land degradation, flooding, and loss of biodiversity. It was also used to promote environmental sustainability and foster a healthier ecosystem across the communities.

Uromi JDPCI made available 171 improved fruit seedlings, made up of 20 Avocado pear, 30 Black pear, 15 soursop, 53 oranges, 20 tangerine, 10 coconut, 5 cashew, 11 palm, 2 mangos, 5 grape. These seedlings were distributed at subsidized rates to community members across Edo Central Senatorial District and Chancery Complex. 30 paw paws were further nursed and planted in the chancery compound, bringing the total seedlings to 201.

Uromi JDPCI continued tree planting initiative is a practical and impactful approach to combating climate change, promoting sustainable practices, and fostering a culture of environmental care. It is a long-term investment in environmental health, climate resilience, and community empowerment.

Uromi JDPCI remains committed to expanding this initiative through partnerships, education, and community engagement, ensuring that the ecological future of Edo Central Senatorial District is secured for generations to come. This initiative was not just about planting trees but about planting hope for future generations.



Group photograph with participants at the event

CORRECTIONAL CENTER APOSTOLATE

Restoring Dignity Behind Bars: Uromi JDPCI's Impact at Ubiaja Correctional Center

In its continued commitment to holistic human development and social justice, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) carried out a series of impactful activities at the Ubiaja Correctional Center between April and June 2025. These interventions not only touched the lives of inmates through spiritual and legal counselling but also amplified messages of hope, peace, atonement, and restorative justice.

Reflecting on Conscience: International Day of Conscience 2025

On April 5th, Uromi JDPCI joined the global community in observing the International Day of Conscience, under the theme "Leave No One Behind." The event, held within the correctional facility, offered a powerful reflection on moral transformation, healing, and the importance of second chances. Drawing from scripture, real-life stories of transformation, and the spiritual wisdom of the Church, the Uromi JDPCI team emphasized that no individual is beyond redemption. Inmates were encouraged to see themselves



Gift items from the Bishop to the inmates

through the lens of divine mercy, with biblical references including the Prodigal Son, King David, and John Newton, whose famous hymn "Amazing Grace" served as a

reminder of God's limitless forgiveness.

Twenty-eight inmates participated in the session, with 14 seeking spiritual counselling and 13 requesting legal guidance. The event was a call to let conscience guide one's journey toward healing with God, society, and oneself.

Charity in Action: Bishop Donatus Ogun's Food Donation

Demonstrating deep compassion and solidarity, Most Rev. Dr. Donatus Ogun, OSA, Bishop of the Diocese of Uromi, extended a generous hand to inmates at Ubiaja Correctional Center through Uromi JDPCI. On



Gift items from the Bishop to the inmates

April 10, 2025, the Uromi JDPCI team delivered vital food items, including rice, garri, yams, palm oil, fruits, salt, onions, and a Ram, all donated by the Bishop.

The facility's Controller, CSC Agili Dennis, received the items with heartfelt appreciation and offered prayers for the Bishop and the Catholic Diocese of Uromi. This act of charity reinforced the Church's commitment to ensuring that even the incarcerated are not forgotten, especially in their moments of greatest vulnerability.

Building Inner Peace in May

In May, Uromi JDPCI returned for its monthly spiritual and legal counselling outreach. The focus of this session was "Building Inner Peace in a Chaotic World." Through scripture, reflection, and testimony, inmates were encouraged to find peace despite their trials and incarceration.

Referencing passages such as John 14:27 and Acts 16:25, the Assistant Executive Director led participants in reflecting on the spiritual sources of peace from God, through prayer, and from within the heart. Inmates were deeply engaged, some sharing personal stories of transformation and commitment to positive change since previous sessions.

A total of 19 inmates took part in the session, including one person with a disability. Six received spiritual counselling, and six others were offered legal advice. Twenty copies of Our Daily Strength prayer manual were distributed to help nurture their spiritual growth.

Atonement and Restitution: Spiritual and Legal Counselling in June

On June 6, 2025, Uromi JDPCI held a special spiritual and legal counselling session on the topic: "Atonement and Restitution: The Importance of Making

Amends." Led by the Assistant Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Rev Fr Ferguson Ukpabor and the Legal Officer, the session emphasized that incarceration, while a legal consequence, must also be accompanied by personal responsibility, spiritual healing, and community reconciliation.

Inmates were introduced to the concepts of atonement and restitution as pathways toward rehabilitation, not just punishment. Citing examples from Nigerian law and restorative justice practices, the session offered practical and spiritual approaches to making amends, from writing letters of apology to returning stolen items or engaging in community service.

Challenges such as stigma, lack of resources, and the absence of restorative justice frameworks in correctional systems were acknowledged. Yet the session ended on a hopeful note, with inmates encouraged to embrace a life of accountability and transformation.

Twenty-nine inmates attended, including 22 who received legal counselling. The session highlighted that true justice is not only about punishment, but also about healing for the offender, the victim, and society.

A Journey of Redemption

Through its sustained presence and interventions at Ubiaja Correctional Center, Uromi JDPCI continues to embody the message: no one is beyond hope. Uromi JDPCI is not just offering services; it is restoring dignity. by integrating spiritual support, legal education, acts of charity, and moral reflections into the Correctional Center Apostolate. Each visit, each session, and each act of listening reminds the inmates that transformation is possible and that, indeed, no one should be left behind.

PARISH JDPC

Strengthening Parish JDPCs: Uromi JDPCI Fosters Deeper Engagement Across the Diocese

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) made significant strides in building the capacity and cohesion of Parish Justice, Development, and Peace Commissions (JDPCs) across the Diocese of Uromi. Uromi JDPCI, through a blend of virtual training, direct follow-up, and consistent engagement, has continued to nurture the spiritual and social mission of Catholic Social Teaching at the grassroots level.

A major highlight of the quarter was the successful organization of an online training session held via WhatsApp, which brought together JDPC members from nine parishes across the diocese. This training served three critical purposes. First, it aimed to strengthen the internal structures and operations of Parish JDPCs, ensuring that these units are functional, organized, and positioned to deliver on their mandate. Second, it provided an opportunity to reflect on the progress made so far, recognizing accomplishments, identifying ongoing challenges, and encouraging the sharing of effective practices among parishes. Finally, the session focused on

reorienting members on their individual and collective roles within the Church, emphasizing their responsibility in fostering justice, peace, and human development within their communities.

To reinforce the impact of the online session, Uromi JDPCI carried out a series of follow-up calls with selected JDPC members. Nineteen individuals (12 females and 7 males) were reached during these calls. The primary purpose of this follow-up was to evaluate how effectively participants had cascaded their knowledge through step-down trainings in their respective parishes. The calls also served as a means to further encourage commitment, troubleshoot emerging structural issues, and offer additional guidance where necessary. These direct engagements did not only help to sustain the momentum from the training but also deepened relationships with local JDPC actors.

Another important aspect of the quarter's work was the receipt and review of monthly reports from eight parishes. These reports offered valuable insight into parish-level activities, participation trends, and the practical workings of JDPC structures. The gender composition

within these meetings showed a notable representation of women, reflecting the inclusive spirit of JDPC work. The data provided also helped strengthen accountability, as Uromi JDPCI continues to monitor and support the functionality of these parish-based commissions.

Despite the achievements recorded, a number of challenges still persist. Inconsistent participation from some members, irregular reporting, and observed gaps in

knowledge during follow-up calls highlighted the need for ongoing mentorship and support. To address these gaps, Uromi JDPCI will sustain follow-up on Parishes, not just through calls but, where possible, through in-person visits. Plans are also underway to organize refresher trainings and targeted capacity-building workshops that will address the specific needs of Parish JDPC members.

MICRO CREDIT

Empowering Dreams and Changing Lives: Uromi JDPCI Micro Credit Scheme Lifts Local Entrepreneurs

From April to June 2025, Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) continued to empower small-scale entrepreneurs across Edo Central Senatorial District through its Micro Credit Scheme. In this quarter, the scheme focused not just on lending but on transformation, helping individuals, families, and entire communities take vital steps toward economic independence.

The scheme supported 77 beneficiaries (17 males and 60 females) across 12 groups in 10 communities, helping them strengthen existing businesses, expand farms, and meet essential household needs. Through access to small loans, savings support, and practical financial training, beneficiaries were able to grow their businesses, expand farms, improve household income, and meet daily needs with greater dignity and confidence.



A group of beneficiaries during a coaching session

Building Confidence and Capacity

What sets the Uromi JDPCI Micro Credit Scheme apart is its deep commitment to holistic empowerment. Beneficiaries are not only given access to credit, but are also guided through financial literacy training that helps them understand loan terms, develop savings habits, and track their business expenses. For many, these sessions were the first time they had received any form of financial education. The training led to real change: participants became more confident in handling their finances, began setting aside savings, and learned to separate capital from profit, a critical skill for long-term sustainability. The knowledge gained was as valuable as the financial support, and it has empowered local entrepreneurs to manage their resources wisely and make better business decisions.



Monitoring visit and confirmation of payment

Real Stories, Real Progress

Across the communities served, stories of transformation emerged. In Ekpoma, a female member of the Victory Group used her loan to expand her business and attract new customers. Her sales increased, and for the first time, she began saving weekly. She proudly shared how the financial literacy training helped her keep better records, plan ahead, and support her family more comfortably.

Her story mirrors many others — individuals who started with a small push but used it to take big steps forward in their lives and livelihoods.

Beyond Business: Strengthening Households

The impact of the scheme went well beyond business growth. With improved earnings, many beneficiaries were able to meet urgent family needs, such as feeding, education, and healthcare. Some used their savings to reinvest in their trade or farm, while others gained the confidence to leave behind informal lenders and manage their finances independently.

The scheme's approach, which combines financial access with education and community support, has helped reduce dependence, restore self-worth, and spark hope in places where opportunity had long felt out of reach.

Looking Ahead

As the Micro Credit Scheme enters its next phase, Uromi JDPCI remains committed to expanding its reach and deepening its impact. The vision is clear: to support local entrepreneurs not just with capital, but with the tools, knowledge, and encouragement they need to succeed and thrive.

The success of this quarter reinforces what we have always believed: that when people are given the chance, they rise. And when they rise, families are fed, dreams are revived, and communities grow stronger.