

Technical Brief

Nigeria CUBS

Improving Care for Thousands of Vulnerable Children in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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FACT SHEET: Community-Based Support for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CUBS)

Improving Care for Thousands of Vulnerable Children in Ekiti State, Nigeria

Launched in 2009, and funded by the President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Community-Based Support for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CUBS) project was designed to support the Government of Nigeria's National Priority Agenda for a coordinated approach to address the needs of orphans and vulnerable children. Implemented by Management Sciences for Health (MSH) in partnership with Africare, the five-year project worked in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (FMWASD) and its corresponding state ministries in 11 states: Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Ekiti, Enugu, Gombe, Imo, Kebbi, Rivers, Sokoto, and Taraba.

In Ekiti State, 43.5 percent of the state's 1.4 million children are estimated to be orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), struggling with unmet needs for nutrition, education, shelter, care, and support. Since 2010, CUBS has been working in partnership with the state government to improve care for OVC in Ekiti. CUBS' interventions have strengthened social support systems and provided food, clothing, health care, educational assistance, emotional support, and legal support to more than 3,500 OVC in Ekiti State. State leaders, community groups, and OVC caregivers are now motivated and equipped to fully support and protect Ekiti State's vulnerable children after CUBS closes in 2014.

Caregivers Develop Stronger Parenting and Income-Generation Skills

Most OVC caregivers in Ekiti State are severely impoverished, with 39 percent earning an annual income of less than 24,000 naira (US \$150). To improve their income so they can better provide for the OVC in their care, CUBS trained more than 110 caregivers in Ekiti State on household economic strengthening and small business development skills. Building on this success, Ekiti State leaders provided 40 additional OVC caregivers with business seed grants of 10,000 naira (US \$400) each. In addition to economic skills training, CUBS also taught 900 caregivers to identify and address the nutritional, health, educational, and emotional needs of vulnerable children in their care.



Photo by Musa Usman

Leaders Provide OVC with Legal and Social Protection

Each year, many cases of physical and sexual abuse against children are reported in Ekiti State. In response, CUBS helped state leaders establish five child protection committees (CPCs), four OVC technical working groups (TWGs), and one state-level OVC steering committee. For the CPCs, CUBS recruited 10 to 15 leaders from traditional ruling councils, landlord associations, religious groups, and market. The TWGs provide oversight and leadership to all stakeholders for the coordination and implementation of Nigeria's National Plan of Action for OVCs. These groups now actively identify children in need of legal and social protection, refer them to appropriate service providers, and secure funding and resources to sustain their activities. Thus far, the groups have assisted more than 100 children.



Community Advocacy Earns OVC Support

Since 2009, CUBS has trained 160 community volunteers, community leaders, and religious leaders to advocate for greater OVC care and financial support in Ekiti State. These efforts inspired the State Ministry of Women Affairs, Social Development, and Gender Empowerment (SMWASDGE) and community members in Ekiti East LGA to donate 500 bed nets to protect children from malaria and 420 sanitary pads for adolescent OVC girls. In addition, community leaders and volunteers in Ado and Ekiti West local government areas raised 98,000 naira (US \$600) to purchase educational materials for more than 1,060 OVC.

Situation Analysis Informs OVC Efforts

Although Nigeria has prepared a national OVC assessment report, state-level data are needed to describe the unique social and geographic conditions these children face and develop an effective response. In 2012, CUBS collaborated with the Ekiti’s SMWASDGE to conduct a situation analysis on the causes of vulnerability and characteristics of OVC in Ekiti State. The report includes estimates of the number of OVC in each local government area and a description of their needs, the available services, service delivery gaps, and recommendations for OVC program and service improvements. State leaders used this report to guide the allocation and distribution of resources for OVC programming.

“The situation analysis allowed us to see the many challenges OVC and their caregivers face. CUBS’ capacity building activities empowered community- and government-level staff to help more OVC in our state. These activities have created a strong platform for others to build on so that more vulnerable children can be reached,” notes Fola-Richie Adewusi, the Honorable Commissioner of Ekiti SMWASDGE.

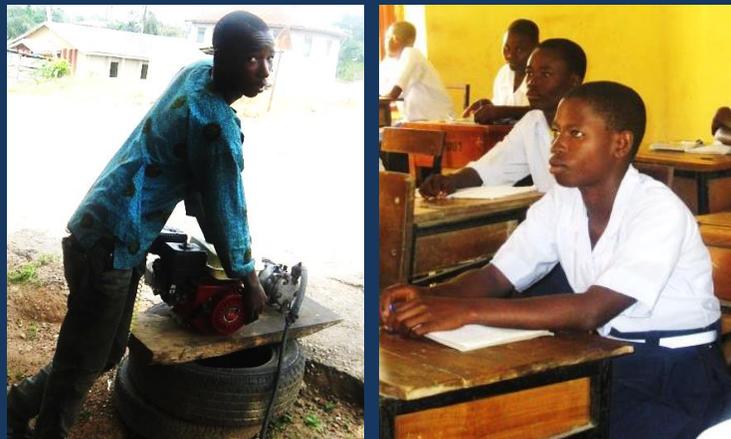


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Irene Abdou Photography

Following in Her Footsteps: A Disabled Mother’s Rise from Poverty Inspires her Son

Author/photographer: Adenike Badiora, CUBS’ Ekiti State Program Officer



Omobolanle’s children, Abiodun and Odunayo

More than 20 years ago, Omobolanle Anjorin lost the use of both of her arms. While helping her sister during labor, her sister’s in-laws accused Omobolanle of meddling in their affairs and poured a hot liquid on her, resulting in a permanent damage. Because her disability made it impossible to find work, Omobolanle soon began begging. Poverty and disability made it easy for men to take advantage of her. By the time she was 35, Omobolanle had three children; each of their fathers had abandoned her. Omobolanle struggled to provide for her family. Eventually, she could not pay her children’s tuition and they were no longer allowed to attend school.

In 2011, the CSO Foundation for Sustainable Health Promotion and Development (FOSH PAD) began helping OVC in Omobolanle’s village. In partnership with CUBS, FOSH PAD provided Omobolanle’s children and 1,248 others with clothing, food, school materials, and emotional support. The CSO also trained Omobolanle and 756 caregivers in parenting and income generation skills so they could better provide for their children.

These training inspired Omobolanle to open a small shop. CUBS gave her a 13,500 naira (US \$80) grant and helped her secure supplies to start the business. FOSH PAD also advocated for additional support for Omobolanle, which helped her earn a 20,000 naira (US \$120) grant from the Ekiti SMWASDGE.

Omobolanle now earns enough money to provide for her children and pay their school fees. Her son recently trained as a mechanic and began working to support his family. Omobolanle is proud of him and gave him the following advice from her own experience: “I thank God that He remembered us and sent help to us through CUBS. Now you too have the opportunity to earn a living. Be focused and persevere in your business, my son. I know God will bless your efforts.”