

Report on African Widow and Orphan Support October 2018 to July 2019

1. Introduction

Beacon of Hope initiative, beneficiaries and their communities express sincere appreciation to African Widow and Orphan Support (AWOS) for the great show of love. Gifts received have empowered traumatized widows and orphans with hope for the future even as terrorist attacks of Boko Haram including activities of armed herdsmen and of recent kidnapping continue unabated. BHI through the generous support of AWOS was able to carry out ministry in twenty-two (19) communities and as a result 1,520 beneficiaries were reached in the following states:

1. **Benue State:** Two Communities reached were Abeda, Aneke, Agasha, Amaafu, Chembe and Sati communities through Universal Reformed Christian Church (URCC) Women Fellowship
2. **Plateau State:** Two communities reached were Mazat, Zafok, Rukung, Zanwrah and Sesut through Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) and Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) Women's Fellowship respectively
3. **Bauchi State:** One community reached is Kutaru through the Women Fellowship of Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN)
4. **Nasarawa State:** Two Communities reached were Abaagu and Mararaban Obi through the Women Fellowship of Evangelical Reformed Church of Christ (ERCC)
5. **Kaduna State:** Two Communities reached were Goska and Fadan Karshi through Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) and the Women Fellowship of Evangelical Reformed Church of Christ (ERCC) respectively
6. **Taraba State:** three communities reached were Jalingo, Gembu, and Takum through the CRC-N Diaconal Ministry, Women fellowship of United Methodist Church in Nigeria (UMCN), Women Fellowship of Mabila Baptist Convention of Nigeria (MBCN), and Women Fellowship of Reformed Christian Church for Nations (RCCN)

Detailed Beneficiaries Reached

1. 570 widows received trauma healing
2. 570 widows received economic empowerment
3. 380 orphans were provided with school fees (tuition) for three years

Orphan Selection and Training of Caregivers

A total of three hundred and eighty (380) orphans were selected through women fellowship committees and church leadership in target areas. Beneficiaries have lost one or both parents due to violence. With AWOS support, BHI provided forty-five thousand naira (about \$128) school fees support for a period of three years for each orphan. The women fellowship also provided supervision in various target communities ensuring payment of tuition. Caregivers also had their capacity built on how to provide care to the orphans and other children within their care. 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.

Ngukuran a female beneficiary orphan from Aneke community said she will like to be a teacher when she grows up. Another orphan, Juliet in Fadan Karshi said *“I am happy learning in school with my friends and wish to become a nurse when I grow up to help sick children”*

All supported orphans are in School.



Caregivers training in Sati community



Orphan in school



Orphans from Sesut community

Orphans from Kutaru community

Economic Empowerment for Traumatized Widows

Entrepreneurial training was carried out with 570 beneficiary widows. Areas covered include correct business worldview, selecting an appropriate business, business planning, marketing strategy, money management and record keeping among others. Capital grant of thirty thousand naira (about \$86) was provided to each beneficiary. Beneficiaries are running various businesses of their choice such as selling of food items, tailoring, rearing of animals, and crop farming. Beneficiaries testify of improvement in their businesses and increased profit. Some businesses are expanding as a result of this program. Beneficiaries shared that the support provided enabled many of them to move on in life with hope as they are able to take care of needs for their families without complete dependence on others.

Iveren a widow from Sati community testified of life making meaning once again as she now sees herself with some self-worth as she is able to provide for her family and even help others. She thanks AWOS for making this happen.

Yop a widow from Zafok community said, *“The grant and training I received was very helpful as it made it possible to start a Kiosk for food items which is generating some income for me. I’m able to take care of my children and meet other needs. I am so grateful I don’t have to beg for survival. Thank you AWOS for being a blessing to my family”*.



Trauma Healing

Trauma healing sessions were held with 570 widows using “*Healing the Wounds of Trauma: How the Church Can Help*” manual. Beneficiaries from target communities participated with eagerness in the healing sessions. They were happy at the opportunity to share the hurts they have encountered from the many atrocities experienced 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.

Cecilia a widow from Abaagu said, *“After my decision to let go of the anger and forgive the attackers, I realized I was able to sleep better. I am beginning to experience some relief from the pain within me. I’m grateful for the healing group session”*

Wandoo a widow from Abeda community shared that she found some relief after sharing her pain during the healing sessions. She expressed being encouraged with the fact that God still loves her and has great plans for her despite the pain she is going through. Wandoo also said the lessons were timely and very helpful.



Healing group at Agasha





Destroyed church at Sesut community



Burnt huts in Agasha community



Burnt Huts at Sati community



Destroyed school at Aneke community

Conclusion

Vou a beneficiary widow from Sesut said, *“I think African Widow and Orphan Support was established just for me. For help to find me in my darkest hour, God is indeed love”*.

Beneficiaries and their communities send their appreciation for the sacrifice and concern. Beacon of Hope Initiative continues to be grateful for the partnership with World Renew and AWOS in this very important ministry of care for widows and orphans.