

**UROMI JUSTICE DEVELOPMENT PEACE AND CARITAS INITIATIVES (UROMI  
JDCPI) NEWSLETTER, September 2022 Edition**

**CORPORATE FACT SHEET**

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name                                 | Uromi Justice Development Peace & Caritas Initiatives, (Uromi JDCPI).   |
| Owner                                | Catholic Diocese of Uromi, Nigeria.   |
| Legal Holder                         | His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Donatus A Ogun (OSA)  |
| Authorized Representative & Director | Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Oriabure Arhedo   |
| Corporate Registration No:           | CAC/IT/No: 50042 & ED/MWASD/NGOR/200/04   |
| Status                               | Catholic Non-Governmental, Non-Profit making, Humanitarian and Development Organization.  |
| Motto                                | Hope for the Oppressed and Empowerment for All  |
| Areas of operation                   | Integral Development, Human Rights, Democracy, and Good Governance, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Prison Apostolate and Legal Aid services, Peace Building, Micro-Credit and Caritas, TB and HIV/AIDS care and support, HIV Counseling and testing, Livelihood improvement, Anti-Human trafficking and VC programming   |
| Project steered                      | Conflict Management, Training of Electorate, Election Observation, Budget Monitoring, Community TB Care, HIV/AIDS Awareness Creation & Counseling, Micro-Credit Facilities, Rural Community Development Enlightenment Campaign, Prisoners' Welfare Services, Gender And Child Rights, Widowhood Association, Human Rights, Training Programmes for Police Officers and Youths, Women Development & Promotion through Micro Credit, Emergency Response, Legal Aid, VC Programming, Capacity Strengthening for Good Governance, Campaigns and Sensitizations Against Human Trafficking as well as Creating Alternatives to Human Trafficking through Vocational Skills Acquisition and Empowerment, Human Right Education and Paralegal Scheme, Don't Pay With Your Life, Strengthening Community Participation to Prevent Human Trafficking and Integrated Child Health and Social Service Award |
| Focus Group                          | The rural populace, the economically deprived, families, children, students, youths, women and widows living among the poorest of the poor in the society. Inmates in Prison and Ex-inmates, persons stigmatized with deadly diseases.  |
| Physical Address                     | Inside Uromi Diocesan Chancery at Egbele, Uromi, Edo State, Nigeria.  |
| Postal Address                       | P.O. Box 7, Uromi, Edo State  |
| E-mail                               | <a href="mailto:uromijdpci@gmail.com">uromijdpci@gmail.com</a>  |
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|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Auditors                       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grant Thornton chartered Accountants Emgn, Benin Branch</li> <li>2. Edforte, Fortne, Ehiagwina&amp; Associates<br/>141 Benin-Auchi Road Ekpoma, Edo State</li> </ol>   |
| Bankers                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UBA BANK PLC<br/>Mission Road, Uromi</li> <li>• ECOBANK PLC<br/>Mission Road, Uromi</li> <li>• FIDELITY BANK PLC<br/>Mission Road, Uromi</li> <li>• Unity Bank PLC<br/>Mission Road Uromi</li> <li>• Union Bank PLC<br/>Mission Road Uromi</li> </ul> |
| Staff Strength                 | 24   |
| Number of Community Volunteers | 72   |
| Project Executed               | 18   |

## **INTRODUCTION**

Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) through her wide-ranging streams of interventions promotes the integral development of the rural populace in Edo Central Senatorial District in accordance with her mission, which is to alleviate poverty and promote integral development through the motivation and empowerment of the less privileged/oppressed and challenging unjust structures that enhance injustice, hatred and backwardness in Nigeria. These interventions address challenges and norms around human rights protection, good governance, human trafficking and Irregular Migration, as well as interventions to promote healthy outcomes amongst children and families infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

In her Human Rights Education and Paralegal scheme project, Uromi JDPCI conducted series of activities geared towards improving peaceful coexistence in the communities. Among which were Community Dialogue in 5 Communities, the facilitation of Adolescent Human Right Club Learning Sessions in 25 schools, the sensitization of representatives of 30 communities on Gender issues and Gender-based violence, training of paralegals and human rights advocates, and the conveyance of third Quarterly Meeting of Paralegals.

Uromi JDPCI also implemented some activities in collaboration with communities to strengthen good governance and encouraged community participation in governance for effective service delivery. The activities were: town hall meetings/media engagement, quarterly learning sessions, and monitoring visits to target communities.

In the anti-human trafficking desk, Uromi JDPCI trained and empowered 40 caregivers across communities in Edo Central Senatorial District. Five tertiary education students were also supported with grants for tuition fees. These were part of the Don't Pay With Your Life Project's effort to reduce susceptibility to human trafficking. Uromi JDPCI through the GATIP project also conducted some advocacy engagement meetings geared towards localizing trafficking in-person response at the LGAs in Edo State. Some public awareness events such as a rally to mark world day against human trafficking and the launching of campaign hashtags were also conducted

Uromi JDPCI through her Integrated Child Health and Social Service Award facilitated Operation Triple Zero (OTZ) Club Meetings for Adolescents Living With HIV/AIDS at Uromi Central Hospital and Irrua Specialist Teaching Hospital, the project also conducted community outreach for HTS as well as followed up on clients with unsuppressed viral load record.

Uromi JDPCI also sustained her micro-credit empowerment Scheme by providing soft loans to Small and Medium Scale enterprises and active farmers within the 5 Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District to enhance their businesses.

## **HUMAN RIGHT DESK**

### ***HUMAN RIGHT EDUCATION AND PARALEGAL SCHEME***

**Quarterly Learning Sessions for School-Based Adolescent Human Right Clubs:** The Six-quarter learning session with the Adolescent Human Right Club members was held in the months of September and October, 2022 in the selected 25 schools across the five Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District. The topic for the learning session was The Power of effective communication. The purpose of this topic was to improve their reporting skills when the incidence of abuse occurs so that proper actions could be taken. The content was focused on communication and the three types of communicators; (the confident communicator, the unconfident communicator, and the forceful communicator). At the end of the sessions, the students demonstrated an understanding of the various characteristics of the different communicators. The purpose of



this session was to build the capacity of the adolescent to effectively express themselves honestly, clearly, and respectfully and respect other people's opinions while standing by their principles, ensuring that their body languages match their words and they are thankful when they were praised. This was to emphasize the need to be confident while communicating incidences of abuse so that such matters could be easily followed. A total of 134 (53 Males, 81 Females) students were



reached. The students who participated in the learning session are already utilizing the knowledge to engage their peers in schools and communities to increase their awareness of child protection mechanism

**Capacity Building (Training):** A two-day training on the concept of human rights and constitutional rights, litigation, and procedure for the enforcement of human rights



in Nigeria was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of July, 2022 at the Catholic Chancery Hall, Uromi. The purpose of the



training was to increase the knowledge of the participants on human and constitutional rights and the procedure that is available to enforce human rights as well as the sections of the law that protects every person from abuse and violations of human rights. This was to better improve their capacity to effectively provide Paralegal services in their various communities as well as provide counsel to those in need of it.

In the course of the two days of training, facilitators took participants through a detailed and simplified discourse on human and constitutional rights through an interactive session with questions

tailored to prepare their minds for the impactful training and to ascertain their understanding and perception of Human Rights.

On day one, participants were taken through the pre- and post-colonial era of human rights in Nigeria,



the historical account of Human Rights in Nigeria which includes the military and civil dispensation and the limitations imposed under section 46 (1) of the constitution while presentations for day two centered on the application of the provisions of Chapter IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended which guarantees the rights of every citizen of Nigeria and the Perception of the society towards Human Rights Enforcement.

The participants thereafter expressed understanding of the developmental issues and human experiences that makes the concept of human right a continuous evolution since more classes of rights or more concept of the existing categories of rights may emerge. At the end of the training, the participants were better enlightened on their human and constitutional Rights. This was ascertained



from the well-informed questions and answers they provided to some technical questions and contributions regarding Litigation and Procedure for the Enforcement of Human Rights in Nigeria. A total of 130 (70 males, 60 females) participants were in attendance made up of 5 Seasoned Legal Practitioners who are the Supervisors of the 5 Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District

**Quarterly Meeting of Paralegals and Human Rights Advocates:** in this reporting period, a quarterly learning session for Paralegals was held between 21<sup>st</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of September, 2022, with a total of 300 persons- (Males 144 and Females 156) in attendance. In the opening remark, The Executive Director appreciated the resilience of the paralegals and human right advocates and despite the challenges encountered in the cause of carrying out their intervention, he exulted them not to relent but to look at the aftermath of their good works in the communities as a motivating factor in continuing their activities. He told them that if they remained focused, their effort would yield bountiful results in the future.



Key activities reported were community sensitizations carried out by the advocates on the promotion of rights of community members, especially female, interventions carried out in cases of child abuse, neglects, spousal abandonment, and the like as well as ensuring due process in enforcing justice on human right violations which were criminal in nature. In the course of giving the reports, challenges faced by the Paralegals and Advocates were also deliberated upon. The Paralegals and Human Rights Advocates in the various communities used the opportunity to share their knowledge, experiences, challenges, and plans for their various communities. Some coaching and mentorship were also given by the Executive



Director during the



meetings during which their zest in ensuring that community members felt their presence through their activities and interventions was appreciated. The project team expressed joy over the manner in which community members sought the interventions of the Paralegals and their abilities to amicably resolve disputes through Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanism. Their efforts in ensuring the protection of human rights in their

various



communities was also appreciated. Those who were undergoing challenges in the quest to carry out



human right activities were encouraged to be relentless, reminding them that a journey of a thousand miles began with a step and therefore, the expected behavioral changes in the community would only take place if they were consistent in their dealings and engagements. Also noted, was the challenge in intervening in cases related to abandoned children as shelters to serve as alternative settlement for such children who have undergone abuses from persons they were

living with were not available at the Senatorial District and the State in general. That notwithstanding, the project team used the opportunity to counsel the advocates on the need to be swift during intervention so as not to cause miscarriage of justice as a result of undue delay and the like.

**Community Dialogue:** 10 community dialogues were held within this reporting period. Uromi JDPCI carried out Community Dialogue in Egbele, Uhe, Ahia, Ukpenu, Idumebo, Ogwa, Eguare-Igubeen, Ivue, Emu, and Emaudo Communities between April 2022 and September 2022, to discourse on human rights issues with emphasis on Child protection/rights and widowhood practices, human right issues peculiar to the various



communities and the way forward. The participants were made up of traditional rulers, chiefs, community leaders, men, women, and youths in the various community and the project team as well



as the supervisor of the human right clubs in various Local Government Areas. The dialogues which were held at the traditional rulers' premises, residences of community leaders, and community halls/squares had reasonable resolutions to improve the participation of women in social-cultural, and economic issues as well as liberating them from cultural hegemony. Some communities began the discussion to abolish certain cultural practices that reduce women to mere possessions and subject women to inhuman treatment in the guise of customs, tradition, and religion. A total of 220 persons made up of 137 males and 87 females were reached. In all the communities, there was no clear definition of a child in terms of age, but after the dialogue, the participants agreed that any person who was below the age of 18 is a child as such community members should make effort to protect all children from abuses and violence. Some participants cited the need for community structure to be put in place to ensure the protection of the rights of children especially their right to education.

On the aspect of widowhood practice, community members stated that widowhood practices were matter of cultural beliefs that will require critical thought. However, they agreed that ill treatment constitute violation against the victims' rights and that not all widowhood practices constitute ill treatment as such the part that constitute ill treatment should be reviewed and abolished. Some communities listed examples of ill treatment that have been abolished because they violate the widows right to social relation by isolating her and subjecting



her to confinement in a small room where she was met to sleep on the floor for some period of days, eat with unwashed dishes and hands made to put on one attire throughout this period and being



faced with accusation or suspicion of killing her husband. She was therefore made to swear an oath to prove her innocence and get inherited by any surviving male family member of her deceased husband. They noted that out of the aforementioned practices, all of them had gone on extinction, except the act of widow inheritance and that it would be important to critically consider the rights and consent of the widows in such cultural practices. This is still being resisted by some communities due to their conservative attitudes and fear of repercussion.



**Gender Sensitization:** Uromi JDPCI conducted annual



sensitization on gender issues across the 5 LGAs. The focus was on the Rights of Females to Inheritance and the rights to freedom of Religion. The purpose was to



critically evaluate the ideas and practices upheld by the people, with a view to determining which ones are adequate and in line with the promotion of human rights and which are erroneous. The primogeniture rule of inheritance as practiced by the Esan people, is an undeniable phenomenon in virtually all communities in Edo Central Senatorial District, though the severity varies from one community to another. This act of discrimination against the female sex, has become an unquestionable act in virtually every community in Esan Land. Esan people, fashioned a pattern of inheritance according to the rule of primogeniture. This rule was predicated upon some ideas which were relevant at that time of formulation where the first son held properties in trust for other members of the family and remained in his father's house as the head of the family while the Female Child was not given a place as a person with rights; rather, she was objectified as an inheritable item both in her parental and marital families. However, there is no gain saying that the rule has become irrelevant since modernization and civilization has made communal living impossible, as most first sons do not even remain in their fathers' house or village localities and most importantly, the need for the promotion of the human rights of all. More so, the implementation of religious right within the district has become a no success situation because of the modulation of religion into the custom and tradition of the people, hence some religious rites are often expected from the heir of the deceased before properties could be legitimately transferred. Failure to perform such religious rite would lead to the loss of the right to inheritance by the heir. The facilitator distinguished cultural practices from



religious practices and tradition. Here participants were able to interactively see that they erroneously submerged the way of life of the people with religious belief in their



practices. For instance, there exist the customary practice of presenting a goat for sacrifice while performing the burial rite and even as part of the mourning act of the widow in some cases; and where such acts were challenged by the duty bearers due to negation of their own religious practices, they risked discrimination and isolation from community members. The facilitator laid emphasis on the fact that freedom of religion was constitutionally guaranteed while buttressing that no community had the power to take away a person's freedom of religion under the guise of cultural or traditional practices. Here, participants understood how some demands could lead to the violation of the freedom of religion of persons especially women who were mostly victims of customary enactments and therefore admitted that low knowledge in the differences between culture, religion and tradition had led to the promotion of unjust, unfair and unequitable practices in the



community. They therefore saw the need to consciously address these issues in the community for change. Participants conversed on key issues on Esan concept of inheritance, the right of women to inherit their father's properties, the Esan people's standpoint on religion, culture, and tradition as well as participants' perception on justice, equity, and fairness.

The sensitization was held across the 5 Local Government Areas of Edo Central Senatorial District from the 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 with a total of 525 persons (305males, 220females) reached. The participants comprised relevant community stakeholders with influential charism and power to amend, modify and change certain customary laws in force that enhance such inequalities in their communities.

## **GOOD GOVERNANCE**

### **Community Mobilization and Engagement for Transparency, Accountability and effective service delivery**

#### **Town Hall Meeting/Media Engagement**

Uromi JDPCI conducted town hall meetings and media engagement sessions on community participation in governance for effective service delivery. This was part of the efforts to improve community participation in governance for accountability, transparency, and



effective service delivery. The purpose was to increase awareness among stakeholders on the relevance of community participation in governance and their roles to improve effective service delivery to their communities as well as engage the media to reach out to the government on the governance demand of the grassroots level and the result of their effort in reaching the Local Government representatives. This was achieved through the town hall meeting that brought stakeholders and civic groups from 25 communities together to reflect on local government service delivery in their communities.

Present at the event were the supervisors and civic group members of the 25 community civic groups instituted across the 5 Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District, Gentle Men of the press which include; Popular News 9ja of Benin City Edo-State, Grassroot Television Benin City, Edo State, The Observer Newspaper of Benin City Edo- State, representative of the Nigerian Union of Journalist, Independent Television of Benin City Edo-State, News Curve of Benin City Edo State, Navigator Newspaper of Benin City Edo-State and Esan Binocular of Uromi Edo-State. A total of 61 persons (38Male, 33 Females) were present

In his press release, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev Fr Dr. Fidelis Arhedo called on the



Local Government Acting Chairmen to be responsive and accessible to the local people and consider community input in the delivery of services to the communities. He also called on the Ministry of Local Government Affairs being the coordinating Ministry to approve and mandate LGAs to make accessible the approved LGA budget to the community groups as part of their commitment to promote Open Government Partnership. He also appreciated the commitment of the Edo- State government in encouraging such a transparent and accountable approach to governance. He thereafter requested the Governor to see to the fact that same was implemented at the grass root level. He also advised participants and the general public to focus on issues that would lift Nigeria and Nigerians from the current political administration's malady as they decide their choices in the coming 2023 general election.

### **Quarterly Learning and Experience Sharing Session**

Uromi JDPCI had the second quarterly learning and experience-sharing sessions with the civic group members across the 5 LGAs in Edo Central Senatorial District. The sessions were held in the month of August 2022. This was part of the effort to build the capacity of local people for improved community participation in governance to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective service delivery in the Edo Central Senatorial District communities.

The meeting provided a platform for experience and knowledge sharing amongst the civic groups in actualizing their set goals. It was also an avenue to learn about their achievements and performances, discover their challenges, and deliberate on possible solutions to such challenges. The sessions also serve as a platform for engagement which is helping them to learn from the experiences of others and strengthen Synergy among the various groups for improved collaboration and sustainability and thus improving their confidence to engage representatives as a group of communities affected by the common good rather than as an individual community. A total of 228 persons (129Males, 99Females) participated in the meetings.



### **Monitoring Visits to Civic Groups in the 5 Local Government Areas**

The project carried out quarterly monitoring visits to the established civic groups across the 5 Project Local Government Areas in Edo Central Senatorial District. This was to provide mentorship for the effective functioning of the groups, render technical support in addressing identified gaps and challenges and also

ascertain the extent of the groups' engagement with their community representatives in harvesting the gains



of democracy and achieving the overall objective of the project. This activity took place between July and August 2022. The various groups were visited during their monthly meetings. Some of the issues discussed were community self-help activities such as clearing the community roads and drainages, others were the outcome of the engagement with the representative including the attitudes of their acting chairmen which do not portray any form of local government autonomy or capacity to cause a change in their communities. They resolved to pass a strong message through the media to the state

Governor to caution the acting chairmen to be responsive to the needs of the local people rather than ask them to write to Benin City for ordinary issues that the Local Government should be able to address. Some groups also took time to inspect the government projects that were being implemented in their communities to be sure they were being implemented according to specifications.

## **ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

### **Don't Pay With Your Life (DPWYL)**

UROMI Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI) in her Partnership with ECPAT France and ECPAT Luxemburg to prevent the susceptibility of adolescent girls and young women from Edo State to Human trafficking and sexual exploitation via the Don't Pay With Your Life project implemented several household economic strengthening activities for vulnerable children as well as reintegration support for Survivors of human trafficking with the ultimate goal of reducing their vulnerability to human trafficking. These activities include; Entrepreneurial Reawakening Training centred on Financial Management and Savings for (40) Caregivers and (10) Young Female Returnees as well as Economic Support to strengthen the business activities of the Caregivers and Returnees, Tertiary education Support for (3) students in vulnerable families and Enrolment into apprenticeship program for (13) of the supported students who have completed their secondary education and have the willingness to learn a vocational skill. Group discussion sessions were also held with the Caregivers and Returnees.



## Entrepreneurial Reawaking Training on Financial Management and Savings for (40) Caregivers

Uromi JDPCI facilitated a one-day entrepreneurial reawakening Training centred around Financial Management and Savings for (40) Caregivers of the Don't Pay With Your Life Project who are active in business. The training was held at the Catholic Chancery Hall, Egbele, Uromi on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 to improve participants' knowledge of financial management and savings for the sustainability of their business and in ways that lead to improvements in the livelihood and well-being of their families.



One of the caregivers sharing experience with Participants during the training

The session was facilitated using a participatory approach to the learning process. Attendance at the training recorded 40

Caregivers, all females with one person with a disability.



Group photograph with some of the participants conditions.

Participants were taken through various concepts such as the meaning and relevance of financial education, Financial Management, budgeting, understanding income and expenditure, bookkeeping, and the need to save to meet future needs and expand their business capital.

The participant who became better equipped to effectively manage their businesses expressed satisfaction and appreciation for the knowledge passed to them and promised to imbibe lessons learnt to advance their businesses and increase their income for the overall improvement of their household livelihood

## Economic Strengthening Training for Young Female Returnees

In a similar dimension, one-day training on Financial Management and savings for (13) young female returnees under the Don't Pay With Your Life Project was also conducted. The purpose was to improve their knowledge of financial management and savings for business sustainability and improve their livelihood situations to reduce their vulnerability to being re-trafficked.



Cross session of participants during the training



Cross session of participants during the training

some of the topics covered in the training were the concepts and relevance of financial education, Financial Management, budgeting, understanding income and expenditure, the relevance of bookkeeping in business, and the need to save to meet future needs and business expansion.

In the course of the training, Participants came to realize the need to manage their finances in ways that are efficient to avoid business breakdown. Through the knowledge gained, they expressed a renewed commitment to their businesses, especially in the area of record keeping, and increasing their savings by joining savings groups to access more business capital.

### **Economic Support to Vulnerable Families and Young Female Returnees**

Uromi JDPCI on Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2022 supported 40 of her previously reached caregivers who demonstrated a high sense of commitment and dedication to their businesses with the sum of ₦50,000 each



Another beneficiary been presented her hairdressing materials to boost her business

This was part of the project's household economic strengthening activities to ensure that the girl child is retained and progresses in school so as to reduce their susceptibility to human trafficking



Cross session of beneficiaries during the empowerment program

In the same vein, 10 returned female migrants that were previously

supported by the project, were also provided additional work materials/goods to the tune of ₦100, 000 each as support to strengthen their life skills.

More so, three children in the tertiary institution received educational scholarship of ₦200, 000 (two hundred thousand naira) each to support their educational endeavours, while 13 (thirteen) beneficiaries who have completed their secondary education were also enrolled as apprentices in vocational training centers.

In the opening remark, the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo encouraged the children to be focused and obedient to their parents and constituted authority. He also urged the caregivers to prioritize their children's interests and ensure their protection at all times.

The items were thereafter presented to the beneficiaries by the



Group photograph with the supported children in tertiary school

Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI and the beneficiaries appreciated the funders and Uromi JDPCI for the great opportunity given to them. One of the Caregivers with tears



One of the beneficiaries being presented materials for her business

been relieved of the huge which was also causing her her inability to raise the fund of the tertiary education huge support given to them at all times.



The Executive Director in a group photograph with the supported caregivers

expressed how joyous she felt to have burden of one session of school fees daughter to drop out of school due to for the school fee. Other beneficiaries scholarship were utterly amazed by the and promised to be of good behaviour

### **Sixth Group Discussion Session With Caregivers On Better Parenting**

Uromi JDPCI conducted the sixth phase of the group discussion session with Caregivers of the “Don’t Pay With Your Life” (DPWYL) project on the Responsibility of Caregivers in Preventing Human/Child Trafficking. The session was held at the Chancery Hall, Uromi, Edo State with a total of 40 Caregivers, all females in attendance.



**The Executive Director addressing the caregivers of DPWYL beneficiaries**

The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev. Fr. Dr Fidelis Arhedo, admonished the Caregivers to maximize the objectives of the session which is aimed at building their capacity to better understand the ills of human trafficking/Child trafficking and open them up to their responsibilities in protecting their children from trafficking situations. He also advised the caregivers to strive at becoming more productive and resilient in the various businesses the project has helped them establish so they can be in positions to continually support their children.

This was followed by an interactive session with the participants during which some of them gave feedback on the results obtained from the application of lessons learnt from the previous group discussion.

The Caregivers were sensitized on their Responsibilities in Preventing Child Trafficking which include but not limited to: being cautious of offers that are too good to be true from people including relatives. Investigating properly those who come to them offering to help their children. Making adequate provision for the family, spending quality time with their children, showing love, and being an embodiment of trust to their children.

Furthermore, they were told to invest in their children and give them quality education, noting that every child must attain at minimum the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination, and if they do not have the means to take them to tertiary institution, they should encourage them to acquire a vocational skill and always ensure to monitor their progress. Lastly, they were told to report suspected cases of human trafficking to NAPTIP, Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking, Uromi JDPCI etc.



**A caregiver making her contribution during the Group Discussion**

At the end of the discussion session; an interactive session where some participants asked questions and made their contributions was featured.



## **Group Discussion with Young Female Returnees as part of Psychosocial Strengthening Activities.**

In the same manner, Uromi JDPCI conducted the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of Group discussion with young female returnees under the Don't Pay With Your Life Project on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> of August, 2022 at the Chancery Hall, Uromi, Edo State. The discourse was centered on Self-Reliance with the objective to make them understand how they



One of the participants trying her hands on the snooker game

can develop self-reliance for their personal development. The facilitator went further to give examples of what self-reliance really entails to the understanding of the participants as well as provided guides on how they can develop Self-reliance which includes accepting themselves the way they are i.e., being your own best friend, having inner confidence because our



The program manager taking Participants on the snooker game exercise

success and failure relies solely on us, assuming responsibility for your life and recognizing and managing your dependence

Some of the lessons learnt from participants were given as; Ability to trust your work and abilities to get through the challenges of life, the fact that Self-reliance does not shut the door to others, and the need to have faith in yourselves because if you do not believe in yourself, you cannot get anything out from yourself. At the end of the session/discussion, Participants were engaged in recreational activities (Snooker game) as a therapy to relieve stress.



Participants paying rapt attention to the session

## **Galvanize Action for Effective Trafficking in-Person Response at the Local Government Level in Edo State**

### **Advocacy Entry visit to some Stakeholders in Esan North East LGA**

The need to obtain and garner the support of relevant stakeholders towards the successful implementation of the project- Galvanize action for Effective Trafficking in Persons Response (GATIP) at the Local Government Area Level in Edo State spurred Uromi JDPCI to carry out advocacy visit to His Royal Highness, Zaiki Anselm O. Edonojie II, the Ojuromi of Uromi Kingdom, The acting Chairperson of Esan North East LGA, the women leader and the youth Leader



The Executive Director in a group photograph with some of the Chiefs and Elders

These visits were part of the efforts to introduce and galvanize support for the project aimed at localizing trafficking in person response in three pilot LGAs in Edo State. The advocacy project which is part of the SCALE



The Executive Director addressing His Royal Majesty, chiefs and elders of Uromi Kingdom.

Nigeria project, sponsored by USAID seeks to mobilize relevant stakeholders and galvanize action towards the activation of trafficking in person (TIP) response in the LGAs of Edo State through legislative review of the Edo TIP Prohibition Law 2018 to make inclusive provision for the establishment of Local Taskforce Against Human Trafficking in the various Local Government Areas in Edo State for more effective implementation of the TIP Law in the State.

While acknowledging the role and importance of the various stakeholders in local administration, the Executive Director entreated their collaboration in mobilizing



Group photograph with Participants taken after the meeting

their people support utilize Local



The Director of Programs Uromi JDPCI giving the presentation for the intervention

to and the

Taskforce when established in the fight against human trafficking thus contributing to peaceful coexistence and maintenance of social cohesion in the communities, LGAs and State in general.

The stakeholders promised to mobilize their people to support and utilize the taskforce in the fight against human trafficking. They added that young people need to be continuously encouraged and enlightened on the need to build their future in their home country by utilizing local opportunities at their disposal rather than endangering their lives through irregular travels to Europe.

They were thereafter appreciated for the commitment expressed in supporting the intervention while relating that they would always be invited to participate in the community dialogue sessions and other community activities planned in the project.

## **Commemoration of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons Held on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2022 across the Three Senatorial Districts of Edo State (Uromi, Auch, and Benin City)**

The localizing trafficking in-person response (LOTIP-R) cluster made up of Uromi Justice Development Peace and Caritas Initiatives (Uromi JDPCI), Josemaria Escriva Foundation (JOSEF), Girls Power Initiative (GPI), Ideal Development and Resource Centre (IDRC), Willi Johnson Foundation (WJF), Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) Auch and Edo State Taskforce Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT) on Saturday, 30th of July 2022 marked the World day against Human Trafficking with a rally procession across the three Senatorial Districts of Edo State (Uromi, Benin and Auch). The rally was part of the Strengthening Civic Advocacy and Local Engagement (SCALE) Nigeria Project sponsored by USAID. The purpose was to create awareness and sensitize the people about the dangers of human trafficking and irregular migration. The sensitization emphasized the need to be conscious of the use of technology in travel preparations to avoid traffickers who also use technology to recruit unsuspecting persons. The rally also featured the distribution of handbills and postcards with various inscriptions deduced from the theme of the commemoration: "Use and Abuse of Technology" while public address systems were used to address the people at strategic locations like the market, junctions, and busy/highly populated shops or business complex.

Attendance at the rally recorded 328 persons, 137 males and 191 females across the three locations of which youths' participants were 181 while the other participants were 147.



Cluster representatives with NUJ members

In Benin City, Edo South Senatorial District, the rally was anchored by LOTIP-R cluster members made up of GPI, ETAHT and IDRC with the Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo in attendance. A total of 113 persons (37 males and 76 females) participated in the rally.



Very Rev Fr Dr Fidelis Arhedo sensitizing people at NUJ

The procession started from Edo State Taskforce against Human Trafficking office with a walk through City center: Airport road, Ring road, Mission road, Ibiwe by Oba market and was concluded with a visit to NUJ center where the team was received by the NUJ Chair Mr. Festus Alenkhe who promised to spread the message through their various channels so as to prevent youth from falling prey to traffickers who adopt the use of technology to recruit their victims.



In Auchi, Edo North Senatorial District, the rally/road walk which was anchored by LOTIP-R cluster members in Edo North (Willi Johnson Foundation and JDPC Auchi) started from Immaculate Conception Cathedral Gate through AP Junction to Jattu Junction and beyond. The main purpose of the rally was to create awareness/sensitize the people on the safe use of internet and social media that could help mitigate the risk of people falling victim of trafficking online. A representative of the Acting Chairman of Etsako West Local Government Area and the Head of Social Welfare department joined in the rally. A total of 108 persons (44



Participants at Auchi Rally

males and 64 females) participated in the rally.

In Uromi, Edo Central Senatorial District, the rally which was anchored by Uromi JDPCI and



Participants at Auchi Rally

Josemaria Escriva Foundation commenced from St Anthony Cathedral through Mission road with a stop at the Uromi main market, Udo lane and Oyomoh street. After which the rally was concluded at the Cathedral where it first started. The Team stressed the need to travel regularly, having the right information of one's travel destination and being mindful of travel opportunities in the internet as Traffickers now also utilize online platforms to get their victims. Members of the Great Esan Returnees Association (GERA) also used their trafficking experiences to sensitize people on the dangers of human Trafficking. A total of 107 persons (56 males and 51 females) participated in the rally.

In all of the three locations LOTIP- R cluster emphasized that it is the duty of us all to strive, fight and work to reduce human trafficking as much as possible in Edo State.



Participants at the rally in Uromi

They called on everyone to be vigilant as human traffickers also recruit their victims through the internet and



Rally at Uromi

digital platforms. The targeted audiences were therefore encouraged not be victims of the traffickers' plot as well as called on the Government, NAPTIP, ETAHT, law enforcement agencies, the criminal justice systems and others to leverage on technology in their responses, including enhancing prosecutions through digital evidence and providing support services to survivors, while Awareness-raising activities on the safe use of the internet and social media as well as cooperation with the private sector to support prevention and combatting of human trafficking be enhanced.

## Strategic Advocacy Engagement Meeting with The Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General of Edo State held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2022

The Localizing Trafficking in Persons Response Cluster (LOTIP-R) made four strategic advocacy engagement meetings with key decision makers and influencers in Edo State Government to sue for their support and collaboration towards the legislative review of the Edo TIP Prohibition Law 2018 to institutionalize and activate Trafficking in Persons Response at the Local Government levels of Edo State. The stakeholders visited were the Speaker of Edo State House of Assembly, his deputy, Chief Whip and the Hon Commissioner for Justice/Attorney General of the State.

The Attorney General, Hon Oluwole Iyamu SAN noted that the review was in process and a whole-scale restructuring was ongoing. He noted that what necessitated the overhauling was the feedback from great



The Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI presenting a copy of the advocacy message to the Attorney General

consideration was also being given to managing migration, to make information more available to the people migration was inevitable. He promised to give the suggested inclusion support, as he received



Participants in a group photograph with the Attorney General

since

the

inputs with a firm assurance to forward them to the committee working on the review for consideration. He promised that he will follow up to ensure that the committee gets back to us to be sure our inputs are part of the outcome of the final document.

Hon. Emmanuel Okoduwa appreciated the visit and assured the Cluster that the Legislatures were disposed to strengthening any work that promotes the interest of humanity, hence he would give unrelenting support to provide the necessary legislative backing to the Clusters' advocacy reforms.



Participants in a group photograph with Hon. Emmanuel Okoduwa

The Deputy Speaker Hon. Roland Asoro noted that the issues raised by the Cluster were very commendable as the domestication of ETAHT at the Local Government Levels would enhance the effective implementation of the



Group photograph of Cluster members with Hon. Roland Asoro

Law at the grassroots and therefore pledged his commitment to support the review process. He promised to discuss with the Speaker the need to invite Uromi JDPCI for a holistic discussion of the proposed inputs with members of the Assembly and not just as individuals so that they can see the merits of the proposal and also



support the process. He assured the Cluster of the Assembly's readiness to partner with the Team to see that the proposals come to fruition.

The Honourable Speaker have listened Keenly to the propositions of the cluster; acknowledged that human trafficking remains a source of concern to everyone although considerable efforts have been made by the Federal Government likewise Edo State Government to respond to the issue, howbeit, responses are not enough due to its concentration in the State capital. He emphasized the need to have TIP response structures at the LGAs to focus on the rural communities that do not have the privilege of getting access to the required information on safe migration as well as ease the reporting of cases from the communities. He assured the LOTIP- Cluster of his support and promised to speak to his colleagues to see that the Law is reviewed while



During the engagement meeting with the Speaker of Edo State House of Assembly

reiterating the commitments of the Assembly to deal with bills and resolutions of this nature that touches the lives of the Edo people directly.

He noted that to avoid delays, they encourage the Ministry of Justice to look at executive bills before it is passed to the house for consideration. The Speaker who received the proposed inclusion

from the LOTIP-R cluster promised to discuss with his members the importance of the bill and the need to expedite action when the proposal gets to the house.



Cluster members in a group Photograph with the Hon. Speaker

### Launching of Advocacy Campaign Hashtag Held on Wednesday 7th of September 2022

The Localizing Trafficking in Persons Response Cluster anchored by Uromi JDPCI on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 launched her Advocacy Campaign Hashtags with the objective to create and increase visibility and awareness of the Cluster's advocacy issues amongst supporters and the target audience for the speedy attainment of the Cluster's advocacy objectives. The hashtags launched were #LocalizeTIPResponse, #EmpowerTIPVictims and #FundETAHT. The event which was held at the Catholic Chancery Hall, Benin City had in attendance the NAPTIP Zonal commander, Benin Zonal command, the Secretary of Edo Taskforce Against Human Trafficking (ETAHT),

Cluster members, SCALE representative, CSOs organizations such as Caritas Nigeria, JDPC Benin, Initiative for Gender Equality and Advancement, Indomitable Youth Organization, CERFADS, ICHIRD and ENIKE ADAMA Initiative as well as Networks such as Edo CPN and CONGOS and five Media houses with a total of 122 persons (56 males, 66 females) reached out of which two were persons with disability.



Group photograph with participants at the event



In the remarks, the Executive Director, Uromi JDPCI, Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Fidelis Arhedo noted that the event was put together to launch the advocacy campaign hashtags for the project “Galvanize Action for Effective Trafficking in Persons Response at the LGAs of Edo State”. He stated that the Launching of the Advocacy Campaign Hashtag (#LocalizeTIPResponse #EmpowerTIPVictims #FundETAHT) by the Cluster was in recognition of the relevance of public awareness campaign in the pursuit and realization of her advocacy objectives, reiterating that the hashtags will be continually used to reinforce the Cluster’s engagement with all relevant stakeholders and ensure public buy-in to the policy reform objectives. He, therefore, called on everyone present to publicize the hashtags via social media in support of this advocacy campaign until the desired change is achieved.



Executive Director of Uromi JDPCI presenting his opening remarks

While giving an overview of the SCALE project Technical Advisor, Social Protection and Inclusion, Nigeria SCALE Mr. Eric Umoru explained that the SCALE project implemented by Palladium with support from USAID seeks to strengthen the capacity of Civil Society Organisations to push for reforms and demand for accountability in different sectors including Countering Trafficking in Persons, good governance, anti-corruption and issues around sexual and gender-based violence.



In his goodwill message at the event, the Edo State Zonal Commander of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in



NAPTIP Zonal Commander while presenting his goodwill message

Persons (NAPTIP), Nduka Nwanene (Esq) noted that trafficking in persons affects the entire society regretting that organ harvesting is the latest challenge posed by the menace as revealed by recent index. He also disclosed that internal trafficking was rising as over 70% of cases of human trafficking are done within, from one state to other and from one local government area to the other. He said all hands must be on deck in the fight against trafficking in persons as NAPTIP and ETAHT cannot do it alone. He appreciated the initiative of the Cluster whilst acknowledging the need to localize the response and empower victims as most victims are vulnerable because they are not involved in any productive venture.

The high point of the occasion was the launching of the campaign hashtags with the Hashtag messages delivered by Onomen Oriakhi (Esq), Program Lead, Anti Human Trafficking Desk of Caritas Nigeria, Daisy Abiola Igaga, CONGOS President, and Nduka Nwanene (Esq), Edo Zonal Commander of (NAPTIP). Remarks and goodwill were expressed by Participants who greatly commended the LOTIP-R Cluster for her commitment to strengthening Trafficking in Persons Response at the Local Government Level

## ORPHAN AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN DESK

### Operation Triple Zero (OTZ) Club Meeting For Adolescents

In view of empowering adolescents and young persons living with HIV between the ages of 10 -17 years to take control of their health, Uromi JDPCI in alliance with ARFH on the ICHSSA -2 Project organized OTZ meetings at ISTH, Esan Central and Uromi Central Hospital, Esan North East Edo state on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July 2022. The meeting had in attendance a total of 67 participants which comprise 62 CLHIV, the Program Manager Uromi JDPC, the Program Officer, a Data clerk and 2 CCMs.

### The Community HTS Outreach

In a bid to get the people of Edo central senatorial district screened of HIV/AIDS thereby making them aware of their HIV status as requested in the 1<sup>st</sup> 95 of the 95 95 95 UNAIDS goal and as such commence treatment. Uromi JDPCI supported by her implementing partner ARFH on the ICHSSA 2 Project carried out community HIV testing and screening in the



A cross section of children on a queue awaiting to be screened for

following communities Eror, Eguare, Egbelle Arue of Esan north east; Ewatto, Ewohimi and Ahia of Esan south east and Igueben and Ebelle of Igueben Local government area within the reporting quarter.

A total of 864 persons were screened, yielding a total of 2 reactive persons ( an adult and a child) who were confirmed positive and linked to treatment and care



Case Manager conducting HTS at Ewatto village

### Visit to Virally Unsuppressed CLHIV

With regards to contributing to the 3<sup>rd</sup> 95 UNAIDS goal, 15 virally unsuppressed CLHIV residents within Edo central senatorial district were traced to their homes and schools, while others were tracked via phone calls within the reporting period; this was done in order to provide community-based adherence counselling while ensuring they are linked to EAC and thus complete it.

The visit was also to identify the principal causes of the viral load unsuppression amongst the CLHIV related to financial/economic challenges and as such prioritized such households for financial literacy, linkages to VSLA, and other household strengthening interventions.

### ARFH ICHASSA 2 Project Review Meeting

In order to reflect on key achievements, success stories, best practices, lessons learnt, and challenges encountered during the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22), ARFH-ICHSSA 2 project had a 2-day Annual Review Meeting at Dover Hotel, Ikeja with partners in Lagos and Edo states. The meeting also featured the progress report from the Strategic Information department, financial review update and system strengthening efforts as well as effective strategies for FY 23 project implementation. Apart from Lagos and Edo states partners, also present at the meeting were her consortium partners FHI360 and Project HOPE. A total number of 58 participants were present.



A program manager of a CBO making her presentation

## MICRO CREDIT DESK

Uromi JDPCI has continued to empower small-scale enterprises and active farmers within Edo Central Senatorial District through her micro-credit scheme which provides soft loans for economic development to farmers and petty traders. Soft loans are given to groups of women and men who are active in business and small-scale commercial agricultural activities to enable them to boost their business which would ultimately lead to an improvement in their livelihood conditions. The Scheme has empowered over 1631 persons across 140 groups with 69 active groups currently in place.

Within the period, thirty-one (31) groups, were visited for collections and mentorship in communities across the five LGAs in Edo Central Senatorial District. Eighteen (18) groups were also given training to prepare them for empowerment in the scheme. The Micro Credit officer while appreciating the members of the group for their commitment in meeting up with the six (6) months repayment provision of the scheme, restated the need for all the members to remain committed as the money they would get will be greater than the cycle they just concluded because they have demonstrated resilience and commitment to their business and the repayment process.



The members of the groups expressed readiness to obtain higher support as they pledged their commitment to



the process. They were thereafter given another round of soft loans to boost their business and agricultural activities through bank transfer.

## INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

### **3-Days Workshop on Sustainability and Resource Diversification Organised By Palladium SCALE For Anchors Organizations From The 5<sup>th</sup>- 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2022.**

As part of the SCALE Project capacity-building interventions, Uromi JDPCI Participated in the Sustainability and Resource Diversification Workshop organized by PALLADIUM SCALE at Hawthorn Suites Abuja. The training exposed Participants to various Resource Mobilization Strategies for increased fundraising for organizations and ensuring the sustainability of their interventions to their target populations. A major output



from the training was the co-creation of a 5 year resource mobilization / business plan by the various Anchor Organizations. Thus Uromi JDPCI now has an operational resource mobilization strategy. The training was attended by 15 participants from 5 different Anchor Organizations; which include CAJA (Centre for Awareness and Justice Accountability), ICD (Initiative for Community Development), WFI (Women Friendly Initiative), the Order Paper, and Uromi JDPCI.

The sessions were facilitated by Dr. ThankGod Okosun from Palladium (Technical Advisor Organizational Development) and involved handholding, brain-warming exercises and group presentations.



During a plenary session at the training

### **3- Day Training on Media Engagement Organised by Palladium SCALE From The 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2022**

Uromi JDPCI alongside two of her cluster member organization; Willijohnson Foundation and Ideal Resource and Development Centre participated in a three day training session on media engagement organized by Palladium SCALE for her Clusters. The meeting took place at Treasure suites Hotel and Conferences, Abuja from the 20<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> of July, 2022.

The training was aimed at helping cluster members to better leverage the media for the public awareness component of their projects so as to galvanize public support for their advocacy agendas as well as influence policy makers and to also provide opportunity for the clusters to co create their media awareness strategy and plan. The training was facilitated by Hilary Chukwu and involved a lot of handholding exercises with an immediate outcome being the development of media strategy/plan by the various cluster based on their advocacy issues.



During handholding session at the training

Eight clusters across Edo, Taraba, Abuja and Kano participated in the training and they include the Localizing Trafficking in Persons

Response Cluster represented by Uromi JDPCI Willijohnson Foundation and Ideal Resource and Development Centre, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Cluster, Digital Right and Information Cluster, Accountability in the Extractive Sector Cluster, Right to Health Cluster, Women Friendly Initiative Cluster, Partnership for Promotion of Maternal and Child Health, Accountability for good governance in Education Cluster Maternal Health with a total of 24 participants in attendance.



During a plenary session at the training

## **A one-day capacity-building workshop on private sector engagements (PSE) Conducted by ACIOE**

Uromi JDPCI participated in a one day capacity building workshop on Private Sector Engagement Organised by Palladium SCALE through her resource Partner, ACIOE Associates. The workshop was held at Royal Continental Hotel and Apartment Abuja on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, 2022. It was aimed at sharpening the skills and capacities of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on the strategies of engagement with the private Sector whilst promoting better understanding of the role of the private Sector in program sustainability, and areas of CSOs collaboration with the Private Sector. The workshop was attended by 12 participants- 5 Males and 7 Females from four different anchor Organisations namely; Centre for Awareness and Justice Accountability, Women Friendly Initiative, the Order Paper, and Uromi JDPCI. A major deliverable from the workshop, was the development of a draft Private Sector Engagement Strategy by the Participating Organisations.

## **Organisational Capacity Assessment (OCA)/ Organisational Performance Index (OPI) Assessment**

As part of the interventions of the SCALE project targeted at improving CSO Organisational Capacity, Uromi JDPCI on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2022, underwent a tailored capacity building assessment which was conducted by WEWE (Widows and Orphans) Foundations; using the OCA and OPI tools. The OCA measured the Organisation at the outcome level; looking at the systems and policies available and operational within the organization across 12 domains which include; Leadership and Governance, System and structures, Human Resource, Administration, Organisational Management, Resource Mobilisation, Project Performance Management, Gender and Social Inclusion, Monitoring and Evaluation Research and Learning, External Relation, Financial Management and Procurement while the OPI measured the impact of the Organisation's programs in the lives of target beneficiaries.



**A session of the assessment with the Finance Team**

(10 females 13 males) comprising Staff members of Uromi JDPCI, Staff of WEWE and the SCALE Organisational Capacity Advisor.



**Cross session of Participants during the assessment**

At the end of the assessment, a capacity development plan was designed based on the gaps identified; for mentoring and coaching and recommendations were also given for system strengthening and deepening our intervention for impact. The methodology adopted was participatory and involved inputs from staff of the organization. 23 persons were in attendance