

Progress Report on African Widow and Orphan Support on Work Done from October 2016 to June 2017

1. Introduction

Beacon of Hope initiative, World Renew, beneficiaries and their communities express sincere appreciation to African Widow and Orphan Support (AWOS) for gifts and ministry of empowering traumatized widows and orphans as a result of terrorist attacks including violent communal crises between herdsmen and farmers. During the period under review BHI through the generous support of AWOS was able to carry out ministry to 22 communities and as a result 1,760 beneficiaries were reached in the following states

1. **Adamawa State:** Three communities reached were as follows:- (Watu, Kubi and Yamwe) through Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN) Women Ministry
2. **Borno State:** Two communities reached were as follows: (Shaffa, and Mbulamel-Biu) through Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN) Women Ministry
3. **Benue State:** Seven Communities reached were as follows: (Gbande, Ikyowase, Ushongo, Uatsor, Kpamo, Agasha, and Wedikpa) through Universal Reformed Christian Church (NKST) Women Fellowship and Mother Union of Anglican Diocese of Makurdi
4. **Yobe State:** Two communities reached were as follows: (Kukar- Gadu, and Firi) through Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) Women's Fellowship
5. **Taraba State:** Four communities reached were (Nyankwala, Gidan-Idi, Jenuwa-Gida and Rikya-Jenuwa) through the women fellowship of Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria (CRCN) and Reformed Church of Christ in Nations (RCCN)
6. **Kaduna State:** Four Communities (Godogodo, Gidan-Waya, Sabon Gari and Zankan) through the Women Fellowship of Evangelical Church Wining All. (ECWA- SIM)

Detailed Beneficiaries Reached

1. 880 widows received trauma healing
2. 660 widows received economic empowerment
3. 440 orphans were provided with school fees (tuition) for three years
4. 440 Orphans caregivers trained

Note: (Widows that received economic empowerment are part of those in trauma healing)

Orphan Selection and Training of Caregivers

Orphans were selected by a committee set up by the women fellowship in the local congregation based on the AWOS general criteria given. Beneficiary should be an orphan through circumstances classified as traumatic such as violence associated with terrorist or fighting over land, displacement, disability of parents/guidance due to violence etc. Orphans should be 15 years and below to enable them receive support for three years in school. Orphans that lost both parents be given priority and more females may be selected

An orphan must commit to good character necessary to serve his or her community as a model, have a responsible guardian to provide care/support and is recommended by a community or religious leadership to women fellowship selection committee and leadership.

Each of the 440 beneficiary orphans had his or her school fees (tuition) paid for a period of three years under the supervision of a caregiver, community leader, and women's ministry and the beneficiary denomination. Caregivers were trained on how to provide support to their orphans and other children in their care such as education, psychosocial care, healthcare, nutrition, and legal protection, clothing, health and housing. There were many who needed help but only a few could be supported.



Economic Empowerment for Traumatized Widows

Widows were trained on basic business principles including choosing appropriate business, developing a business plan, marketing, money handling and proper record keeping. Each trained beneficiary received either fifteen thousand (\$41) or twenty thousand naira (\$55) as micro business startup capital. Training and provision of economic empowerment grant provided an incentive needed by the widows to engage in businesses. The economic support given has enabled many widows to engage themselves in self-help economic ventures to support their families. Beneficiaries are involved in peasant farming, trading, sale of grains/tubers/vegetables/soup ingredients and food selling, etc. Beneficiaries were also introduced to cooperative savings and loan.



Trauma Healing

Trauma healing sessions were held with 880 widows using the manual “*Healing the Wounds of Trauma: How the Church Can Help*” manual. Many of the trauma healing beneficiaries testified that they received help not to give up on life. Many testified that they have decided to forgive the attackers and some that could not sleep well in the past are able to sleep well.

The trauma healing sessions continue to encourage the process of forgiveness, reconciliation and healing in target communities. Trauma healing sessions have rekindled hope and courage for communities.



Some destroyed houses at Gidan Waya community



Conclusion and Appreciation

Expressions of gratitude and appreciation continue to flow from beneficiaries, communities, and religious leaders in all reached communities. They see the opportunity to be part of this project as a rare privilege and sincerely say a big thank you to the donors. Beneficiaries and communities see the grant as a demonstration of God’s unfailing love that brings hope and strength.

World Renew, Beacon of Hope Initiative and beneficiary churches and their communities also greatly appreciate African Widow and Orphan Support for this show of love. In the light of so much pain and struggling, individuals and communities are receiving help and encouragement to move on in life through AWOS ministry for which we remain thankful. As Marvin go round some beneficiary communities he will discover that what we have written cannot fully express the very deep appreciation in the minds of beneficiaries and communities. We pray for God’s blessings and support on AWOS ministry.