DARE TO HOPE

MIGRATION II

NEWSLETTER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ne major reason for migration is economics. Many research studies including the baseline survey conducted at the inception of ActionAid's Migration Programme laid economics as one strong reason for migration. It is believed that people will generally not yield to the pressure of irregular migration if their economic conditions were improved. So, the following up from the first migration programme which focused on tackling unemployment as well as providing awareness on safe migration options, the phase two of the programme tagged: 'Dare To Hope' is aimed at creation of sustainable socio-economic alternatives to irregular migration.

The programme worked with stakeholders and partners from government agencies and Community Based Organisations to provide skills and necessary support such as counseling, psycho-social profiling and self confidence building for returned irregular migrants and potential irregular migrants.

The programme targeted 2000 vulnerable young persons from age 18 to 35 in Auchi, Benin and Uromi to participate in a rigorous vocational training in specific skills such as farming -fishery and poultry, shoe making, cosmetology and baking/confectionary business. The core objective of the programme is to promote access to socioeconomic alternatives to migration among young people, as well as capacity strengthening of relevant government agencies in response to weak institutional capability.

The programme has imbedded in it a sustainability plan to assist the trained participants to form partnerships through registering and operating a cooperative. At the end of the training, participants trained in

particular skills were formed into cooperatives and provided with fund to purchase equipment, rent business space and commence business activities. 'Dare To Hope' is implemented through ActionAid's local partners in Edo State – Ideal Development Research Centre and Kairos Youth Empowerment Initiative.



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UPSKILLED: KUDIRAT'S STORY

udirat Musa has had enough; she thought to herself, it was over. Kudirat is a University graduate but worked for salaries less than that of a labourer. She has had 3 attempts at fairly good job offers but the jobs came with compromising conditions. "Immediately after my NYSC, I got a job, I scaled through the interviews and passed all the tests but the manager called me to his office and told me he liked me and wanted to go out with me. I knew it was a red line and never went back to pick up the appointment letter" Kudirat said.

The sex-for-employment scenario played out again with two more opportunities. At this point, she began to think of quitting the idea of seeking for paid employment for business. Starting a business, would be a big hurdle, she had no capital and no one to borrow. "When I couldn't get a good paid employment, I decided to look for other things to do; I found a secondary school in my area where teachers were needed, so I applied and got the teaching job but the salary was too poor. I was paid Eight Thousand Naira (8,000), after a month, it was increased to Ten Thousand Naira (10,000) because I was combining teaching 4 subjects in secondary with occasionally attending to the nursery section" nodding in displeasure, Kudirat noted that it was as if her life depended on the job.

She continued working on the meager wage teaching job until an event that will alter her course of life occurred. Her mother died. "It was like the end of the world to me because my mother was like a pillar to me, after her death, I decided to relocate to Auchi to stay with my siblings" she acknowledge that the decision to relocate to Auchi was unintentional.

"One day, I was thinking of many options including travelling abroad, because I was so frustrated, then my brother brought a form and asked me to fill it, I read through and filled the form and after a few weeks I was called to participate in this ActionAid training" she said. "Let me tell you, if the skill acquisition training did not come at the time it came, I would have travelled out" she affirms. Kudirat tells how the skill in Catering Services transformed her mindset, raised her level of confidence and made her to see the opportunities around her. "I learnt how to bake, I can bake cake very well now, I have baked some cakes that I have sold, I am now planning big time cake and baking business here in Auchi" no longer interested in illegal migration she insists: "If I must travel now, it will be for vacation" she quips.



DERAILED BUT NOT DETERRED

ary Adams (not real name) could barely survive the poverty in her household. Mary and her 6 siblings had no fun childhood; they only bore the wrenching memories of poverty and lack of everything. Mary tells how eating one tasteless meal per day was a luxury.

At 15, she became a child labourer; doing menial jobs from house to house in her neighbourhood: "I was tired of watching my parents fight, so I will go to my neighbours and ask them what I can do for them to earn money so that I can pay for my school fees and buy my books. I washed their plates, fetched water and washed cloths every morning before going to school" Mary said when her early morning regular chores could not sustain her and her siblings, she took to a sales job at a bar. "When I was working in a bar; I met a woman who told me she will help me, so she took me from Benue to Nassarawa State. She promised that I would have better opportunities and be able to help my family. I was happy".

Her happiness was short-lived when she realised that the good life promised was a mirage; she was later sexually exploited by the same woman who promised her help. At 16, she became 'imprisoned' by her host, who verbally, physically and sexually abused her. "I became her prisoner, I was used as sexual slave, sleeping with different men and the woman collects all the money". Mary muttered, constantly wiping the tears which freely flowed down her sun beaten cheeks.

Mary hatched a plan to escape from her captor: "I told her I had to go and visit my sick mother that I would return after a while. I was released to go. I never returned" After one year away, she returned to complete her National Diploma and relocated to Auchi.

"When I got to Auchi, I did many things to survive but I was Iucky one day when I met a woman from Kairos (ActionAid's Partner in Auchi, Edo State), they were doing sensitization and they told us about the dangers of irregular migration, which was what I was already planning to do but after that sensitization, I changed my mind, we were given a form to fill and apply for training" said Mary.

"The training really changed me and made me become confident, it improved the way I interact with people and the transport money that they gave us was useful, I saved the transport money and trekked every day, so I can use the money to obtain my National Diploma Certificate, which I couldn't receive since graduating in 2018" she said.









FULFILLING DREAMS THROUGH MENTORSHIP

earning with an air-cutting enthusiasm, it is easy to tell that Favour Omofuna is passionate about her fashion business. Favour is a fashion trainer and seamstress like no other; she is not scared of competition or ever running out of business.

Favour and her husband Abel left a lucrative business location in Northern Nigeria, where their fashion business had thrived and their customers swelled for Auchi, a place they had to start from the scratch. "I have always wanted to train young girls in fashion, it has always been my dream, because I belief you cannot run out of ideas and what to do in fashion, it is very wide because everybody needs clothing, even the mad man on the street need clothing, so no matter how many people are into tailoring there is still room for more" Favour insists the fashion business is one of endless opportunities.

Her fashion outfit, MerPraise Fashion Home was nominated after a rigorous screening process to train selected returnees and potential irregular migrants on fashion designing and cloth making. "When I see young girls aimlessly walking about without doing anything, I use to feel very bad, that was one of the reasons why we relocated to this place, so that we can impact on the lives of the young people by first making them to discover themselves and be sure of what they want from life. That was why I was excited when we were chosen by ActionAid to train the girls, I feel so happy impacting knowledge on young girls" she said, scanning the room-filled with assortment of cloth pieces, electric sewing machines, she points at Gift Olorunda.

Gift is one of the ActionAid's Migration Project trainee who was the shining light at the MerPraise Fashion Home, Auchi. Gift had lost complete hope in continuing her education when she lost her Daddy at age 6. When she turned 18, she decided to work to support her struggling mother and other siblings.

Gift situation is an opportunity for human traffickers who dot around her community; searching for vulnerable prey for irregular migration. "It was a big opportunity for me to be trained by ActionAid in this Fashion Home (MerPraise). I have learnt a lot of things that I cannot consider traveling illegally because I have skills that I can make good money from. I promise to put my fashion skills to work, and I will not betray ActionAid" she enthused.

DARE TO HOPE

CREATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

MIGRATION II PROJECT

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE:



Young people

(18-35)

in Nigeria enjoy full socio-economic rights.

Young people

(18-35)

in Benin, Auchi, and Uromi have increased access to socio-economic alternatives to migration and are empowered to make informed choices.

PROJECT PILLARS



Economic Empowerment



Institutional Strengthening



Community and Media Sensitisation

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES:

8,969 people



and



of which:





1500 potential migrants (60% women).



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT BENEFICIARIES



At least

100

participants in phase 1 included as trainers and/or ambassadors for change.



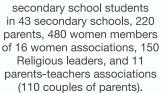
At least

100

trainers benefitting from
Training of Trainers (TOT) on
life and vocational skills.









69

 \bigcirc

members of 7 government agencies.



300

traditional leaders and key members of communities involved in initial meeting and/ or platform meetings.

DONOR:

Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS).





DURATION:

36 months



TOTAL BUDGET:

2,000,000 Euro



LEAD



ActionAid Italy

ITALIAN PARTNERS:





LOCAL COUNTERPART:

ActionAid Nigeria



LOCAL PARTNERS:

- Ideal Development and Resource Centre (IDRC).
- Kairos Youth Empowerment Initiative.
- Salesians of Don Bosco.

DAMNING THE DISABILITY

bdul Fatai made haste to arrange his wears; neatly displayed on the 4 layer wooden shelf are handmade leather sandals, he pulls each out and wipes the edges with a rough dusty piece of cloth. Fatai looks cheerful and satisfied as he paced slowly; holding up his left knee to support his movement, his inability to walk upright does not deter his determination to unleash his potential and work towards his childhood dreams.

Fatai recalled a bullying experience as a child which made him even more determined to become self reliant: "I could not play with my age mates when I was in school, they will gather and laugh at me, and they will laugh at the

way I walk. I am always sad and I cry about it, that was why I asked my mother why my leg is like this, she said it happened when I was 6 months old" he quips. Fatai's disability propels his motivation, as he is determined to prove that physical disability is not able to stop a determined mind. "I don't want to depend on anybody, that is why I am determined to make it in a legitimate way, I know some of my

classmates who are into yahoo yahoo (local parlance for internet fraud) but I told myself I will do the right thing to survive" he said.

Though determined to do the right thing, Fatai had challenge with funding his dream to be a big time shoe maker. He admired good shoes and dreamt of building a shoe factory, but the fund to learn the skill was unaffordable: "I wanted to learn how to make shoes in a professional way, it is very expensive so I plan to work and save for it" he noted that while returning home from work he found the team from Kairos and ActionAid making public announcement for the returnee and potential migrant capacity programme, it was his chance and he took it.

Fatai was selected to participate in the capacity development programme, he learnt shoe making. "I started making shoes the next day of the training" he said and in a short while, he has built a small shoe making business and gradually etching toward his childhood dream of owning a shoe factory. "I am very grateful for the chance to learn this shoe making; it has made me believe that I can do anything anybody with two legs can do without depending on other people" said Fatai.

EXPANDING IMPACT

he ambiance has the feel of a carefully staged trade exhibition hall; colourful, inspiring and engaging. Everywhere you turn; the wall bleeds with inspiring inscriptions of courage, guts, hope and faith. The Genius Hub is more than a vocational training centre; it is a place for life's skills acquisition, a centre where total human development is attained.

Isimene Whyte is full of energy; it is easy to tell how her mind works; the nearly perfect setting and craftily organised setting at the Genius Hub gives a hint on the founder's vision to empower young people with skills to compete in the market place and the emotional balance for right decision making. The Genius Hub was a creation of necessity; Isimene, an experienced social work expert in International NGOs and government space discovered huge skill gaps among university graduates and the young people she interacted with: "I started a research on how to solve the problem of poverty, in the course of the study I discovered that many young people lacked ability to manage, they lacked

online presence, they lacked self confidence, had low self esteem, had no smart phone to boost their businesses" Isimene listed as some of the reasons why the Genius Hub was established.

"Since inception, we have trained about 8,540 young people in 31 skill sets, improving their ability to discover themselves, enhance their chances of employability and entrepreneurship" the Hub's founder affirms how the centre's cooperation and collaboration with ActionAid has extended their core mandate of empowering young people with better alternatives to irregular migration. "We got in touch with IDRC (ActionAid local implementing partner in Edo State), we then started the conversation on how to engage with returned irregular migrants and potential migrants. In our centre, providing psychological support is the most important part of our job" she said.





POSITIONED FOR PROGRESS

hidiebere Ifudu is faced with an uneasy task. She and her team are executing a mission to prevent, and hunt down perpetrators of human trafficking. Chidiebere is the zonal commander of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking In Persons, NAPTIP covering Edo and Delta axis.

"The situation of human trafficking as we can see is reducing in Edo State but taking a toll on Delta State, we are even seeing new trends with the cases of ritual adoption and killings" the NAPTIP zonal commander argues that the sustained efforts including the public renouncement of 'curses' by the Oba of Benin has emboldened victims to speak out and traffickers to relocate to the fringes of the Delta State borders.

March 9, 2018, His Majesty, the Oba of Benin summoned all the chiefs and native doctors in the Benin Kingdom, it was an emergency meeting, the Oba in response to the increased incidences of human trafficking and irregular migration in the State made stern proclamation against the perpetrators of human trafficking.

The Oba warned and cursed: "Our gods will destroy you" the angry Monarch lashed on the traffickers. Chidiebere adduced the Oba's pronouncement and reversal of curses placed on the victims as one of the reasons for drop in the incidences of human trafficking in Edo State but she is worried about the rise in Delta State. She hints of increase on NAPTIP regional call centre for enquiries at the 24 hours call centre: "We observed that immediately after the pronouncement by the Oba, many victims were emboldened to come out, they spoke out for the first time and the perpetrators shifted to the neigbouring State" She said.

"I believe that we need such institutional synergies and co-operations' like the one by ActionAid's Dare to Hope project in order to fight this menace that has now become endemic" She insists that: "ActionAid is one of the great partners that we have in Nigeria; since our work with ActionAid, our capacity have been increased, many officers have been trained, we have learnt new things from the partnership and our operations have greatly improved" said the NAPTIP commander.

A DIFFERENT BREED

"With a vision that started with 20 fishes, I now have 3000 Catfish and 2000 Tilapia and a fixed asset worth over one million naira" said Joshua Aiyanya.

Joshua had a good start in life, he had supportive parents who prioritised education and ensured that he got the education to the university level. He enjoyed the acquisition of knowledge in the field of science: "I love the sciences, I love the sense of saving lives and I can say without sounding boastful that God has used me to save many lives" Joshua said his concept of saving lives changed when a neighbour child died as a result of kwashiorkor.

"When my neighbours child died of kwashiorkor, it triggered in me a new direction, I began to ask why would a child die for lack of protein, I was asking myself how can a child die of fish that is cheap and can be bought in the market" he inquired of himself. As fate would have it, Joshua's growing frustration led him to making enquiries about fish farming, he was determined to meet the protein nutrient need of his community and stop the needless death caused by lack of

protein. As he began to search and learn online, he was informed of the opportunity to participate in the ActionAid Migration vocational training on fish farming.

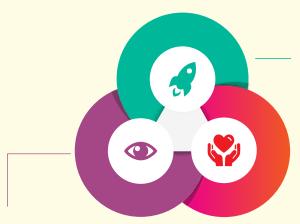
"I would say that ActionAid found me and I found purpose afterward" Joshua affirms that he found meaning and direction for his life when he participated in the vocational training: "Initially I thought of just coming to the training so that I can leave the house, but I discovered it was exactly what I was looking for. The training started on Tuesday, by Wednesday I had bought 20 fingerline which I started growing in a bowl but today I have ponds" he said.

Joshua was lucky to have experienced the dangers of irregular migration from people close to him and has vowed never to consider that route: "if you are leaving a place for a brighter future, then you must go with skills and through the right channel" he counsels young people who want to take to the option of migration.



WHO WE ARE

ActionAid Nigeria is a social justice organisation working to eradicate poverty through gender equality and the redistribution of wealth and power. We apply a human rights-based approach to development. We mobilise the active agency of people to confront unequal power relations that exclude them or others from participating in decision-making and limits their access to and control of resources and opportunities. We also challenge the norms and practices that undermine women's rights and promote patriarchy in formal and informal spheres. These we believe will contribute to the realisation of social justice for all.



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.

VISION

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.

MUTUAL RESPECT

requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity

EQUITY AND JUSTICE

equiring us to ensure the realisation of our ision for everyone, irrespective of but not limited to gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, HIV status, disability, location and religion.

INTEGRITY

Integrity, requiring us to be honest, transparent and accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and our use of resources; and open in our judgements and communications with others.

VALUES

HUMILITY

recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty and injustice.

INDEPENDENCE

from any religious or political party affiliation.

COURAGE OF CONVICTION

requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative - without fear of failure - in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty, injustice, and gender inequality.

SOLIDARITY WITH PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY AND EXCLUSION

being the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty, injustice, and gender inequality.



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