

## **Beacon of Hope Team Ministry Report**

### **AWOS Program Update from March 2021 – September 2021**

Nigeria continues to be confronted with multiple security challenges among which include the activities of Boko Haram terrorists, armed herdsmen, kidnappers and banditry leading to rising numbers of widows and orphans leaving many homeless, helpless and displaced. This has caused so much trauma owing to the loss of lives, properties and sources of livelihood.

The gifts of African Widow and Orphan Support (AWOS) has empowered traumatized widows and orphans who are victims of these wicked acts in traumatized communities of northern and central Nigeria through Beacon of Hope Team. From March 2021 to September, 2021, two hundred and seventy (270) widows and 180 orphans were reached through the project in nine (9) communities of four (4) states.

1. **Benue State:** Gondoza, Jato-Aka, and Manor communities through Universal Reformed Christian Church (URCC) Women Fellowship.
2. **Kaduna State:** Angwa Njoh, communities through Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA).
3. **Nasarawa State:** Nindah communities through Evangelical Reformed Church of Christ (ERCC) Women Fellowship.
4. **Plateau State:** Kombun, Kuru, Rukuba and Wadrak communities through Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) Women Fellowship.

#### **Breakdown of selected beneficiaries are as follows:**

1. 270 widows reached through Economic Empowerment training
2. 270 widows were trained through trauma healing sessions
3. 180 orphans were provided with school scholarship for a period of three years.
4. 180 caregivers received training on provision of care and support to orphans

In addition, all the 270 widows reached with economic empowerment had trauma healing sessions

#### **Economic Empowerment to selected widows**

Traumatized widows from target communities were trained on economic empowerment to develop their skills on business, the training empowered the widows on basic business principles on how to startup or expand existing businesses. Lessons covered during training include:

Correct business worldview, how to choose an appropriate business, money management, business planning, business ethics, proper recordkeeping, and marketing strategies. Widows trained were excited to learn new skills. They saw it as a great opportunity that enabled them engage themselves in self-help ventures that is helping to improve their families. Target beneficiaries received startup grant of forty thousand naira (about US\$105) as support from AWOS where they set up businesses of their choices such as peasant farming, petty trading of grains, yam tubers, vegetables and food vending. Some beneficiaries shared that the knowledge and skills received were helpful and timely. Others said they are now able to distinguish between personal and business money as a result of improved record keeping which is helping them adequately manage resources meant for the business. Some beneficiaries also testify of improvement in their businesses and increased profit. Some businesses are expanding as a result of this program.

Furthermore, beneficiaries were introduced to local savings and loans where they save on a weekly basis to generate local pool they can borrow from for their ventures.



**Business training at Manor community**



**Business training at Jato-Aka community**



**Orphan support/ Caregivers**

**Business training at Wadruk community**

**training**

There is increased number of needy orphans in northern Nigeria due to lingering insecurity. In spite of the efforts of this program, many needy orphans are still unreached. Selected orphans were those that experienced traumatic situations associated by violence such as terrorists and herdsmen attacks and displacement. School fees was paid for orphans aged 15years and below for a period of three years. Priority was given to orphans that have lost both parents. With AWOS support, Beacon of Hope Team provided forty-five thousand naira (about \$118) school fees support to 180 orphans. All beneficiaries in different locations are currently in school and studying happily. One hundred and eighty caregivers were trained on how to provide support to beneficiary orphans in areas such as psychosocial care, healthcare, nutrition, legal protection, clothing, health and housing. Some caregivers shared that they learnt things they had not known before. They made commitment to talk, play with and listen more to the orphans in their care



**Orphans supported at Manor community**



**Caregivers training at Jato-Aka community**



Njoh

**Trauma Healing**

Beneficiaries' express appreciation for the opportunities to share their pain as well painful experiences they have encountered from the many atrocities perpetrated by their attackers in their communities. Trauma healing sessions have continued to encourage the process of forgiveness, reconciliation and healing in target communities. Trauma healing sessions have rekindled hope in God and courage for beneficiaries. Of note also is the willingness of many beneficiaries to forgive those that hurt them and move on in life with hope. It is amazing to see some of the beneficiaries who have passed through a lot of pain now helping and encouraging others in their *communities*. The manual "*Healing the wounds of trauma: how the church can help*" developed by the American bible society was used in carrying out healing sessions with beneficiaries.



Trauma healing session at Manor community



## Conclusion

Beneficiaries, families, churches and their communities greatly appreciate African Widow and Orphan Support (AWOS) for the great show of love. Some shared since their communities were attacked, they felt lost and helpless as no help came their way even from the government. They lack words to express their hearts' gratitude to this show of love from AWOS through the Beacon of Hope Team. They pray that God would bless this noble ministry and its supporters

## MNENA'S STORY

Mnena Afanga is 32 years old widow with 2 children from Jato-Aka community of Benue State; she lost her husband who was the bread winner to herdsmen attack in 2009. As an unemployed widow, life became very difficult for her. She could barely afford daily meals for her children and herself, and meeting other needs like school costs and basic necessities was extremely difficult.

Mnena was one of the beneficiaries who participated in the economic empowerment training at the Universal Reformed Christian Church (URCC) in her community. At the training, they were taught basic business principles and given a startup capital of about \$118 where she set up a fish business. She now sells fried fish within her community where she generates income to take care of some of her family needs. Her children are back to school and she does not rely on others for help. With the savings group in her area, she is encouraged to save weekly and plans to expand her business. Mnena shared that the trauma healing sessions helped her to come to terms with her situation. It provided her the opportunity for the first time to share her pain and be prayed for. She said even though the lesson on forgiveness was difficult, she began experiencing relief when she decided to forgive the attackers. She is grateful as she believes God loves her and has great plans ahead for her. Mnena further said unlike before, she is able to contribute resources to church and community projects including helping others in need. This gives her some sense of self-worth and comfort in knowing of a truth God still loves her. She sends her appreciation to the Beacon of Hope Team and AWOS for the opportunity.



**Mnena at her fish business**



**Mnena attending to her customers**

## **Security Update**

### **Gunmen attack Plateau community, kill 7, raze over 275 houses**

No fewer than seven persons were killed as gunmen suspected to be herders, weekend, attacked hamlets in Miango, Irigwe chieftdom in Bassa Local Government Area of Plateau State

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/08/gunmen-attack-plateau-community-kill-7-raze-over-275-houses/>

### **Plateau Attacks: 17 killed, 85 buildings burnt – Police August 4, 2021**

The Commissioner of Police in Plateau, Edward Egbuka, has said that 17 people were killed and 85 buildings burnt in the recent attacks in Bassa and Riyom Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/north-central/477422-plateau-attacks-17-killed-85-buildings-burnt-police.html>

### **Again, suspected herders kill scores in Plateau community**

A yet undisclosed number of people have been killed by suspected herders in an attack Tuesday night in Yelwan Zangam in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/481136-again-suspected-herders-kill-scores-in-plateau-community.html>

### **Four killed, 10 houses burnt in fresh Plateau attack**

Residents of Nche-Tahu community in Bassa Local Council of Plateau State were, on Friday, thrown into mourning, following gunmen's attack, which left three persons dead. Also, 10 houses were set ablaze in the early morning attack

<https://guardian.ng/news/four-killed-10-houses-burnt-in-fresh-plateau-attack/>

### **Police confirm abduction of 73 Zamfara students**

The Zamfara State Police Command has on Wednesday night confirmed the abduction of 73 Students of Government Day Secondary school, Kaya in Maradun Local Government Area of the state

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/09/police-confirm-abduction-of-73-zamfara-students/>

### **Attackers kidnap 140 pupils from Nigerian boarding school**

Gunmen have kidnapped 140 children from a boarding school in north-western [Nigeria](#), a school official has said, in the latest in a wave of mass abductions targeting schoolchildren and students

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/05/attackers-kidnap-pupils-from-nigerian-boarding-school-bethel-baptist-kaduna>

### **Suspected herders kill 30, injure others in Benue**

No fewer than 30 persons have been killed and many others injured as suspected Fulani herdsmen attacked Odugbeho village in Agatu Local Council of Benue State on Sunday.

<https://guardian.ng/news/suspected-herders-kill-30-injure-others-in-benue/>

### **2,371 people abducted in Nigeria in first half of 2021 — Report**

An average of 13 persons were abducted daily in Nigeria in the first half of 2021, according to a report by SBM Intelligence, bringing to 2,371 the number of persons kidnapped in the country within the first six months of the year.

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/07/2371-people-abducted-in-nigeria-in-first-half-of-2021-report/>

### **32 more students of Bethel Baptist High School regain freedom –CAN**

Another batch of 32 abducted students of Bethel Baptist High School, Maraban Damishi, in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna state, have regained their freedom, bringing the total of those released to 90

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/481714-32-more-students-of-bethel-baptist-high-school-regain-freedom-can.html>

### **Troops repel Boko Haram attack on Maiduguri**

*Heavy shootings were heard at about 6 p.m. at the outskirts of Jiddari Polo neighbourhood of Maiduguri.*

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/460990-troops-repel-boko-haram-attack-on-maiduguri.html>