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LOCAL RIGHTS PROGRAMME
STORIES
OF **IMPACT**
GOMBE STATE





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Board, Management and Staff of ActionAid Nigeria, I wish to appreciate the individuals, government institutions and organisations who contributed to the progress recorded during the implementation of the Local Rights Programme (LRP) in Gombe State.

I also appreciate the implementing technical partner Hope for Lonely Foundation (HFTL) and the programme partner Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) who worked in collaboration with ActionAid Nigeria, relevant gatekeepers, Ministries, Agencies and Departments, Civil Society Organisations, and community facilitators to create progressive changes recorded across the seventeen communities - Kupto, Nahuta, Digijim, Kuka Bakwoi, Malam Goni, Gojo Gori, and Garin Abba in Funakaye LGA; Shela Wudoya, and Panguru in Biliri LGA; Lalaipido, Powalam, Lasadar, Latatar, Leketurum, Tedmukzu, Latur, Kaifui, in Shongom LGA where the programme was implemented from 2006-2023.

Kudos to the ActionAid Nigeria LRP team led by Kehinde Arowosegbe with support from Hajara Opaluwa Adamu, Osamudiamen Owen-Akinwale, Teresa Usman, Jannie Zibiri Esakome, Nnenna Ugwu, Sharif Yakubu, Henry Anuforo, Collins Chinyere, Oluwole Olusanya, Fidelis Onyeulor, Bernard Ibelih, and Ogheneovo Aisiri. The contributions of Nkechi Ilochi-Kanny, Head of Programmes, Andrew Mamedu, the Director, Resource Mobilisation & Innovation and Suwaiba Muhammad Dankabo, Director of Programmes are specially recognised. The effort of ActionAid Nigeria's Communications hub led by Oluwakemi Akinremi-Segun who worked with the writer – Hadiza Usman to document and collect the outcomes of the programme in various inspiring format is appreciated.

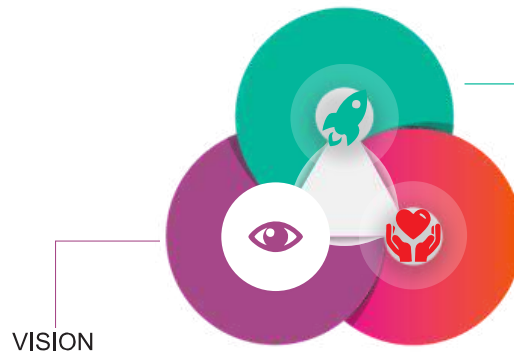
Finally, a big thank you to our esteemed supporters and funding affiliates: ActionAid Italy and United Kingdom for giving us the opportunity to make positive changes in the lives of those who ordinarily would not have been reached.



Ene Obi
Country Director
ActionAid Nigeria



OUR VISION, VALUES, & MISSIONS



VISION

MISSION

To achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication by working with people living in poverty and exclusion, their communities, people's organisations, activists, social movements and supporters.

A just, equitable and sustainable world in which every person enjoys the right to a life of dignity, freedom from poverty and all forms of oppression.

VALUES



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The impact of the local rights programme in Gombe State resounds in all the 10 communities where the programme was executed. The programme reflects a significant shift in the behaviour of individuals, communities, as well as institutions of government. In most of the communities captured, women now report power balance, where women have been denied opportunities to contribute or participate in community governance and politics.

The impact of the LRP programme depends largely on the priority need of the communities. Communities were engaged in making decisions on the top most priority need. Most of the communities had issues with dilapidated or non-existence of school buildings and health centres. Lasadar and Shela communities benefited from the construction of blocks of classrooms which has increased enrolment and retention in school. Leketurum and Kupto on the other hand benefited from the construction of primary health care centres to improve the quality of health care, especially for women and children. Women are now the advocates of child spacing and birth control.

One of the big wins of LRP in Gombe state is the creation of systems and community groups to build cohesion and respond better to challenges. Different groups were created such as Women Peer Education Group, Youth Groups, and Inclusive Forum for Accountable Society (IFAS). These groups were created to act as advocacy and responsive groups to enable sustainability of the LRP.



Kehinde Isaac Arowosegbe
Local Rights Programme Manager
ActionAid Nigeria

INTRODUCTION



The Local Rights Programme has worked towards giving power to people in the most vulnerable and hard to reach communities by empowering them with essential skills and capacities to make demands by engaging political and institutional power structures in their communities and the State.

The programme commenced in 2006 after a comprehensive baseline survey mapping which showed urgent need to respond to the various resultant challenges associated with poverty in 17 communities.

The LRP is a unique programme designed to unleash the potential of persons living in communities and make them play pivotal roles in the decisions and actions that affect their lives and communities. It has continually developed community people's capacity to interrogate prevailing challenges in their communities and take necessary steps, enabling them to be responders than on-lookers and bystanders in developing their communities and their collective well-being.

The LRP baseline survey conducted in 2006 showed power inequality between men and women in many communities of the state. This disparity was so apparent that women were not considered critical actors in the decision that affected them the most. It also identified challenges and issues of poor and non-existence of basic amenities and infrastructure such as schools, health care centres, governance systems, security architecture, youth empowerment/participation and agriculture support system.

ActionAid Nigeria and Hope for the Lonely executed the programme's capacity building and human rights intervention throughout project communities, and subsequently, extended the partnership with Joint National Association of Persons with Disability. Selected participants in the communities were trained in different sectoral areas like governance, education, and women's rights. The knowledge and skills required were deployed to advocate for community services and developmental needs.

ActionAid also identified and built priority infrastructure in communities such as schools, primary health centres, and other livelihood empowerment schemes for women and youths, all towards modelling and providing gender-responsive services by Government.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the LRP is to improve the socio-economic status of poor women, men, and children in LRP states by mobilising communities and building their capacities to implement people centered development programmes using the Human Rights Based Approach to programming. This is done through a three-pronged approach:

NO. 1

Empowering grassroots community through rights consciousness and supporting locally initiated projects



NO. 2

Building the capacity of local institutions



NO. 3

Supporting policy advocacy initiatives that ensure that the voices of people living in poverty are listened to and their rights respected.



THEMATIC FOCUS

Local Rights Programme interventions focus on the following thematic areas:

1

Right to Education



4

Women's Rights and Empowerment



2

Right to Health



5

Right to Food Security



3

Right to Democratic, Good Governance and Accountability



6

Right to Human Security in Conflicts and Emergencies



ActionAid Nigeria has also improved the capacity of the implementing partners in Gombe State by helping them build stronger accountability systems and policies such as financial and audit policies, HR & gender policies, child protection and safeguarding policies anti-sexual, harassment, exploitation, and abuse policies. Proudly, JONAPWD and HFTL are now formidable organisations that we believe will continue to promote social justice in Gombe State.

Suwaiba Muhammad-Dankabo
Director of Programmes
ActionAid Nigeria



THE BLISSFUL PARTNERSHIP

Mrs. Serah Ayuba Yapwa, the visionary CEO of Hope Foundation for the Lonely, has been at the forefront of creating a profound and lasting impact on communities in Gombe State through her non-profit organisation, which was established in June 1999.

One of the most significant milestones in the organisation's journey has been her partnership with ActionAid Nigeria, which commenced in 2007. The collaboration has not only elevated the status of Hope Foundation, it has also amplified its reach and recognition. Mrs. Serah gratefully acknowledges the transformative effect of this partnership, stating, "The partnership with ActionAid has lifted us, spreading our name and recognition far and wide. Wherever we go, we are recognised due to that partnership. The capacity of our staff has been built, and today, their association with ActionAid has opened doors for them professionally."

In addition to the personal growth of Hope Foundation for the Lonely, Mrs. Serah also recounts how the partnership has positively impacted the 17 communities of the three LGAs of Billiri, Shongom and Funakaye, Gombe state they have worked with over the years.

It was an unimaginably unpleasant experience for the children in Shela community, located in Shongom Local Government Area, before the intervention of ActionAid and Hope for the Lonely. With their only available building on the verge of collapse, the children had no choice but to seek refuge under the shade of a tree. Mrs. Serah vividly recalls the plight of these primary school pupils, saying, "In Shela, there was a primary school that was almost falling, and when we got there, the children were having their classes under the tree because the house could collapse at any time. When they told us their need, we wrote to ActionAid and they supported them with a block of classrooms." The impact of the new school infrastructure has been remarkable. Mrs. Serah affirms, "the construction of a school has increased the level of enrolment because anytime rain falls, people don't come to school; the children are discouraged, but with the structure on the ground, it has encouraged a high level of enrolment, retention. and completion within the area"



Mrs Serah Yapwa
CEO, HFTL

In the Kupto community, the partnership between AAN and HFTL has brought about a revolution in girl-child education. Before the AAN/HFTL partnership, girl-child education was not given equal consideration as the male, and was severely neglected, resulting in low school enrolment. Overcoming immense challenges, which the team faced in gaining access and acceptance into the community, they were resolute in their mission to ensure girls' enrolment and retention in schools. Today, Kupto community can now boast of more girls finishing primary school, transiting to secondary school, and beyond, "which is a great success." Mrs. Serah CEO, HFTL, remarked.

Thanks to the amazing partnership between Hope Foundation for the Lonely and ActionAid Nigeria, school children of Shela now have a safe and conducive learning environment, free from fear of collapsing classrooms. Additionally, the emphasis placed on girl-child education in Kupto community has yielded positive results, empowering young girls to pursue their educational dreams.

IN DISABILITY LIES GREAT ABILITY

Ishaku Adamu serves as the State Chairman of the Joint National Association of Persons with Disability (JONAPWD) in Gombe state. He proudly shares, "JONAPWD is an umbrella body of all organisations of all persons with disability in Nigeria, with chapters in all 36 states. The organisation aims to advocate for the full inclusion of all persons with disability in every aspect of life"

JONAPWD became an implementing partner of ActionAid's Local Rights Program (LRP) in Gombe state in 2020. Within this relatively short period, the partnership has already achieved remarkable outcomes. These achievements include capacity building in social auditing for the community of Kupto, establishment of an ICT centre in Shela (poised to become a certified computer skills' centre), peacebuilding and conflict resolution in Pokekere, gender-based violence (GBV) awareness and empowerment training for women in Kupto, Shela and Lekenturum communities of Billiri, Funakaye, and Shongom LGAs of Gombe state.

Although JONAPWD primarily focuses on the developmental issues of people with disabilities, it was no excuse! Their collaboration with ActionAid Nigeria has broadened their horizons and expanded their opportunities. The transition from being a solely disability-oriented organisation to an all-inclusive one was both challenging and rewarding.

Reflecting on this transformation, Ishaku Adamu shares, "Transitioning from being an organisation that solely addresses disability-related issues to one that embraces all-inclusive programming, within our community, was not an easy task. One of the key lessons we have learned in the implementation of the LRP is the importance of not exclusively focusing on disability-related work. We should also advocate for other vulnerable groups. I believe JONAPWD Gombe will serve as a model for other state chapters"



Mr Ishaku Adamu

ED, JONAPWD

The Gombe state chapter for JONAPWD expresses deep gratitude to ActionAid for recognising their potential and empowering them to realise it. Ishaku Adamu acknowledges this support by saying, "We are immensely grateful to ActionAid for believing in us, and for entrusting us with this project. After witnessing the impact, we have made, and with the capacity building they provided us, as well as their unwavering support, during challenging times, we will never forget their contribution to our growth."

Through the collaboration between JONAPWD and ActionAid Nigeria, the abilities and aspirations of people with disabilities have been given a platform to thrive. The partnership has not only created tangible change in the lives of individuals, but has also contributed to fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

"We are immensely grateful to ActionAid for believing in us, and for entrusting us with this project. After witnessing the impact, we have made, and with the capacity building they provided us, as well as their unwavering support, during challenging times, we will never forget their contribution to our growth."

Mr Ishaku Adamu
ED, JONAPWD





RENEWED HEALTHCARE FOR KUPTO

Kupto, a community in Funakaye Local Government Area of Gombe state, had no functional healthcare centre and clean water. To cater to their healthcare needs, the people had to travel long distances to Bajoga or Tongo (the LGA centre) and relied on contaminated streams and wells. However, thanks to ActionAid through her partners' intervention, their condition has improved.

Rabi Umar, a 30-years old farmer, petty trader, mother of five, and a member of the women cooperative group in Kupto expresses her joy over the accessible healthcare and abundant clean water in the community. Previously, she had to bring her own water to the old dilapidated health facility when giving birth. Rabi is also excited that the new healthcare centre constructed by ActionAid Nigeria has a clean laboratory, where she can get blood tests done without going far, and without breaking the bank.

She exclaimed, "there is nothing that gladdens my heart such as the lab" and it is equipped with modern facilities, saving the residents from the inconvenience of travelling to distant places.

Not only did Kupto lack healthcare, but they also faced water scarcity, forcing them to compete with livestock for water from streams. This exposed them to waterborne diseases. ActionAid's intervention has provided boreholes, ensuring a sufficient and safe water supply for the community.

Rabi emphasises on the significance of these improvements, stating that they benefit not only the residents, but also visitors passing through the town. She acknowledges that water is the most crucial of them all, without water, there could be no life.

THE TRANSITION

With her toothless grin, a testament of the blessing of the ages, yet filled with contagious energy and wit, the 75-year-old woman retells old memories of Kupto. She recalled days when the community lacked essential amenities like healthcare and clean water. As a traditional birth attendant, she had personally delivered all her thirteen children at home due to the absence of a hospital at her reach during the time.

However, times have changed. With the construction of a functional healthcare facility in the vicinity, built by ActionAid Nigeria, the members of the Kupto community are no longer burdened by the stress of inaccessible healthcare. The impact even extends beyond their borders, as it also serves women from neighbouring Fulani settlements.

"In the past, we didn't have water in this town. "We had to carry basins and travel to our old town where there was a stream to fetch water. We didn't have water here." She reminisced, struggling to describe the distance. "But when God brought ActionAid, and Hope for the Lonely here, we now have boreholes and it's still functioning. Both young and old, those in towns and villages, are benefitting from the water" the 75-year old mother of thirteen proudly declared.

"In the past, we didn't have water in this town. "We had to carry basins and travel to our old town where there was a stream to fetch water. We didn't have water here."



WE NOW HAVE INCREASED FUNDING FOR AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Mr Maina O. Jonathan, the acting Manager of Gombe State Agricultural Development Programme, (ADP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, has witnessed transformative collaboration between ActionAid through Hope for the Lonely and the Ministry of Agriculture in championing positive changes in the agricultural sector.

Recognising the crucial role of sustainable agriculture in reducing poverty and addressing social problems, their joint efforts have focused on advocating for increased funding for agricultural activities in Gombe state. Mr. Maina shares his experience, stating, "I have been participating in their activities. The collaboration between Hope for the Lonely and the Ministry of Agriculture has yielded significant successes, particularly in securing increased funding for agricultural activities in the state. Since this engagement, the state government has been consistently increasing our funding for agricultural activities. Additionally, they have provided counterpart funding for projects financed by prestigious organisations such as the World Bank, African Development Bank, and the UNDP.

Reflecting on the impacts of this collaboration, Mr. Maina expresses both mixed emotions and gratitude, while he feels a sense of sadness about the exit of the Local Rights Programme (LRP) in Gombe state, he is also immensely grateful for its profound impact on the agricultural sector.

He states, "I believe the state government has realised the importance of the agricultural sector and has taken concrete steps to increase the budgetary allocations for agricultural activity in the state.



Mr. Maina O. Jonathan
Ag. Manager, Gombe State Agricultural Development Program, (ADP)

“since this engagement, the government has been consistently increasing our funding for agricultural activities”

As beneficiaries of ActionAid's activities through Hope for the Lonely, the ADP has experienced the positive outcome of this collaboration." To sustain and build upon this impact, Mr. Maina emphasises the importance of continued advocacy efforts with successive governments in Gombe state.

The collaboration between ActionAid and the Ministry of Agriculture serves as a testament to the power of partnerships in driving positive change and securing resources for essential sectors like agriculture.

LOCAL RIGHTS PROGRAMME (LRP) LEARNING AND CLOSE OUT MEETING

GOMBE 25th July, 2023

SESSION	TIME	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE
Arrival & Registration	9:00am – 9:30 am	All Invited Guests
National Anthem	9:30am – 9:40am	All
Introduction of Dignitaries & Guests	9:40am – 9:50am	MC
Welcome Address	9:50am – 10:00am	JONAPWD/ HFTL Board Chairs
Opening Remarks	10:00am – 10:15am	Ene Obi, Country Director, ActionAid Nigeria (AAN)
Goodwill Messages	10:15am - 10:45am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His Excellency, The Executive Governor of Gombe State • Budget planning and partners coordination Office • Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the Gombe State Governor on Sustainable Development Goals • Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development • Ministry of Water Resources • Ministry of Education • Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry • Ministry of Youth and Empowerment • Ministry of science and Technology • Gombe State State Primary Education Board • National Orientation Agency • National Directorate of Employment • Gombe State House of Assembly • Association of Non Governmental Organization (ANGO) • Other MDAs represented. • Development partners • Representatives of Community Heads • Representatives of women groups • Representatives of Linked Children

LOCAL RIGHTS PROGRAMME (LRP) LEARNING AND CLOSE OUT MEETING

GOMBE 25th July, 2023

Overview of the Local Rights Programme in Gombe State	10:45am - 10:55am	Kehinde Arowosegbe Manager, Local Rights Programme, AAN
Drama play/ Cultural dance	10:55am - 11:15am	LRP communities/Theatre Group
Presentation of Local Rights Programme Documentation	11:15am - 11:40am	Madam Sarah Yapwa Executive Director, HFL Gombe
Experience Sharing Session	11:40am - 12:25pm	LRP stakeholders
Presentation of Certificates of Recognition and Plaques to LRP partners and communities	12:25pm - 12:55pm	Ene Obi, Country Director, ActionAid Nigeria (AAN) and stakeholders
Vote of Thanks	12:55pm - 1:00pm	ED JONAPWD
Group photos, lunch & closing	1:00pm - 1:15pm	All

A photograph showing a woman in a bright pink hijab standing in the center, flanked by three children. To her left is a young boy in a white shirt. To her right is a taller boy in a yellow t-shirt, and in front of him is a smaller child in a grey hijab. They are standing outdoors in a rural area with a simple structure and trees in the background.

A SUSTAINED EMPOWERMENT

Fatima Mohammed Kupto, is filled with happiness and gratitude. She is among the lucky women who have benefitted from the livestock empowerment courtesy of the LRP by ActionAid Nigeria in Kupto. After experiencing several unsuccessful business ventures, Fatima made a unique choice when given the opportunity for support—she opted for goat farming.

“When ActionAid and her partners came in, we already had a cooperative, of which I was a member and they asked for the names of ten people. The first five received bags of rice, to refine and sell. Others were given beans and soya beans, but I expressed my desire for goat rearing” Fatima explained.

Why would Fatima prefer animal farming over other businesses? She firmly believes that livestock rearing offers a more sustainable source of income. “I prefer goat rearing because other businesses are not as sustainable.

If you need just five hundred or one thousand naira, you can't sell a goat. That's why I chose goat rearing. Even if I were given another chance, I would still settle for it because I've enjoyed it” Fatima expresses with enthusiasm.

Since embracing goat farming, Fatima's journey has been successful. She shared her achievements, saying “ the goat has reproduced three times. Out of them, I gave one to my husband and sold one. With the money, I added to my savings and bought a plot of land as an investment for myself and children. Additionally, I gave one of the goats to my friend because I wanted her to benefit from it as well. My friend has also benefited as the goat has reproduced, and she plans to sell the offspring during the next Eid to buy another goat”

The impact of this empowerment extends beyond Fatima herself; it positively affects her children as well. She elaborated,

“ When I sell one goat, I can use the money to buy school books, pencils and pens for my children. I can also contribute to household expenses. Without this opportunity, I wouldn't have been able to buy a plot of land or provide for my children's needs. I plan to give the land to my children when they grow up so they can build on it. Additionally, my eldest son is in secondary school, and I intend to use the income from goat rearing to support his further education. ”



~~~ Fatimah Mohammed

Through sustained empowerment in goat rearing, courtesy of ActionAid Nigeria, Fatima has not only improved her own livelihood but has created opportunities for others while securing a brighter future for her children.



# “NOW, WE ARE CONFIDENT ABOUT HOW TO DEMAND OUR RIGHTS”

**M**allam Bala Mohammed Kupto feels personally empowered, not only as a member of the beneficiary community but also in his capacity, as the community facilitator for ActionAid and its partner, in Kupto.

He learned about the importance of advocacy and discovered the power that lies in the hand of a collective of people- a resource he didn't realise the people possessed. Through a series of capacity building and retraining, they unleashed their hidden power of advocacy, successfully persuading the government to construct staff quarters for the personnel of the community healthcare facility. The development is life-changing for the Kupto community and its environs since the healthcare staff will now reside in the premises and would be available 24/7.

In addition, through advocacy efforts directed at the Ministry of Education, the community secured a construction of a Junior Secondary School for their children. The presence of a junior secondary school translates to a great number of children transitioning from primary to secondary school, thereby increasing the number of in-school children in Kupto.

Mallam Bala Mohammad explains, “As the facilitator, I serve as the intermediary between the community, ActionAid, as well as her partners i.e JONAPWD and Hope for the Lonely.



At one point, the community was initially excluded from benefiting from a school project. However, their advocacy skills came into play. Mallam Bala recounts, "In 2008, Junior Secondary Schools were allocated to communities in various LGAs, but Kupto was not included. The community then organised an advocacy visit to the Ministry of Education and SUBEB. We voiced our concerns and as a result, a Junior Secondary School was established in Kupto with the appointment of a principal. The school remains functional to this day and more than 200 students from Kupto have finished their secondary education. I have become enlightened about my rights, and received training on how to exercise my voting right without being denied."

Through these efforts, the education of girls has improved and school enrollment has increased. Mal. Bala expresses,

“ I have also gained an understanding of the importance of girl-child education which was previously neglected in favour of prioritising male education. I have learned that girl-child education is equally important and valuable and it is essential to treat both genders equally. When girls receive an education, it positively impacts the workforce, and has a ripple effect, benefitting many people.”

~~~ Mallam Bala Mohammed



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YOUR
POWER
FOR
CHANGE!**

4

**Ways to
Renew Your
Donations to
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Community
Sponsorship**

1 **Use Our
USSD Codes**



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*737*000*20139*AMOUNT*

GTBank:

*894*000*20139*AMOUNT*

GTBank:

*966*000*20139*AMOUNT*

2 **Bank
Transfer**



ActionAid Nigeria
Community Sponsorship

GTBank

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First Bank

2024080600

Access Bank

0724104341

3 **Standing
Order**



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Deductions**

4 **Visit our
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Emergency Giving

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07007070700 



ActionAid through Hope for the Lonely built a hospital for us. Previously, we had to carry the sick on our backs and travel to the neighbouring towns of Billiri or Kashare, even during the rainy season. But now that we have a hospital, things have improved.

~ ~ ~ Madam Victoria



ROCKY, MUDDY BUT NOT DETERRED

Stretching out for miles without any sign of civilisation, Panguru appears to be a community forgotten by its government, left to fend for itself. Panguru is a hard-to-reach community located in the Billiri Local Government Area of Gombe state. The journey to Panguru initially seemed like a trip to nowhere. The land is vast, with rugged terrains and a combination of rocky and muddy ground. Traversing this area during the rainy season is considered an act of bravery. However, ActionAid was not deterred!

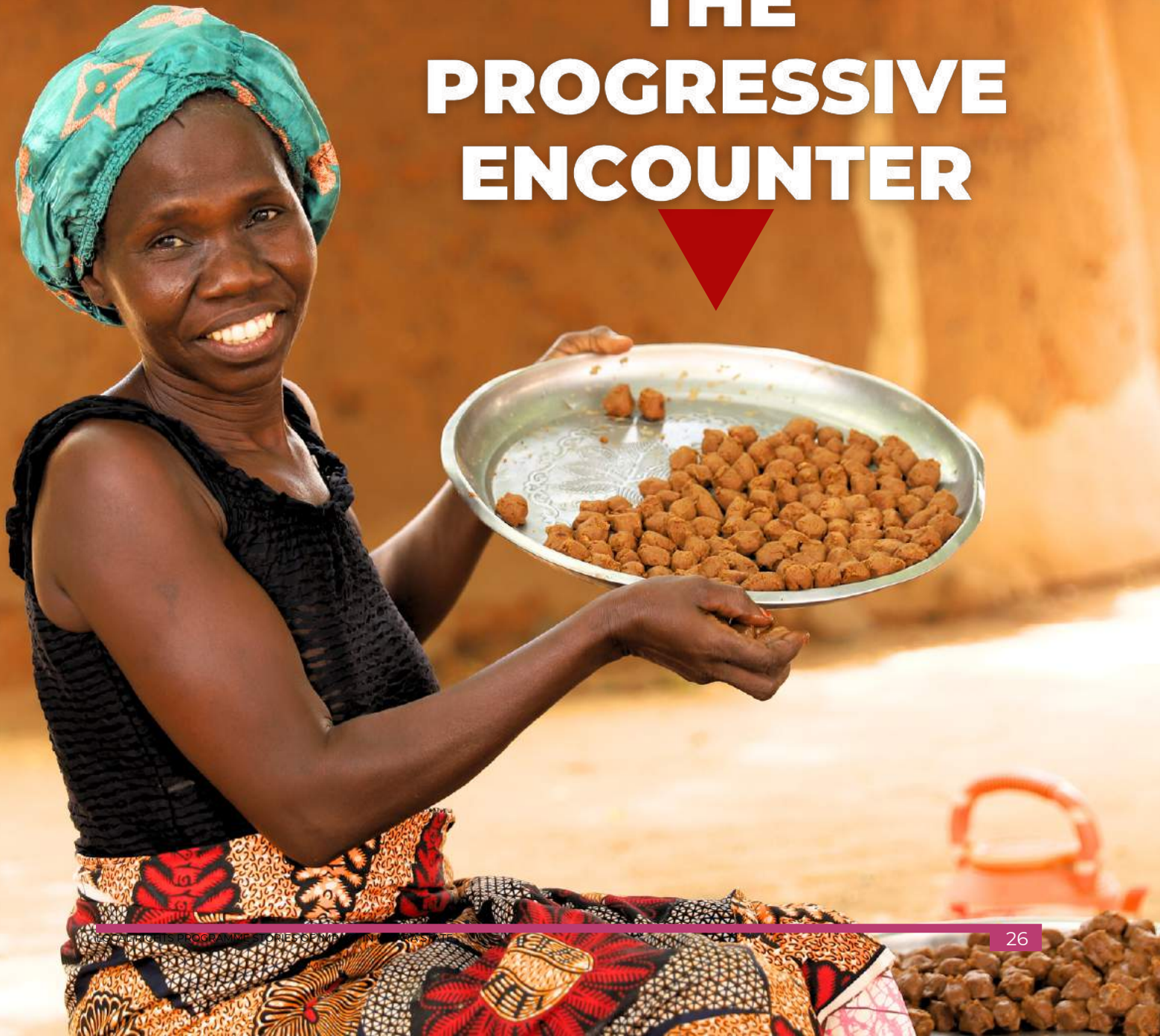
Madam Victoria, as she is popularly called, is the community facilitator in Panguru. She shared with excitement how the community became a beneficiary when ActionAid and her partners were turned down in another community. She expressed gratitude, saying, "I want to thank AAN, JONAPWD and HFTL because we have benefited a lot from them, and we count ourselves lucky. Another community refused partnership and collaboration with AAN, hence replacing their community with ours, and now, they regret their decision."

The presence of ActionAid and her partners in Panguru has empowered the women in the community. This empowerment was achieved through capacity building in areas such as education, peaceful co-existence, education, hygiene, human rights, and sustainable farming. "When they first arrived, we were taught how to set up a cooperative group. After informing the community elders, we received their blessings, and that's how the women's cooperative group was birthed. We agreed to meet on Sundays to deliberate and learn from the peer education manual that was provided to us.

Subsequently, we started contributing funds weekly and ActionAid and Hope for the Lonely complemented our effort by empowering six women with livestock, groundnut for oil extraction, and more. We continued to grow and invest in each other. ActionAid Nigeria and her partners kept inviting us to reinforce our learnings," said Victoria, a farmer and mother of seven. "This facility is the only one serving the community and neighbouring communities. In the past, without this facility, the community had endured the unpleasant terrain to seek help when needed. Previously, we had to carry the sick on our backs and travel to the neighbouring towns of Billiri or Kashare, even during the rainy season and before we reached the next community, the person may have died, and we'll returned with a corpse. This happened a lot of times. But now that we have a hospital, things have improved." Madam Victoria painfully recalled.

Madam Victoria also shared how she was personally empowered, and how it positively impacted her entire household. "I was empowered with a cow. The cow helps us during the farming season, as we no longer have to pay to make ridges. When it is time to sell the cow, we can do so and then use the profit to repurchase another one and start the process all over again," empowered Madam Victoria explained

THE PROGRESSIVE ENCOUNTER



Hansatu Musa, a 43-year old mother of five from Panguru, has been tirelessly making groundnut oil from scratch for many years. Despite her dedication, Hansatu struggled to understand whether her business was making a profit or running at a loss after each batch of groundnut oil was made. Nevertheless, she persevered, as making groundnut oil was the only livelihood she knew. However, Hansatu's life took a positive turn when she encountered ActionAid and her partners, which transformed her business acumen and financial awareness. Now, Hansatu can accurately calculate her profit margin, and the impact on her family is immeasurable.

Reflecting on her journey, Hansatu shares, "When I first started making groundnut oil, my business wasn't thriving until I crossed paths with ActionAid and Hope for the Lonely. They taught me how to separate my expenses when producing the oil, and through this simple practice, I decided to produce ten measures of groundnut oil, and I could clearly identify my gain. I am grateful to AAN and HFTL because in the past, I was engaged in business without really understanding its financial implications. But now, I can accurately calculate my profits." Furthermore, Hansatu learned the art of price management, ensuring that even when groundnut prices fluctuate, she can set prices in a way that guarantees she doesn't run at a loss. This new found ability empowers her to make informed decisions that safeguard the sustainability of her business.

The impact on her business insight is evident in Hansatu's life. She explains, "The business has become a lifeline for my family's well-being, especially in terms of my children's education. When their father is unable to contribute financially, I can step in and provide some support. I am immensely grateful to ActionAid for her invaluable assistance over the years." Hansatu's transformation from a business owner with limited financial understanding to a savvy entrepreneur has not only improved her own life but has also impacted her entire household.



MOBILISING FOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ADVOCACY

The people of Shela community had long resigned themselves to a life without electricity, believing their power woes will never cease. However, their perspective changed when they were empowered with the knowledge and skills to leverage the immense potential of advocacy.

Mr. Caleb Amadu, Local Rights Programme (LRP) facilitator, Shela community recalls how the capacity training and support provided by ActionAid and her partners encouraged them to mobilise and advocate for social amenities. The outcome of their efforts is a remarkable achievement. Shela community now proudly boasts of electricity!

“When ActionAid came to this community, we had no access to electricity. They trained us on the power of advocacy at the Local Government and state level. We visited the LGA and saw the chairman, lodging our complaints, and sharing how ActionAid, Hope for the Lonely, and JONAPWD have contributed to our cause. We persevered, continuously meeting with the government officials and stakeholders, day and night, to advocate for electricity. We were accompanied by ActionAid and partners but sometimes, took initiative on our own. And one day, our efforts paid off. That’s how we obtained electricity in our community.” recounts Mr Caleb.

The availability of electricity in Shela has brought about numerous benefits for the community. Now, they have access to welding services without having to travel long distances.



Mr. Caleb Amadu
Community Facilitator

Local businesses have flourished with individuals able to sell cold drinks and water thanks to the presence of refrigerators powered by electricity. Additionally, charging mobile phones has become much more convenient for the residents.

Having wielded its power, the people of Shela are determined to utilise the same approach to equip their existing health facility.

Furthermore, Shela community has joined the age of technology! ActionAid through JONAPWD launched an ICT centre in Shela. The ICT centre provides computer acquisition skills for the school children. Now, both school children and other residents can now learn computer skills easily.

A smiling woman wearing a colorful, patterned headscarf and a matching long-sleeved dress. She is holding a large orange plastic water container. The background is a light, textured surface.

WATER IS LIFE

Water, they say, is the essence of life; without it, living becomes unbearable. Such was the tale of the people of Lalaipido, a story that persisted for ages, until a glimmer of hope emerged over a decade ago. ActionAid, in collaboration with her partner Hope for the Lonely, transformed the lives of the Lalaipido community by installing a borehole.

Rahila Ezikiel, a resilient fifty-years-old widow, has resided in Lalaipido throughout her entire life. She tells the story of the challenges they faced, embarking on an exhaustive journey to the far Lalappejji river. In the wee hours of the morning, they would traverse great distances, carrying basins on their backs with children in tow, all in the pursuit of water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and maintaining their household.

"The circumstances we endured were dire. We lacked a borehole and were compelled to trek to the far reaches of the Lelepejji river. We fetched water to bathe our children, and use for cooking.

"Failing to embark on the pre-down journey meant depriving their children of food before school and neglecting other essential household tasks. Rahila explains, "Yes, to ensure our children attended school, we had to rise at 4:00 am and return by 6:30 am, allowing sufficient time for the children to prepare for the school day. If we failed to awaken by 4:00 am, our children would miss school due to the distance required to travel. However, thanks to ActionAid, our lives took a turn for the better when they constructed the borehole. Now, accessing water in the town has become remarkably convenient." Rahila reflects with gratitude.

The absence of a near-by health facility compounded their plight, as it would take hours to reach the nearest hospital. Rahila recalls a tragic incident, "An elderly man fell victim to cholera, but before transportation could be arranged to take him to the distant hospital, precious time had slipped away." In the midst of these challenges, thirteen-year-old Rejoice Ishaku, a JSS 3 Student of Evidence Academy in Lalaipido, experienced immense joy and relief. "After I close from school, I can now fetch water from the borehole. At home, I use the water to wash dishes," Rejoice happily declares.

Today, Lalaipido community thrives, their burdens lifted, as they have a borehole that brings water closer to their homes. Thanks to the unwavering support of ActionAid and Hope for the Lonely, the people of Lalaipido have been granted a renewed sense of hope.



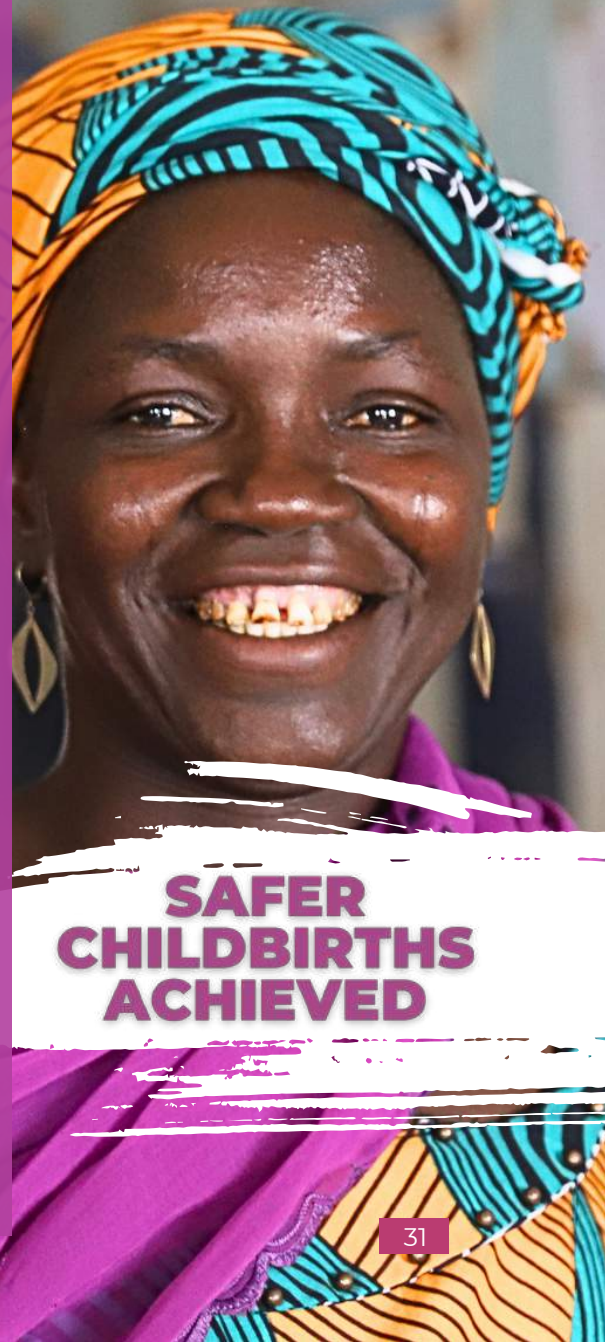
Lekenturum, a community that once lacked access to hospitals, has witnessed significant transformation since the construction of a healthcare facility by ActionAid Nigeria. The impact of this development is particularly evident in the experiences of the women in the community, who now understand the crucial difference between giving birth at home and at the hospital. They share why they choose hospital birth, and talk about complications that could occur when women deliver at home due to lack of healthcare facilities near-by.

Talatu Yila vividly recalls the hardship they had to endure before the healthcare facility was constructed by ActionAid: "When we didn't have a hospital, we went through a lot. We had to travel and if fortunate, some of us could afford a bike ride or rely on someone with a bike for assistance. There were instances when we couldn't reach the hospital in time, resulting in home deliveries. The consequences of such circumstances were dire- either the baby's life was at risk, or postpartum bleeding prolonged, leading to further complications. The presence of the healthcare facility in our town has been a blessing to us." Talatu said.

Zuwaira Shehu, a 40- year old mother of four from Lekenturum, experienced both home births and hospital births. She attests to the care she received during her childbirth at the hospital. She said, "When I gave birth at the hospital, I received maximum care. The medical staff attended to all the necessary procedures, including administering injections. They diligently checked for any signs of discomfort. This level of care was not possible at home where no professional assistance is available."

Another resident, Bilkisu Jonathan, highlights the convenience she experienced due to her proximity to the healthcare facility. "When labour started, I simply walked to the hospital; the healthcare staff supported me throughout the process, ensuring a safe delivery. I gave birth at night and afterwards, they gave me medication and ensured I was in good health before discharging me." Bilkisu, a happy healthcare consumer, said.

The people of Lekenturium no longer face life threatening challenges of inaccessible healthcare. As a result, their greatest fear- postpartum bleeding leading to child and maternal mortality, is allayed.



**SAFER
CHILDBIRTHS
ACHIEVED**

A POWERHOUSE OF COLLECTIVE IDEAS, ACTION, AND FEEDBACK



Dr. Bachama Yusuf

There is no contesting the fact that there is much to achieve when people are intentional about addressing social issues and come together as holistic entities to approach them. Recognising this, ActionAid Nigeria developed an exceptional model called the Inclusive Forum for Accountable Society (IFAS). As the name implies, this forum serves as a catalyst for bringing people together, enabling them to demand accountability from the government functionaries, and other stakeholders, while collaboratively taking practical steps to find lasting solutions.

Dr. Bachama Yusuf, Gombe State IFAS Chairman, expresses immense enthusiasm and passion for IFAS, stating, "As far as I know, it is one of the most innovative initiatives that came at the right time. Its name, the Inclusive Forum for Accountable Society, truly represents how communities can come together, organise themselves, understand their capacities, identify their issues, and collectively decide on the necessary steps to address these issues. It empowers communities to recognise their responsibilities and utilise available resources to ensure their rights are addressed. I believe it is a remarkable initiative."

IFAS, both as an initiative and a model pioneered by ActionAid Nigeria, is dedicated to empowering communities, acknowledging and harnessing the inherent power within them to engage stakeholders and influence decisions for their collective well-being while ensuring accountability and transparency of Government

. It serves as a powerhouse and a safe space for the exchange of ideas. Dr. Bachama Yusuf further emphasises its success, stating, "Overall, I think IFAS is a resounding success, and it should be embraced as a community engagement model that works for the people. It is a model that every development partner should strive to adopt."

The question arises, "Why wouldn't ActionAid establish platforms of LRPs?" Dr. Bachama Yusuf passionately asks. He firmly believes both closed-out and ongoing LRP states can continue leveraging the well-established network and connectedness to ensure the sustained growth and effectiveness of IFAS. By doing so, communities can collectively champion their causes for positive change.

LIST OF AAN/HFL PROJECTS IN LRP COMMUNITIES

| TYPE OF PROJECT | YEAR COMPLETED | LOCATION | FUNCTIONAL | NON-FUNCTIONAL | COMMENTS |
|----------------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|----------------|--|
| Water Well | 2008 | KUPTO | | NO | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| Water Well | 2008 | NAHUTA | YES | | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| Water Well | 2008 | DIGIJIM | YES | | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| Health care centre | 2017 | KUPTO | | NO | Not in use |
| Kuka bakwoi primary school | 2007 | KUKA BAKWOI | | NO | Provided pupils with conducive learning facility thereby increasing enrolment and retention rates in the school. |
| HAND PUMP BORHOLE | 2007 | KUKA BAKWOI | | NO | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| HAND PUMP BORHOLE | 2007 | MALAM GONI | | NO | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |

LIST OF AAN/HFL PROJECTS IN LRP COMMUNITIES

| TYPE OF PROJECT | YEAR COMPLETED | LOCATION | FUNCTIONAL | NON-FUNCTIONAL | COMMENTS |
|--|----------------|---------------------------|------------|----------------|--|
| HAND PUMP BORHOLE | 2007 | GOJOGORI | YES | | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| HAND PUMP BORHOLE | 2007 | GARIN ABBA | | NO | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| HAND PUMP BORHOLE | 2008 | POWLAM, shongom LGA | YES | | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| Three class rooms and office in Primary school | 2009 | SHELA WUDOYA, BILLIRI LGA | | | Provided pupils and teachers with conducive learning and teaching facility, respectively thereby increasing enrolment and retention rates in the school. |
| A Block of two Classrooms | 2006 | Lasadar, Shongom LGA | YES | | Provided pupils with conducive learning facility thereby increasing enrolment and retention rates in the school. |
| Borehole | 2008 | Latatar, Shongom | YES | | Provided the Community with portable water and has reduced the risks of drinking contaminated water. |
| Health Centre | 2008 | Lakenturum, Shongom | YES | | Reduced the long journey to find locate a clinic during emergencies. Provides women and children with easy access to maternity and infant clinic. |









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