

Annual Project Report

Nigeria CUBS

October 2011 – September 2012

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Community Based Support for Orphans and
Vulnerable children (CUBS)
Annual Report
October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2012



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Annual Report

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Project Title: Community Based Support for OVC

Recipient: Management Sciences for Health

To: Mr. Olusola Onifade

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Table of Contents

Acronyms	4
I. Financial Status Report	6
II. Annual Data Achievement on Intermediate Results	7
III. Annual Progress	10
IV. Problems and Opportunities	17
V. Success Stories	18
VI. Year 4 Priority Areas, Results and Related Tasks	19

Acronyms

AONN	Association of OVC NGOs in Nigeria
CAC	Corporate Affairs Commission
CBGMP	Community Based Growth Monitoring and Promotion
CEFSORD	Centre for Society Reconditioning and Development
COP	Chief of Party
CPN	Child Protection Network
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSI	Child Status Index
CUBS	Community Based Support for OVC
DDIU	Data Demand and Information Use
DQA	Data Quality Assurance
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FMWA&SD	Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
FIDA	International Federation of Female Lawyers Association
GHARF	Global Health Awareness Research Foundation
HES	Household Economic Strengthen
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HCT	HIV Counseling and Testing
IP	Implementing Partner
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
IGA	Income Generation Activities
KAN	KAN Development Foundation
LGA	Local Government Area
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MWASD	Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
MSH	Management Sciences for Health
NACA	National Agency for Control of AIDS
NACO	Nigerian Aids Counseling Organisation
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
NOMIS	National OVC Management Information System
NPoPC	National Population Commission
NMEMS	Nigeria Monitoring and Evaluation Management Services
NPA	National Plan of Action for OVC
NICaB	Nigeria Indigenous Capacity Building
NEPWHAN	Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

PLHA	People Living With HIV/AIDS
PMP	Performance Measurement Plan
RIVCHO	Riverine Communities Health Organization Inc.
SACA	State Agencies for the Control of AIDS
SMWA	State Ministry of Women Affairs
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SOW	Scope of Work
SPDC	Shell Petroleum and Development Company
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children Education Fund
URC	University Research Company
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

I. Financial Status Report

USAID/Nigeria QUARTERLY REPORT

**CUBS Project
Quarterly Progress Report
July - September 2012**

<u>ACTIVITY SUMMARY</u>
Implementing Partner: Management Sciences for Health
Activity Name: Management Sciences for Health, Inc. (MSH) – Community Based Support (CUBS) for OVC in Nigeria Project
Activity Objective Support the Government of Nigeria to implement its National Plan of Action on OVC by developing and strengthening community based service delivery for Orphans and Vulnerable Children as well as building community ownership, reducing gender discrimination and increasing OVC involvement and advocacy.
USAID/Nigeria SO 14: Reduce the Impact of HIV/AIDS in selected states
Life of Activity (start and end dates): October 7 2009 – October 6, 2014
Total Estimated Contract/Agreement Amount: \$20,907,645
Obligations to date: \$15,976,104
Current Pipeline Amount: \$4,830,470
Accrued Expenditures this Quarter: \$805,007
Activity Cumulative Accrued Expenditures to Date \$11,145,634
Estimated Expenditures Next Quarter: \$1,230,108
Report Submitted by: <u>Zipporah Kpamor (Project Director)</u> Submission Date: <u>October 31, 2012</u> Name and Title

II. Annual Data Achievement on Intermediate Results
Results #1: Increased Number of OVC Served with 6+1 Services

Indicator	Indicator Description	Yr3 Target	Achieved	% of Target Achieved	Explanation
C1.1.D	# of eligible clients (OVC) provided with a minimum of one care service	23356	38587	165%	All 38 CSOs of years 1 & 2 continued to provide service to OVC throughout the reporting period. Grant modifications enabled enrollment of new OVC to meet the year's target.
	- Number who were newly enrolled	12,500	18689	149%	
	- Number previously enrolled	20,856	19898	95%	
	Education Male		2910		
	Education Female		2814		
	Health Male		6352		
	Health Female		6564		
	Psychosocial support Male		18682		
	Psychosocial support Female		18088		
	Shelter Male		1172		
	Shelter Female		1266		
	Protection Male		5281		
	Protection Female		4971		
	Nutrition Male		1881		
	Nutrition Female		1902		
	Economic Strengthening Male		40		
	Economic Strengthening Female		82		
C5.1.D	# of eligible clients (OVC) who receive food and/or nutrition services	No target	3782		
1.4	# of Caregivers trained in caring for OVC	2500	3971	158%	With improved capacity of CSOs and better established Community structures, caregiver training have been devolved to CSOs. This hastened the process and strengthened caregiver – CSO

					bonding which is essential for sustained service delivery.
1.5	# of OVC referred for clinical services	No target	286		

Results #2: Strengthened Capacities of National and State Governments to better Protect and Care for OVC

Indicator	Indicator Description	Yr 3 Target	Total	% of Target Achieved	Explanation
2.1	# of AIDSTAR states with comprehensive OVC plans	3	2	66%	Enugu state was supported using old NPA and SACA strategic plan. This document will be improved on when the new NPA is finalized. The project will support more states to adapt the National Plan of action next year in collaboration with other IPs to reduce duplication of effort in the other CUBS states.
2.2	# of functional state, and LGA community coordination (OVC Forums) mechanisms in place to monitor OVC programs	3states	11	366%	The project has continued to support all 11 states coordination forums both technically and otherwise. So far 12 LGA TWG have been formed.
2.3	# of AIDSTAR states with existing functional referral systems	3	9	300%	
2.4	# of persons from state ministries and LGA trained in leadership and management	60	67	112%	The LGA staff trained on leadership and management in the area of Cordination has been the pillar in setting up the LGA structures and more efforts are being channelled to the LGA to ensure sustainability.
2.5	# of persons who successfully completed an in-service training in strategic information including data collection, collation, analysis and use	50	85	170%	With the roll out of NOMIS, staff were trained on the new database and will roll out to states in the following quarter. Ekiti State Ministry of Women Affairs (SMWA) was also supported in training on OVC data tools as well as OVC survey tools

Results #3: Gender Related OVC Programming Issues addressed in Focal States

Indicator	Indicator Description	Yr 3 Target	Total	% of Target Achieved	Explanation
3.1	# of female adolescent OVC reached with a comprehensive prevention package	2500	2870	115%	With the project's current prevention strategy that includes active collaboration with prevention IPs to reach ready OVC population, 2870 female adolescents were reached with the minimum prevention package of services
3.2	# of female child-headed household supported by the OVC program	No target	20		
3.3	# of programs that address protection issues for female OVC and caregivers	39	38	97%	Child protection committees have been set up by all CSOs and in all communities we work. MSH is finalizing the child protection guideline which will be adapted by CSOs to fit local context.
3.4	# of OVC reached with individual and/or small group level preventive interventions that are based on evidence and/or meet the minimum standards required	5000	5676	114%	With the project's current prevention strategy that includes active collaboration with prevention IPs to reach ready OVC population ; 5676 adolescents were reached with the minimum prevention package of services

Results #4: Increased Local Capacity to Implement Monitor and Evaluate OVC Programs

Indicator	Indicator Description	Yr 3 Target	Total	% of Target Achieved	Explanation
4.1	# of persons trained in the use of the CSI	<u>50</u>	142	284%	We had to train more volunteers to address volunteer attrition/burn out issues.
4.2	% of new OVC who are screened at enrollment with the CSI	100%	100%	100%	All OVC are screened at enrollment with CSI and re-screened after 6-12 months of service to monitor how services that are being provided have improved the quality of life of OVC.
4.3	# of service sites/delivery points that received a DQA visit	39	38	97%	In addition to internal DQA visits to all CSOs by project staff, external Data Quality Assurance (DQA) visit by USG NMEMS also took place in Rivers and Enugu states respectively.
4.4	% of service sites/delivery points that receive a QA visit during the reporting period	33%	100%	100%	

III. Annual Progress

Some of the key achievements from this year include:

Intermediate Result 1: Increased Number of OVC Served with 6+1 Services

The project was able to reach its set target of newly enrolled OVCs as well as the outstanding targets from year one and two. The previously enrolled OVCs were also served with the period under review.

- The project served an additional 18689 new vulnerable children and 19897 previously registered vulnerable children to bring to a total of 38587, the number of OVC served with 6+1 services by 38 CSOs supported by the project through a small grants program. Even though the indicator reads 'served with a minimum of one care service' the project was able to reach each client with a minimum of three services, prioritized based on need.
- All CSOs delivered on their targets as stated in the scope of work within the period under review thus making them eligible to participate in the next granting cycle. This is despite the delay in approval to modify sub grants. When the approval came through, the CSOs implemented the activities concurrently in order to deliver on targets within the stipulated time period while still maintaining quality. All 38 CSOs are currently involved in the preparations for the technical session for the 4th year grant cycle is in process and all CSOs will be signed on based on performance to provide holistic service to the vulnerable children and their households.
- As a sustainability and exit strategy, the CUBS project continued to build the capacity of all its CSOs partners to provide quality services, but also supports organizational development that places them in good standing to attract new funding. In the past year, six of CUBS CSOs GHARF from Enugu, Synergy Care and KAN from Bayelsa, NACO and RIVCHO from Delta and CEFSORD from Ekiti secured new funding from FHI360, PACT REACH and non-USG sources to implement programs that complement the CUBS project.
- A total 3971 caregivers were trained in PY3. The participants include those who are being trained for the first time and those whose training is being refreshed. These trainings are to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of services provided to the OVC. The trainings cut across several thematic areas, ranging from psychosocial support training that will help to improve parenting skills of caregivers; to reproductive health, basic health promotion for OVC households, nutrition education, child protection and household economic strengthening capacity building and linkages to resources and assets that will strengthen OVC households.
- Protection issues of OVC are being addressed through the provision of birth registration, establishment/strengthening of child protection committees who take up cases of child abuse etc. During this past year the CSOs have been able to get birth registration certificates for over 10000 vulnerable children. With project support, state ministries of Women Affairs have made it possible for CSOs and communities to get birth registration certificates for OVC at no cost from the National Population Commission. Equally, in collaboration with Child Protection Network (CPN), International Federation of Female Lawyers (FIDA), Legal AID council and the community child protection committees (CPC), the project has taken up cases of rape/ abuse of the girl child across the project states within the reporting period. CPC continues to be sensitized on the necessary steps to take when this happens.

- CUBS supports URC and the FMWA&SD in piloting the Health Improvement project as lead in Akwa Ibom, working with CSOs. During the period under review, CUBS rolled out the implementation of the draft service quality standards and conducted the first and second learning sessions of the draft OVC service quality standards pilot in collaboration with URC. The project is carrying out this pilot using two of the five engaged CSOs in the State. Lessons learnt from the sessions were opportunities used to improve upon the services they provided and the CSOs recorded a remarkable improvement in the quality of services before the second learning session. Key lessons learnt were the need to use community resources to achieving the needs of the vulnerable children, realizing that when Government says services like education and access to birth certificates are free for children, it is not so in reality. The need for skills in process documentation amongst the CSOs was also a highlight at the meeting. Experiences shared will inform national scale up.
- As part of quality improvement and in response to one of the findings in the internal review, the project trained 34 health and nutrition workers from the states and LGAs, Staff Program Officers and CSO staff as trainers in Nutrition and Health. This was stepped –down to an additional 233 participants across the project states. This capacity building activity was prioritized to reach pregnant women, mothers and caregivers of children 0-5 years because of their special needs. Thus the content of the training included topics such as basic postnatal care (immunization, community based growth monitoring and sanitation education), Infant and Young Child Counseling and Feeding (IYCF), HCT and PMTCT, Women nutrition, feeding in the context of HIV, malnutrition, Positive Deviance Hearth and home gardening amongst others. At this training were CSO staff, state Nutrition/Home Economic officers and health workers (Community Health Extension Workers, Midwives and Nurses) who will support the necessary linkages for the provision of these services.

To improve the quality of psychosocial support and skills development in children, the Sesame Workshop supported the project with educational and play materials in Akwa Ibom State when Project staff from Imo, Enugu, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers plus partner organizations in Akwa Ibom state participated in their capacity building workshop. Already the lessons from that workshop are being imbibed as the ministry of women affairs in Akwa Ibom state. The state wants all the teachers in primary school to be trained in the use of these materials.

- In continuation of the health promotion strategy using family centered approach, the project reached 12000 OVC with Basic Care Kits (BCK), health education and health emergency services.
- Collaboration with other line ministries and corporate organizations yielded very positive results within the period as children enrolled on the program received special attention in the provision of available services. In Bayelsa state CUBS supported OVC benefitted from the State-led de-worming program and 15 vulnerable households so far have benefitted from the unconditional cash transfer by National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP). In Rivers state, CUBS supported OVC benefitted from the health outreach supported by SPDC and from textbooks distribution supported by the Ministry of Education. In Imo state, 44 vulnerable households received micro-credit facility from Janet Dozie Foundation and 2 households in Gombe received support for fish farming from the

Governor's wife initiative. All the support goes towards improving the quality of life of the OVC and their families.

- To close the obvious gaps in HIV prevention intervention, CUBS collaborated with USG funded IPs in HIV prevention. CUBS approached IPs like MSH, Deloitte and PACT that implement ProACT, ENCAP and REACH project respectively to engage CUBS registered OVC in prevention activities during Kids' and Youth clubs. Since these are prevention projects, they use their strategies to provide comprehensive prevention services to our children and caregivers. They count the numbers while we report that our children have been reached and to avoid double counting, we do not feed in any prevention numbers into the national data based since we are not a prevention project. This has yielded positive results in Imo, Enugu, Bayelsa and Kebbi states. To this end, 5676 OVC were reached with the minimum prevention package, including HCT and a child was found to be positive within the reporting period. The child has been enrolled for HIV care and treatment services in Military Hospital, Obinze Owerri, a facility closest to the household.

Intermediate Result 2: Strengthened Capacities of National and State Governments to Better Protect and Care for OVC

In strengthening the capacity of the state systems to respond to their coordination role to better protect and care for the OVC, the project was able to institutionalize the functioning of the coordination forums at state and LGA levels in target states which is the critical structure needed to ensure oversight and coordination of all child related matters. Specific achievements under this result area are as follows:

- The project supported the Social Welfare Systems Strengthening (SWSS) activity for Nigeria in mapping and review of existing training programs for social work in the Universities and other higher institutions in the South of Nigeria. A similar exercise is being conducted for institutions in the north with support of UNICEF. Once complete, this data together with mapping of social welfare structures in Local governments in Nigeria will be used to propose and recommend a strategy and structure for Nigeria's Social Welfare approach.
- In line with the objective of strengthening the support system for OVC coordination in the state ministries of women affairs through the state Technical Working Group (TWG), the project has continued to support the states in hosting quarterly OVC coordination meetings and work plan development. Ten states have established the OVC coordination meetings. Additionally, the project supported Gombe and Ekiti states to prepare presentations on the work of the OVC division of the Ministry of Women Affairs. These presentations were then used in meetings with First Ladies to secure more long term funding for OVC activities in the states. In Delta and Imo states, the project worked closely with the Commissioners of Women Affairs and Senior Management to articulate the needs of the OVC division for the draft ministry budget. Working with UNICEF and other IPs in Bayelsa and Akwa Ibom states, the project continues to support the hosting of Child protection networks that are providing critical support for OVC.
- The project's technical team in collaboration with Northern Education Initiative (NEI) supported Sokoto State to develop its state comprehensive OVC strategic plan of action. In the same light the project also supported the adaptation of the State Strategic Plan of Action for Enugu State using the old NPA and the state HIV strategic plan. This

document will be updated using the expected NPA when it eventually comes out. All the relevant line ministries, MDAs and IPs were at the workshop.

- A total of 67 LGA staff were trained in leadership and management for OVC coordination from across 32 LGAs drawn from 10 states under CUBS coverage. It is expected that the acquired skills will strengthen the OVC coordination at the LGA level and help to ensure sustainability at the grass root. To that effect a total of 12 LGAs have inaugurated its TWGs in Rivers, Delta, Enugu, Imo and Ekiti States.
- In support of the FMWA&SD's coordination role, the project conducted a joint supervisory visit with the FMWA&SD staff to Enugu State. This visit strengthened skills for service delivery at community level and lessons learnt from the community level will be used to advance policy.
- In Delta state, the advocacy team of the OVC TWG with technical support from CUBS, has begun the process of meeting with the state house of assembly to gazette the Child's Right Act in the state, making it available for public dissemination, with a view to strengthening family courts in the state.

Intermediate Result 3: Gender Related OVC Programming Issues Addressed in Focal States

- After a well thought out and implemented process, 145 trained most vulnerable female heads of households received material support to start up and in some cases expand on economic activities in Gombe and Delta states. This group is being monitored and provided mentoring support to ensure that the benefits from such businesses are used to improve the well being of OVC under their care.
- An aggressive advocacy campaign was carried out by CSOs and state ministry of women affairs teams to get more support from government and private entities for OVC. As a result of these advocacy visits, a number of private concerns have agreed to support more heads of households in Delta state. These include Lions Club international which will support 50 heads of households in this coming year in household economic strengthening activities. Additionally, a member of CSO Board of Trustees donated the sum of One Hundred Thousand Naira to support more female heads of households in starting up new small scale businesses, the profit there from will be used to fund the education, nutrition and health needs of vulnerable children in the household.
- Working with USAID MARKETS Team and using their model, 143 caregivers were trained in Household Economic Strengthening amongst whom were 7 CSO staff in Taraba and Kebbi states. This training will improve the business acumen of caregivers, and help them to start and better manage small businesses. The inclusion of maternal and child health in the training provides the link between improved income and improved health and quality of life. The project plans to scale up this training to all project states while trained caregivers in the same communities will be paired with untrained ones so they can transfer some of their newly found skills. Subsequently, funding will be provided based on submission and review of business plans developed by the caregivers supervised by the CSOs and state program officers. Cooperative businesses modeled on the traditional "Esusu" (contributory) scheme will be encouraged where there is potential for establishment of small women-led agri-businesses to allow for value chain promotion of

specific crops with high nutritional value and high yield potential as identified by the National Agricultural transformation plan.

- In Akwa Ibom state, with project support, a group of female heads of households have been able to access government agricultural support enabling them to start off small animal farming businesses while in Delta state, government has taken over the list of female heads of households that were assessed by project CSOs with a view to supporting them under the government's economic empowerment program .
- To mainstream gender into partner scope of work and to bring to the fore gender related protection matters for adolescent girls and female heads of households, the project conducted 3-day workshops in the 11 CUBS supported states . These meetings brought together civil society groups working on gender matters police, immigration, civil defense and legal practitioners to discuss these challenges and facilitate reporting of abuse cases and what to do when these issues arise. The Ministry of Women Affairs as well as other government agencies all agreed to continue this discussions which the project will provide technical assistance as well as other necessary support to ensure ownership.
- A Train the Trainers (ToT) workshop on reproductive health took place in Akwa Ibom, Ekiti, Gombe, Taraba, Enugu, Imo, Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta. With the ToT concluded, the caregiver level training has been conducted in Rivers, Delta and Bayelsa and the remaining states will receive prior attention in year 4. This training empowers caregivers and adolescent OVC to handle reproductive health challenges among vulnerable children while increasing access to reproductive health information and services.
- Continuing with efforts to mitigate vulnerability of adolescent girls, the CUBS team in Rivers state has identified in the first phase, 14 female out of school adolescents and assessed their needs with a view to placing them in vocational skills training. These girls had and are still benefitting from HIV prevention messaging through youth club activities. The state team is actively identifying private/philanthropic and public sector resources and establishing linkages for mentorship and expansion of opportunities which these adolescents can access following training to ensure they can be adequately established in their chosen careers/trades. This way, the girls can afford to pay their way back to school/enter the work force. The implementation plan with timelines and assigned roles/ responsibilities for skills acquisition training for adolescent girls have been developed and this activity is also prioritized in the year 4 budget.

Intermediate Result 4: Increased Local Capacity to Implement, Monitor and Evaluate OVC Programs

- The project conducted Data Quality assurance (DQA) to all CSOs during the course of the year. The result shows a significant improvement in their documentation effort.
- Approximately 3 of each CSO staff were re-trained on the use of Child Status Index (CSI) to improve their capacity to monitor and document well being of children.
- Site based capacity building exercise continues to be provided to state and CSOs enabling them to implement programs and adhere to international norms and standards.
- All CSOs staff have been trained on comprehensive OVC services including psychosocial support activities for Caregivers. These CSOs now train their Caregivers and also provide supportive counseling during home visits by their volunteers'

- The project also trained staff on the health needs of households including hygiene, water treatment and malaria prevention. As an added innovation based on our findings that adolescent females lack access to sanitary towels, the project included these in the basic care kits it provides to households. Before handing over these kits, CSO volunteers train heads of households on the use of the contents and also advice on how they could get replenishment supplies.
- Continuous site based supervision and mentoring provided to CSOs enables them to implement programs and adhere to international norms and standards
- A total of 85 persons successfully completed an in-service training in strategic information including data collection, collation, analysis and use.
- Following the call by the FMWA&SD for roll out of National OVC Management Information System (NOMIS) as the national OVC database, all CUBS M&E specialists and program staff at the country office including IT specialists (16 officers) were trained on NOMIS in collaboration with FHI. Hands-on mentoring of the CSOs' M&E officers on NOMIS has started in all 11 states following the just concluded NOMIS training. Project expects that NOMIS will be the reporting platform by the end of second quarter of year 4.
- In order to fill the OVC information gap in the state, Ekiti State has determine to conduct an OVC survey to provide information for planning. In support of this process, CUBS worked with staff of the Department of Planning, Research and statistics and the Department of Child Development of the State Ministry of Women Affairs to develop the OVC data collection tools and trained 59 M&E officers o its use, as well as reviewed the survey methods. In the coming year, CUBS will provide TA for data collection and analysis and in the report writing. Using the National Harmonized Organizational Assessment Tool (NHOCAT), Organizational capacity of 24 CSOs was assessed, bringing to fore strengths like community acceptability and presence, experience in programme area which will be consolidated upon and exposing gaps such as frail structures, poor governance, non-existent systems which will be developed and strengthened to enable the CSOs deliver quality services. Based on assessment results, comprehensive development plan (intervention plan) were developed with the 24 CSOs to address identified gaps and strengthen local organizational capacity for quality service delivery. Achievement of developed benchmarks in identified weak areas ushers in the weaning of the organization from capacity development. This assessment aims at organizational system strengthening that contributes to CUBS' exit strategy.
- Following organizational development plans put together after the organizational capacity assessments, three CSOs have been supported to put in place plans for organizational strategic and work plan development. Using intensified direct mentoring, the project has supported 7 of CSOs to steadily progress on process, policy development and internalization, thereby enhancing prospects for project sustainability.
- In our effort to strengthen the strategic information skills of the Government partners, Data Demand and Information Use (DDIU) training was conducted for 11 Desk Officers of State Ministry of Women affairs to improve their capacity in reporting, documentation and data use for informed decision making. The three-day training held in Abuja in Feb 2012. A laptop computer was given to each state ministry as a working tool to support the process of documentation and reporting system. Currently, 10 out of the 11 states report to the FMWA&SD using this tool.

- Through coaching and mentoring, 6 CUBS CSOs have been supported to put in place and uphold strong governing Boards within the period under review.
- With leveraged support from wider MSH team, 3 of our CSOs were supported to obtain the DUNS, CAC and other forms of local registrations with regulating authorities and oversight bodies.
- As part of quality improvement, the project conducted an internal review of its interventions and followed closely with a mid term project review. The team used qualitative methods to interact with State ministries of women affairs, CSO staff, caregivers and vulnerable children in Gombe, Delta and Enugu States. Preliminary findings presented clear achievements as well as big gaps in HES, nutrition and the need for standardization of CUBS' document. This report has already been put to use and serves to guide programming in the remaining period of the project's life time to ensure quality in the system as well as life of the OVC and their households.

Intermediate Result 5: Document and disseminate successful innovative approaches, sustainable models, evidence-based best practices and lessons learned.

- The first ever forum on **Lessons Learned and Experience Sharing on Promising Practices in Household Economic Strengthening (HES)** was hosted by CUBS on 14 June 2012 in Abuja. This forum was borne out of a real concern by Implementing Partners working with vulnerable populations in economic strengthening activities, to reflect on workable models and to share in lessons learned. Thirty three (33) people attended, cut across a variety of dynamic organizations across the country, representing IPs, CSOs, Government and Donors. The forum critically examined various methods and approaches adopted to strengthen poor households. The success of this forum is that it established a foundational agenda for interaction on HES, provided a unique opportunity to discuss existing HES theoretical and pragmatic approaches, and envisioned novel approaches to encourage sustained critical reflection.

Intermediate Result 6: Cost Effective Project Management to Meet Deliverables

- The Ministry of Women Affairs are beginning to take over the cost of running OVC forum meetings in Ekiti and Enugu states while the project continues to provide the necessary technical assistance. Efforts are being made to get other states' buy-in.
- Using approaches that bring the ministry to the fore and provide visibility to the senior management, the project has been able to get them to take up the needs of caregivers and females in particular. In handing over health and education materials, the Ministry was given the chance to showcase its networking that has enabled USAID to support the state. The same argument is being used by the state ministries in Imo and Delta states to get government to provide additional kits to benefit OVC. Over time we are hopeful that the funding for these resources and many more will become part of Ministry's mandate informed by high quality data.
- CUBS has made a major shift from formal class room training to hands on mentoring in all aspects of capacity building efforts of the project.
- Leveraging resources such as in Organizational Development and prevention

packages are also been maximally explored.

- Inclusion of training cost to CSOs' Scopes of Work (SOW) to improve their capacity, ensure sustainability as well as reducing direct project staff time/resources. At the same time, the Ministry of Women Affairs are beginning to take over the cost of running OVC forum meetings in Ekiti and Enugu states.
- CSOs' capacity has been built to enable decentralized community level training involving managing logistics. This has reduced direct project staff level of effort in community activities while channeling more efforts to system strengthening at the LGA and State level. This will serve to strengthen their capacity in financial management, ensure sustainability as well as reducing the use of direct project staff time/resources routine activities while channelling them towards maintaining quality.
- CUBS has made a major shift from formal class room training to hands on mentoring in all aspects of capacity building efforts of the project.
- Leveraging resources such as in Organizational Development and prevention packages were also maximally explored.
- CUBS went through a major period of transition during the period under review, that saw chsnge in staff at the state, country and home offices. In all, five technical staff including the current chief of party, and the project director supervisor, two senior program officers and an M&E specialist, were recruited within the period to address staffing needs as well as CSOs organizational development technical assistance by the project. The transition was not limited to just staff as, one CSO; Empowerment for Women and Youth Initiative (EWAYI) opted out of implementation in Imo State and was promptly replaced by Unique Care Foundation. Transitions were smooth and did not affect the chievement of project benchmarks.
- Forty-five staff of the CUBS project convened in Markurdi from 24 – 30th September for a project retreat. The meeting reviewed activities of PY 3 and planned for PY 4. A series of team building exercises focused on getting the staff to improve the organizational environment and make them better acclimatized with each other. This in turn will make staff comfortable with each other, and will further enable them to work well with each other in order to achieve the PY 4 goals.

IV. Problems and Opportunities

Problems:

- Form B for birth registration is still in short supply from National Population Commission (NPOPC) in some states. In the mean time the project is doing all the preliminary documentation so transfer will be easy when the forms become available. Additionally, CUBS has intensified advocacy to NPOPC so that the OVCs will be prioritized when the forms become available.
- The project has maintained a cordial relationship with the ministry and has advocated at various levels that trained staff be retained so that there will be continuity. This has reduced to a minimum the incessant ministry staff transfers. We also send documents to the whole team, rather than to one person so that when there is a transfer, other members of the team will be sufficiently informed to continue with the activity.

- Flooding in Imo, Bayelsa and Delta affected programming in the states. Households were displaced and the office in Bayelsa relocated to Delta temporarily. The project has made concerted efforts to reach displaced households with adequate health education on sanitation, safe water, malaria prevention, RH and HIV prevention.
- Security continues to be a concern for everyone in Nigeria. Project is careful and taking measures to ensure safety of staff. Trips have been reduced, when necessary they have been used to achieve multiple agendas while remote mentoring and coaching have been intensified.
- Increased operations costs in Nigeria due to rising inflation is a challenge to implementing planned activities. To this end we are making efforts at cost savings to remain within budget.
- The strike action throughout the country in January and in some states in April, delayed/disrupted a number of planned activities. The rescheduled activities ran concurrently when the staff returned.
- The delay in the approval process for grants modification of the 38 CSOs affected the targets achievement in the first 3 quarters of the project. CSOs prepared the communities while waiting for the grants approval and even, placed eligible OVC on a waiting list. This expedited enrollment when the time came.
- Change of leadership in the project in quarter 2 affected the plans for the mid project evaluation which was delayed till last quarter to enable the incoming COP to get familiar with the project.

Opportunities

- Building on the HES and RH interventions, the project is planning a research on the various cohorts of the beneficiaries to assess the impact of the intervention on OVC households to promote best practices. To do this, is to begin to write the stories that will be told during project close out session and during informal community of practice meetings to profile what is working and work is not working.
- Meetings with NAPEP and State ministries provides opportunities for further collaborations. The unconditional cash transfer initiative which began in Bayelsa will be expanded to other states through our partnership with NAPEP even at the national level.
- Trainings with FMWA&SD on NOMIS has been expanded to the states and the CSOs. This will provide for timely process documentation and update on OVC data
- USAID paid routine monitoring visits to our sites in Ekiti and Imo. The need to link up more effectively with the LGA was highlighted as the LGA is closest to the communities. The attention of the state teams and CSOs were also drawn to the new PEPFAR guidance as it is a tool to provide guidance in OVC programming. This provided avenue for learning for the project.

V. Success Stories

Attached

VI. Year 4 Priority Areas, Results and Related Tasks

During year four, the following progress is expected in each of the intermediate results Component including:

Intermediate Result 1:

- Hold the 3rd learning session on the pilot of the OVC service standards in Akwa Ibom. Start analysis of the pilot result to inform OVC program direction for the nation.
- Integrate VSLA into HES activities to increase household assets.
- Support block granting interventions as a means of enhancing community ownership and program sustainability.
- Conduct quality assurance visits and mentoring to CSOs across the 11 states
- Support workplan development for CSOs to finalize scope of work and plans for service delivery in year 4.
- Support continuous collaborative efforts with relevant line ministries, MDAs, bilateral and multi-lateral organizations to garner adequate support for OVC care and support.

Intermediate Result 2:

- Carry out mentoring visits to National and State governments in order to build on the structures and systems CUBS and other partners have put in place.
- Facilitate the activation of TWG at Local Governments Councils level.
- Support the adaptation of the National Plan of Action in Bayelsa, Kebbi, Akwa Ibom, River and Delta States and implement accordingly.

Intermediate Result 3:

- Conduct an orientation for senior project staff on the Gender programming framework incorporating legal protection for girls to enhance gender integration across project outputs and performance monitoring and reporting. Integrate with orientation on baseline assessment tool for Household Economic Strengthening.
 - Support vocational skills training and procurement of start up equipment for adolescent girls in Rivers state.
 - Scale up HES training to five states-Kebbi, Sokoto, Ekiti, Bayelsa and Enugu
 - Document and share 2-3 success stories arising from gender trainings.
- Intensify field-level mentoring support to HES project teams in Delta and Gombe states

Intermediate Result 4:

- Conduct Board meetings/Board development activities and strategic plan development for focused and guided achievements to build strong governance & leadership structures in CSOs through periodic.
- Facilitate policy development and mentor on dedicated implementation of developed policies in order to strengthen systems and operational capacities
- Create linkages and opportunities for networking, build alliance and conduct advocacy visits to enhanced resource mobilization/organizational income opportunities
- Conduct monitoring and supervisory visits to strengthen documentation and engender accountability

- Devolve caregiver level training to CSOs as part of capacity building and sustainability plans

Intermediate Result 5:

- Increase documentation on HES interventions across the states. Harvest more success story
- Conduct brown bag with other OVC IPs on preliminary CSI analysis in relation to evidence based Quality Improvement of OVCs
- Initiate collaboration in other technical areas, document and share best practices.

Intermediate Result 6:

- Use recommendations from the MTE result to inform programming
- Review of the grant renewal process
- Convene a Governors' wives forum in collaboration with the FMWA&SD to advocate for the cause of the vulnerable child at the state and LGA levels.